

# NATO's Initiative for a Greener Future

The Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society 1969-1983



Angelo Nijenhuis

475946

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Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication

Master Global History and International Relations

Supervisor: Martijn Lak

Second reader: Mark Straver

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Working on this thesis, I experienced as both a pleasant and challenging journey. At the start, when my ideas for my research began to take shape, I had high expectations, on the novelty of my research, the content of the primary sources and visiting the NATO Archives in Brussels. While some of the expectations came out, others, needed to be adjusted due to the unseen outbreak of COVID-19 as the Archives closed their doors.

Now that I am nearly finishing writing the thesis, I would like to thank the people who helped me along the way. The idea of my research on the Committee on the Challenges of Society originates from my thesis class lecturer Dario Fazzi who visited the National Archives in Atlanta. There he obtained documents from multiple US departments concerning the CCMS. Because I was interested in researching NATO's history, he passed the research idea and the sources from Atlanta to me. I am grateful for the opportunity he gave me to research these sources and his willingness to discuss the progress of my work.

I want to thank my supervisor Martijn Lak who always thoroughly read my work and made many helpful recommendations and corrections. Furthermore, I would like to thank the Roosevelt Institute for American Studies for the opportunity to follow my research internship. From its archives, I found many valuable sources for my research. Furthermore, I owe many thanks to Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, the first scholar to publish a book on the CCMS, for discussing my research ideas and his helpful recommendations for relevant literature.

I am grateful to my fellow students Milan and Wouter for their encouragements whenever I had some doubts about the result of my research. You two made the whole process certainly more enjoyable. Last but not least, I would like to thank my parents for supporting me and providing me with the opportunity to pursue my master's degree.

## Abstract

The Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS) proposed by President Nixon launched in 1969. The Committee facilitated environmental research between the members of the Alliance. Scholarship on the CCMS notes that the Committee served mainly the US's interest in maintaining unity within NATO. For multiple reasons, the European members of NATO opposed the Committee in its first years of existence. The historiography shows that by 1975 the Committee became accepted by all members of NATO. This thesis research on the CCMS includes the years 1975-1983. Based on internal US documents, this research assesses if the Committee received continued support by the US and European members in the second half of the 1970s and start of the 1980s. Thereby it researches the perception of the members on the pilot studies conducted by the Committee. Moreover, with the end of détente in 1979, US support to NATO's environmental project waned. This thesis critically examines the US and European consideration when the CCMS became reevaluated in 1983.

**Key words:** NATO, Transatlantic relations, CCMS, environmentalism, US empire, Environmental security,

## List of Abbreviations

CCMS	Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society
CoE	Council of Europe
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ERDA	Energy Research and Development Administration
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSTP	Office of Science and Technology Policy
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

On the occasion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) twentieth anniversary, US President Richard Nixon expressed his vision on how the Alliance needed to adapt "to changing conditions" at the time.<sup>1</sup> He strongly urged to "create a committee on the challenges of modern society (...) to explore ways in which the experience and resources of the Western nations could most effectively be marshalled toward improving the quality of life of our peoples."<sup>2</sup> The proposed Committee would add a new, social dimension to NATO, alongside its traditional military and political roles. With détente, "there was less of the original cement of fear" to unite the members of Alliance.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, support amongst the public on both sides of the Atlantic was decreasing rapidly.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, President Nixon believed that a Committee focused on environmentalism would bring the Alliance closer together and increase its support.

While the Americans were optimistic about the creation of the Committee and were eager to get started, the proposed initiative was received with less enthusiasm by the European members of the Alliance, who had several objections.<sup>5</sup> Despite the European skepticism, the members of the Treaty Organization agreed to establish the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS) during the fall of 1969. The Committee would continue to exist up until 2006, when it merged with the Science Committee.<sup>6</sup>

The history of the Alliance is a succession of transatlantic crises. Just like in 1969, when the CCSM was established, NATO currently faces criticism and shows signs of a lack of internal unity. US President Donald Trump has an ambivalent attitude towards the Alliance, having called it from "obsolete" to contend that the organization is serving "a great purpose."<sup>7</sup> The French President Emmanuel Macron even stated that NATO is experiencing its "brain death."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 'Address by President Nixon to the North Atlantic Council, Washington, April 10, 1969.', Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Richard Nixon, 1969, p. 272-276.

<sup>2</sup> 'Address by President Nixon to the North Atlantic Council, Washington, April 10, 1969.'

<sup>3</sup> 'Address by President Nixon to the North Atlantic Council, Washington, April 10, 1969.'

<sup>4</sup> Linda Risso, 'NATO and the Environment: The Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society', *Contemporary European History* 25, no. 3 (August 2016): 506.

<sup>5</sup> Risso, 513.

<sup>6</sup> Risso, 533.

<sup>7</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 2.

<sup>8</sup> 'Emmanuel Macron Warns Europe: NATO Is Becoming Brain-Dead', *The Economist*, 7 November 2019, <https://www.economist.com/europe/2019/11/07/emmanuel-macron-warns-europe-nato-is-becoming-brain-dead>. (accessed January 5, 2020).

As of yet, only a few scholars researched the topic of the CCMS (see the literature report for an overview). The reason for this is that most of the research on NATO focusses on its main military and political role and overlook arguably less-important environmental endeavors of the Alliance.

Existing academic works on the Committee, predominantly focused on the first years of the Committee (1969-1975), when the project still faced resistance by European members.<sup>9</sup> The Greek historian Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, the author of the first book about the CCMS, sees the year 1975 as a turning point for the CCMS. He argues that the “initial reservations of many member-states had been overcome, and the committee was working smoothly as part of the alliance structure.”<sup>10</sup> Beyond that timeframe, only a few sentences are dedicated by scholars on the CCMS. The historian Linda Risso states that, when the Cold War flared up again at the end of the seventies, NATO focused more on its military role. Because of that, the Committee suffered from a lack of political support.<sup>11</sup>

Hatzivassiliou argues that although the CCMS did not have a significant role in determining the course of NATO, it is a valuable indicator of the Transatlantic relations and dynamics at a time when the Alliance faced multiple challenges and needed to adjust.<sup>12</sup> Therefore this thesis is not a study of environmental history but a study on NATO’s transatlantic relations manifesting itself in the CCMS. This thesis aims to shed a better light on how the CCMS managed to develop after 1975 and how the American initiative became viewed positively by the other members of the Alliance.

### **Research question and sub-questions**

The research question of the thesis is as follows: *How did the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society develop between 1969-1983?* Three sub-questions contribute to answering the research question: (1) *How was the CCMS viewed by the European members of NATO in its beginning years 1969-1975?* (2) *How did the CCMS develop between the years 1975-1983?* (3) *To what extent was the CCMS impacted by the Reagan presidency and the end of détente?*

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<sup>9</sup> See Risso 'NATO and the Environment', 507; Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975* (New York, NY: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2017), 1.

<sup>10</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 1.

<sup>11</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 532.

<sup>12</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 2.



## Methodology

The research for the thesis on the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society is based on primary sources from multiple archives. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, the NATO archives were closed during the process of writing the thesis. The archive contains a chronological series of documents related to the topic of the CCSM. These documents are reports of the plenary meeting held by the CCMS, reviews of conducted pilot studies and documents of individual actors within the CCSM. Because the documents are not digitalized yet these sources are not used in this research.

The archive of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is a valuable source for documents related to the CCMS. It contains many documents of annual reports and evaluations of pilot studies conducted for the CCMS by different scientific research groups. The documents are not available online. My thesis class supervisor, Dario Fazzi, has obtained many relevant documents concerning the topic from the EPA archive. These sources indicate that after 1975, the European NATO members had a positive attitude towards the CCMS.

Digital collections of the presidential libraries from the US Presidents are consulted. The presidential digital collections of the Carter and Regan administration contain few documents on the CCMS directly. However, some documents provide a good overview on the Transatlantic relationship at the time, that were beneficial for laying out the context of, decision made by NATO.

Via the Roosevelt Institute of American Studies (RIAS), the Declassified Documents Reference System (DDRS) are accessed, that contained additional sources on the CCMS. Another kind of primary source that is used for the topic of my thesis are the published memoirs of US policymakers such as Henry Kissinger. For instance, in the first volume of Kissinger's memoirs; *White House Years*, he lays out his train of thought regarding a closer Transatlantic relation through the establishment of the CCMS. Although the CCMS is not mentioned often in the memoirs, it is be a valuable complement to official documents on the topic. These memoirs are used with caution, as policymakers can twist the truth or omit things to paint a better picture of their actions.

### *Limitations*

Due to the closure of the physical archives many sources that could have been useful to my research were not consulted. The NATO archives and also the national archive from the Netherlands could have provided additional insights or strengthened my claims.

The primary sources used for the thesis on the CCMS will be limited to US archival sources. The NATO archives contains documents that expressed the views of the delegations of multiple members of the Alliance. However, the US based sources are more feasible to access since they are digitalized in contrast to, for instance, British sources from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office archives. The lack of other national sources on the topic of the CCMS naturally limits the scope of the thesis and will not claim to provide a complete overview on the workings of the Committee. Hatzivassiliou, who studied extensively US national archives for his book on the CCMS, states that the US archival sources provide more details on the internal disagreements and discussions within the Committee than the NATO sources provide.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, the CCMS was an American initiative and the US was responsible for the majority of the administrative work.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, relying on American sources provide a relative wide overview of information regarding the workings of the CCMS.

Another limitation for my thesis is that documents of the Carter and Regan administration are still under declassification review, whereas, most of the Nixon/Ford administrations are declassified. This makes it more difficult to compare the CCMS from the years 1969-1975 to how it functioned the remaining years of the seventies.

The research is limited for the most part on the CCMS internal dynamics. It therefore will not go into detail on how the CCMS pilot studies and results compared to that of other international organizations concerned with environmental and social development such as the UN Environmental program established in 1972 and the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation established in 1961.

### **Historiography**

Before examining the existing scholarship on the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, this literature report provides a brief overview of the different views amongst scholars on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Encompassing a full account of NATO's

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<sup>13</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society*, 3.

<sup>14</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 3.

history and the different perspectives on it would be beyond the aim of this historiographical overview. Therefore, this historiography focusses on parts of NATO's history relevant to the topic of the CCMS. Firstly, this historiography provides an overview of works concerning the creation of NATO. Secondly, it looks at what has been published on the scientific and technological character of the alliance, the so-called 'third dimension' of NATO. Thirdly, this historiographical overview focusses on scholarly research concerning the CCMS itself. Finally, this literature report describes what this thesis aims to contribute to the historiography of the CCMS.

### *The creation of NATO*

Scholars have often interpreted the history of NATO as merely an extension of US foreign policy to increase its power over its European allies or seeing it as an organization with its own agenda.<sup>15</sup> Many authors have written on the nature of the Alliance and in which light the organization should be seen. One author who has written extensively on the emergence of NATO, is the historian Lawrence Kaplan.<sup>16</sup> He acknowledges the multitude of ways NATO can be viewed, ranging from being a "Guarding of Peace" to a "Harbinger of War."<sup>17</sup> According to Kaplan, both narratives contain some truths.<sup>18</sup> He puts more emphasis on how NATO evolved since its founding in 1949 as a result of facing continuous challenges, contending that its survival showed America's abandonment of isolationism.<sup>19</sup> By being a member of NATO, Western European states were protected by the vast military power of the US against a possible Soviet invasion. While Western Europe lay in ruins, the United States was the main victor of the war, which suffered the least damage to its infrastructure and whose economy grew due to increased production during the war.<sup>20</sup> The Europeans felt the threat of Soviet communism to their democracies and therefore wanted to form a new western alliance with the US to counter military pressure from the Soviets.<sup>21</sup> The US did not want to join such an alliance, as the

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<sup>15</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 535.

<sup>16</sup> See Lawrence S. Kaplan, *NATO 1948: The Birth of the Transatlantic Alliance* (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007); Lawrence S Kaplan, *The United States and NATO: The Formative Years*. (The University Press of Kentucky, 2014).

<sup>17</sup> Lawrence S. Kaplan, 'NATO Retrospect', *The Review of Politics* 23, no. 4 (October 1961): 447.

<sup>18</sup> Kaplan, 447.

<sup>19</sup> Kaplan, 447.

<sup>20</sup> Melvyn P. Leffler, 'The Cold War: What Do "We Now Know"?', *The American Historical Review* 104, no. 2 (April 1999): 503-8.

<sup>21</sup> Kaplan, 'NATO Retrospect', 12.

American public was suspicious of European intentions.<sup>22</sup> However, two US initiatives launched in 1947, would bring the two sides of the Atlantic closer together. The Marshall Plan aimed to reconstruct Europe, while simultaneously boosting the US economy. The Truman Doctrine would provide help to countries exposed to the Communist threat of expansion. Therefore, historian Walter LaFeber argued that the Truman Doctrine and Marshall aid are “two halves of the same walnut.”<sup>23</sup>

Still, there were many differences between the US and Europe for the creation of a military Transatlantic Alliance. A pivotal moment that accelerated the US’ commitment to forming such an alliance was the Soviet-led Prague coup in the Winter of 1948. Alongside the Soviet blockade of Berlin in the same year, this appeared to the US to be the beginning of a full-fledged Communist take-over of Europe, which alarmed Washington.<sup>24</sup> In 1948, the US accepted the premise to join a military alliance with Western European countries. Exploratory talks followed, concluding in the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty on April 4, 1949.<sup>25</sup> According to the historian Melvyn Leffler, the grand strategy of the US under the Truman administration was to link the core industrial areas of Western Europe and Japan, to the United States.<sup>26</sup> Leffler states that the creation of NATO was “the capstone” of the strategy of the US to include the new country of West Germany in a ‘healthy Atlantic community’ under American leadership.<sup>27</sup>

Similar to Kaplan, the historian John Lewis Gaddis argues that the events in Prague and the Soviet blockade of Berlin contributed to the creation of NATO in 1949. However, he differs with Kaplan by stating that the events in 1948 convinced the Western European countries, rather than the US, of the necessity of American military assistance.<sup>28</sup> In Gaddis’ view, Western Europe was hesitant to accept the US’ military help, as it feared the US would gain too much influence over them.

Gaddis’ perception is challenged by the historian Geir Lundestad, who puts more emphasis on the fact that the emergence of a military alliance was initiated by the Europeans. According to Lundestad, the American position of strength in 1945 and its expansion the years

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<sup>22</sup> Kaplan, ‘NATO Retrospect’, 12.

<sup>23</sup> Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-2006*, 10th ed (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2008), 56-57.

<sup>24</sup> Kaplan, ‘NATO Retrospect’, 21.

<sup>25</sup> Kaplan, ‘NATO Retrospect’, 24-26.

<sup>26</sup> Melvyn P. Leffler, ‘The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy, 1945-1952’, in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 82.

<sup>27</sup> Leffler, 81.

<sup>28</sup> John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2007), 34.

after that can be called an “empire”; however, this would be an “empire of invitation.”<sup>29</sup> Western European nations, exhausted by the war, influenced the US to be more committed to European affairs with economic investments and providing military security. They feared (especially the British) that the US, just like after the First World War, would fall back into isolationism once the Second World War ended. Therefore, according to Lundestad, the British took the initiative in the process that would create NATO.<sup>30</sup> Europe would prosper more through this ‘invitation’ than it would benefit the United States.<sup>31</sup>

This notion of the US acting following a ‘European invitation’ is contended by the historian Antony Hopkins in his book *American Empire: A Global History*. He states that the US, after the Second World War, would only continue its loans to the British, if they would liberalize their trade and open up to them the Sterling Area.<sup>32</sup> Hopkins states that the US strategy under the Truman administration was to use its surplus of dollars “to open protected trading regimes throughout the world.”<sup>33</sup> Key institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were established to create and maintain a stable international monetary system. In Hopkins’ view, the Marshall Aid provided to Europe was designed to rebuild America’s most significant foreign market and to counter Soviet influence. The creation of NATO was, according to Hopkins, the military part of the US strategy under the Truman administration to restore the world economy and to contain the spread of Communism.<sup>34</sup>

The historians Stephen Ambrose and Douglas Brinkley in their book *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy Since 1938* corroborate Hopkins’ view of NATO being a US initiative to assert its dominance over Europe. They state that after the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the US changed its defensive approach into a belief that “threats had to be met early and overseas”.<sup>35</sup> According to Ambrose and Brinkley, the creation of NATO marked a new era for the US in which it would have a “military, political, and economic dominance over Europe.”<sup>36</sup> They cast doubts on NATO being an alliance to defend democracy

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<sup>29</sup> Geir Lundestad, ‘Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952’, *Journal of Peace Research* 23, no. 3 (1986): 263.

<sup>30</sup> Lundestad, 269-70.

<sup>31</sup> Lundestad, 275-76.

<sup>32</sup> A. G. Hopkins, *American Empire: A Global History, America in the World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), 471.

<sup>33</sup> Hopkins, 474.

<sup>34</sup> Hopkins, 475-76.

<sup>35</sup> Stephen E. Ambrose and Douglas Brinkley, *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy since 1938*, 8. rev. ed, A Penguin Book (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1997), 2.

<sup>36</sup> Ambrose and Brinkley, 98.

and reject claims of NATO being an alliance of equals. The Americans would lead the alliance, and their possession of nuclear weapons gave validity to NATO.<sup>37</sup>

In recent years, multiple contributions to the existing body of work on the history of the Cold War and NATO have been published. The historian Odd Arne Westad released in 2017 *The Cold War: A World History*. In this lengthy volume, Westad argues that the Cold War can be seen as a global phenomenon, and he expands the timeframe of the conflict back to the beginning of the twentieth century, rather than the conventional delimitation of the years 1945-1991.<sup>38</sup> According to Westad, the rapid economic, political, and social worldwide changes at the end of the nineteenth century lie at the basis of the Cold War. Therefore, Westad believes that the origins of the Cold War can only be understood by understanding these global transformations.<sup>39</sup> To understand how the Cold War ended, Westad points out that starting in the 1970s, global economic changes and technological innovations were responsible for the American victory in the conflict.<sup>40</sup>

Historian Petra Goedde takes a different approach to the Cold War. In 2019, she published *The Politics of Peace: A Global Cold War History*, where rather than focusing on the aspect of war, she emphasizes the role of peace and how transnational peace movements influenced the outcome of the Cold War. This perspective on ‘peace’ is, according to Goedde, largely neglected in the historiography of the Cold War, as most research has focused on military and political events.<sup>41</sup>

The most recent contribution to the existing historiography of NATO is the book *Enduring Alliance: A History of NATO and the Postwar Global Order* by historian Timothy Sayle. While Constructivist approaches argue that NATO’s long existence and survival after the end of the Cold War can be explained by the shared democratic values of its members, Sayle counters this notion. He states that it was not democracy itself that kept the alliance together, but that maintaining NATO was the best way for its members to avoid “the dangers of democracy”: an ever-changing electorate, whose desire for peace, could have led to the outbreak of war.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Ambrose and Brinkley, *Rise to Globalism*, 100–101.

<sup>38</sup> Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War: A World History*, First edition (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 12.

<sup>39</sup> Westad, 13.

<sup>40</sup> Westad, 694-95.

<sup>41</sup> Petra Goedde, *The Politics of Peace: A Global Cold War History* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019), 3–4.

<sup>42</sup> Timothy A. Sayle, *Enduring Alliance: A History of NATO and the Postwar Global Order* (Ithaca [New York]: Cornell University Press, 2019), 2.

Sayle uses the famous quote by Lord Ismay, the first Secretary-General of NATO, to explain the purpose of the organization: “To keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down.”<sup>43</sup> Although there is no evidence available of Lord Ismay making this comment, it has been cited by a wide variety of authors to explain NATO’s function.<sup>44</sup> Sayle highlights in his book the worry of NATO leaders that their population would reject the concept of the Alliance. When faced with the choice of preserving the Alliance or pursuing national interest, NATO was chosen, as they believed it provided peace and stability.<sup>45</sup>

### *NATO and the Environment*

In recent years, contributions to the historiography on NATO have been made that focus on the so-called “third dimension” of the Alliance. This third dimension is about the scientific and technological role of NATO, which it has alongside its more traditional military and political role.<sup>46</sup> Plenty has been written on the traditional role of NATO. However, in general, the third dimension has been neglected in the historiography.<sup>47</sup> The reason for this lack of attention is that at the end of the sixties and the beginning of the seventies, multiple events took place in NATO’s history. For instance, détente and negotiations with the Soviet Union. Therefore, the first two traditional dimensions received most of the attention by scholars.

According to Hatzivassiliou, this is not surprising, as the military and political roles of NATO are arguably the most important ones.<sup>48</sup> The third dimension of NATO can be traced back to Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which prescribes closer political and economic cooperation between its members.<sup>49</sup>

In January 2015, NATO published an article titled “Science: NATO’s “third dimension”. This article describes how scientific cooperation within NATO took form in 1958

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<sup>43</sup> Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 10-13.

<sup>44</sup> See for instance Westad, *The Cold War*, 139; G. John Ikenberry, ‘The Myth of Post-Cold War Chaos’, *Foreign Affairs* 75, no. 3 (1996): 88; T. C. W. Blanning, *The Oxford History of Modern Europe* (OUP Oxford, 2000), 121; Jussi Hanhimäki, Georges-Henri Soutou, and Basil Germond, *The Routledge Handbook of Transatlantic Security* (Routledge, 2010), 14; David M. Andrews, *The Atlantic Alliance Under Stress: US-European Relations after Iraq* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 61.

<sup>45</sup> Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 3.

<sup>46</sup> Risso, ‘NATO and the Environment’, 507.

<sup>47</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 4.

<sup>48</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 4.

<sup>49</sup> Risso, ‘NATO and the Environment’, 508.

when the Science Committee was established. The article provides an overview of many international scientific initiatives that received funding from NATO's Science Programme.<sup>50</sup>

The historian Simone Turchetti has extensively researched the topic of scientific cooperation during the Cold War. In the article "Sword, Shield and Buoys: A History of the NATO Sub-Committee on Oceanographic Research", Turchetti provides an overview of one of the first initiatives of the Science Committee: a sub-group that would be devoted to marine science.

*The Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society.*

The historian Timothy Sayle mentions in his book *Enduring Alliance: A History of NATO and the Postwar Global Order* that NATO faced difficulties at the end of the sixties with the start of détente. According to Sayle, "NATO's future seemed to be in jeopardy", because its viability was at stake in times that a Soviet invasion was highly unlikely during the thaw of the Cold War.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, he mentions the diminishing public support for NATO at the end of the sixties.<sup>52</sup> While this a good analysis by Sayle, like most other Cold War historians, he overlooked a solution by President Nixon to address the issues NATO faced: namely the establishment of the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS) in the fall of 1969.

One of the first scholars to publish an article on the subject of the CCMS was the historian Jacob Hamblin. In his article, the main argument is that the CCMS was created by Nixon to serve his foreign policy objectives. Using NATO as the vehicle for environmentalism would bolster détente between the East and the West and create more unity within the Alliance. Environmentalism, in Hamblin's view, was the most effective topic for Nixon to use as a tool to achieve these goals, as it was a topic, he thought all countries were in favor of.<sup>53</sup>

Also, the historian Thorsten Schultz published an article on the origins of the CCMS. Whereas Hamblin assigns great importance to the role Nixon played in the creation of the Committee, Schultz points out that CCMS pioneers such as Nixon's adviser for Urban Affairs and scholar Patrick Moynihan, who genuinely cared about the environment, were the driving

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<sup>50</sup> 'Science: NATO's "Third Dimension"', NATO, 23 January 2015, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news\\_116804.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_116804.htm).

<sup>51</sup> Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 8.

<sup>52</sup> Sayle, 8.

<sup>53</sup> See J. D. Hamblin, 'Environmentalism for the Atlantic Alliance: NATO's Experiment with the "Challenges of Modern Society"', *Environmental History* 15, no. 1 (1 January 2010): 54-75.



force behind the establishment of the Committee. The CCMS, however, did not become what the pioneers envisioned. The goals steered away from environmental security, to become a body for major industrialized countries to stimulate the exchange of technology.<sup>54</sup>

An important addition to the historiography of CCMS was an article by the historian Linda Risso. In line with the two previously mentioned authors, this article focusses on the origins of the CCMS. Risso follows the same train of thought as Hamblin in the way they see the creation of the CCMS as a tool for President Nixon to improve the public image of NATO. She points out that behind the scenes, the creation of CCMS caused tensions between the US and European NATO members. The latter were not enthusiastic about the idea of the CCMS, which displeased the Nixon Administration. The European members doubted if NATO would be the right platform for the projects the CCMS would undertake and that it would duplicate work done by other organizations. Moreover, the European members feared American interference in their internal affairs.<sup>55</sup>

According to Risso, most likely the CCMS did not provide increased public support for NATO. However, the CCMS did contribute to increased awareness for the environment on the global stage. Moreover, the Committee's work proved valuable in setting the stage for solutions to problems modern industrial countries faced (e.g. problems related to urbanization and road safety). The way the CCMS was set up led, according to Risso, to increased cooperation in scientific knowledge among experts. This exchange of knowledge proved to be profitable for the NATO allies, especially for smaller countries that lacked scientific experts. Risso argues that the decentralized structure of the CCMS, with minimal interference from national governments, helped experts in their exchange of ideas. This also proved to be the Committee's downside, as many of its recommendations were not implemented due to a lack of enthusiasm by national governments.<sup>56</sup>

In 2017, the historian Evanthis Hatzivassiliou wrote the first comprehensive overview on the CCMS. The timeframe of his research starts with the creation of the Committee in 1969 up until 1975, when, according to Hatzivassiliou, "the initial reservations of many member-states had been overcome", and CCMS worked "smoothly" as part of NATO.<sup>57</sup> Hatzivassiliou

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<sup>54</sup> See Thorsten Schulz, 'Transatlantic Environmental Security in the 1970s? NATO's "Third Dimension" as an Early Environmental and Human Security Approach', 2010, 21.

<sup>55</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 523.

<sup>56</sup> See Risso, 'NATO and the Environment'.

<sup>57</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 1.

uses a vast number of sources to back up his research and his book is of great value for the thesis. In the first chapter of the book, Hatzivassiliou provides a thorough overview of the process how the CCSM was established. He describes how behind the scenes, tense negotiations between the US and the other members of the Alliance took place, on the purpose of the proposed Committee. In the next chapter Hatzivassiliou analyses the first the five years of the CCMS. He arrives at the conclusion that the European attitude towards the CCMS evolved from doubt to acceptance. Their initial reservation had been overcome by 1975 as a result of the success of the pilot studies.

In 2018, Turchetti released the book *Greening the Alliance: The Diplomacy of NATO's Science and Environmental Initiatives*. This book encompasses the scientific and environmental endeavors of the Alliance in a broad timeframe. Turchetti managed to study a wide array of sources for his research. Also, he has a chapter dedicated to the CCMS.<sup>58</sup> The book offers a comprehensive account of the history of both the Science Committee and the CCMS. It takes a different perspective than Hamblin by arguing that environmental research that the US was not the hegemonic power behind NATO's environmental research.<sup>59</sup> Turchetti rather sees environmentalism as the means for the US to promote diplomatic relations.<sup>60</sup> The book raises compelling insights into how the Science Committee adapted to the new wave of environmentalism in NATO to keep existing. The Science Committee shows similar tensions between the European members of the organization with the US, as witnessed in the CCMS.

#### *Innovative aspects*

As the historiography shows, most works on the CCMS focus on the negotiations behind the formation of the Committee and its first years. Hatzivassiliou describes the year 1975 as a “watershed in the development of the CCMS.”<sup>61</sup> After that moment, he argues, a point of balance was found on how the Committee would operate in a way that satisfied all of its members.<sup>62</sup> The research from Hatzivassiliou is however limited to the years 1969-1975, and therefore it does not mention how the CCMS operated after the turning point in 1975. Here

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<sup>58</sup> Dagomar Degroot, ‘Seeking Solutions to Cold War Divisions, in the Mid-20th Century NATO Embraced Environmentalism’, ScienceMag, 1 January 2019, <https://blogs.sciencemag.org/books/2019/01/01/greening-the-alliance/>. (accessed January 24, 2020).

<sup>59</sup> Simone Turchetti, *Greening the Alliance: The Diplomacy of NATO's Science and Environmental Initiatives* (Chicago ; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2019), 10.

<sup>60</sup> Turchetti, 11.

<sup>61</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 157.

<sup>62</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 157.

the innovative aspect of the research comes in to play. By looking beyond 1975 up until 1980, a timeframe which has not yet been researched for the CCMS, it can be analyzed how the Committee contributed towards its intended goal of closer cooperation between members of the Alliance. How did the European perception of the CCMS develop, and did this remain the case for the remainder of the seventies?

### **Theoretical concepts**

This paragraph provides a brief overview of multiple theoretical concepts that are used for the thesis. In the literature report, some concepts are explored in more detail. The first two chapters of the thesis set out what NATO was and how it operated. Therefore, the part on NATO in this paragraph is concise in order to avoid repetition. Moreover, this chapter lays out the concepts of the US empire and Environmentalism.

Much has been written on the topic of NATO's existence and evolution by historians and scholars of International Relations Theories (IR). This section describes how three major schools within the field of IR interpret NATO in different ways. When starting the actual research for the thesis, these IR theories can provide valuable insights in understanding and interpreting the behavior from actors and states involved in the CCMS. Below, this paragraph provides a brief overview on how the theories of Neorealism, Neoliberal Institutionalism, and Constructivism see NATO.

#### *Neorealism*

Neorealists assert that the primary aim of NATO was to deter the Soviet threat.<sup>63</sup> They see NATO in a narrow sense as a military alliance whose main focus was to deter Soviet influence and to protect its own members. Therefore, they argue that the existence of the Alliance would be obsolete after the fall of the Warsaw Pact.<sup>64</sup> As Neorealist Kenneth Waltz puts it: "NATO's days are not numbered, but its years are."<sup>65</sup> Waltz's conclusion follows the logic from the core

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<sup>63</sup> Gabi Schlag, 'Re-Constituting NATO' (Paper prepared for presentation at the ECPR Joint Session Workshop "Theorizing NATO", Lisbon, 2009), 3.

<sup>64</sup> See Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, 3. print, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1994); Kenneth N. Waltz, 'The Emerging Structure of International Politics', *International Security* 18, no. 2 (1993): 44-79.

<sup>65</sup> Waltz, 'The Emerging Structure of International Politics', 76.

assumption of the Realist belief that the international world order is characterized by a state of anarchy, as there is no higher authority than the state with coercive power.<sup>66</sup>

However, the prediction of Waltz that NATO would not remain after the Cold War, did not hold. In 2000, Waltz wrote an article explaining the Realist point of view how the Alliance survived past the new millennium. According to Realists, once a winner emerges after a war, a new balance of power is formed.<sup>67</sup> Waltz argues that the unipolar world order dominated by the United States will slowly be replaced by a multipolar world order formed by the US, China and the European Union.<sup>68</sup> With regard to NATO's survival after the Cold War, Waltz explains that big organizations in general "have long lives."<sup>69</sup> Once a big organization's mission is achieved, it will find a new purpose in order to continue to exist. The same logic applies to NATO, according to Waltz. It has a big organizational structure with many bureaucrats who have a stake in its survival. "Once created, and the more so once it has become well established, an organization becomes hard to get rid of."<sup>70</sup> In the same article, Waltz provides another Realist argument explaining NATO's survival. The longevity of the Alliance shows how international institutes are established and maintained by strong states in order to serve their own interests.<sup>71</sup> NATO can, therefore, according to Realists, be seen as a tool to influence on European affairs.

### *Neoliberal Institutionalism*

The school of Neoliberal Institutionalism shares many core beliefs with Neorealists on the anarchical structure of the world. However, Neoliberals believe that institutions can overcome the uncertainty of anarchy and make cooperation between states possible.<sup>72</sup> Institutional IR scholars challenge the Realist notion of NATO. One of the founders of Neoliberal Institutionalism, Robert Keohane, states that Neorealism does not take institutions into account. He argues that Neorealists do not provide the complete picture of NATO if they leave

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<sup>66</sup> See Kenneth Neal Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, Reissued (Long Grove, Ill: Waveland Press, 2010), 66.

<sup>67</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, 'NATO Expansion: A Realist's View', *Contemporary Security Policy* 21, no. 2 (August 2000): 25.

<sup>68</sup> Waltz, 26.

<sup>69</sup> Waltz, 28.

<sup>70</sup> Waltz, 28.

<sup>71</sup> Waltz, 29.

<sup>72</sup> Anne-Marie Slaughter, 'International Relations, Principal Theories', in *Max Planck Encyclopedia of Public International Law* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 2, <http://opil.ouplaw.com/view/10.1093/law:epil/9780199231690/law-9780199231690-e722>.

out the fact that the Alliance is 'highly institutionalized.'<sup>73</sup> Keohane does not go that far in claiming that NATO is an autonomous organization. However, he argues that the Alliance has shown to be a complex, bureaucratic organization, that is adaptable to change.<sup>74</sup> IR scholar Celeste Wallander adds to the Institutionalist argument, that NATO continued to exist after the Soviet threat disappeared, because NATO as an institution, is "costly to create and less costly to maintain."<sup>75</sup> According to Wallander, NATO's ability to adapt itself to new circumstances was vital for its survival.<sup>76</sup>

### *Constructivism*

Both Neorealists and Institutionalist approaches to NATO are based on a rationalist framework.<sup>77</sup> Constructivist approaches within the field of International Relations see NATO as a security community of shared democratic values and common interests.<sup>78</sup> The Constructivist scholar Thomas Risse claims that the birth of NATO does not primarily originate as a reaction to the Soviet threat, but that it is founded on the aforementioned shared democratic values of the participating members.<sup>79</sup> The Constructivist approach may be beneficial to explain the rationale for the Alliance to broaden its scope through the establishment of the CCMS. In order for NATO to endure in times of détente, it needed to be emphasized that the organization encompassed more than just being a military organization. Environmentalism would form a useful subject to further develop the cooperation within NATO. With regard to NATO, there is not a big divide between the Constructivist and Neorealist approaches. By stating that an alliance, merely based on military cooperation, in the long run is not viable, is something both schools would agree on. However, the theories differ in opinion if this broadening of scope is desirable for an alliance. Constructivists would be in favor, whereas Neorealists see alliances mainly as temporary.

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<sup>73</sup> Robert O. Keohane, 'Alliances, Threats, and the Uses of Neorealism', ed. Stephen M. Walt, *International Security* 13, no. 1 (1988): 174.

<sup>74</sup> Keohane, 174.

<sup>75</sup> Celeste A. Wallander, 'Institutional Assets and Adaptability: NATO After the Cold War', *International Organization* 54, no. 4 (2000): 705.

<sup>76</sup> Wallander, 706.

<sup>77</sup> Schlag, 'Re-Constituting NATO', 3.

<sup>78</sup> See Emanuel Adler, 'The Spread of Security Communities: Communities of Practice, Self-Restraint, and NATO's Post-Cold War Transformation', *European Journal of International Relations* 14, no. 2 (1 June 2008): 199-201.

<sup>79</sup> Thomas Risse, *Cooperation among Democracies: The European Influence on U.S. Foreign Policy*, 2. ed, Princeton Studies in International History and Politics (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1997), 223; Helene Sjusren, 'On the Identity of NATO', *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 80, no. 4 (2004): 689.

### *The American Empire*

As mentioned earlier in this section, the Neorealist Waltz made the argument that NATO can be seen as an American tool to increase its influence over European states. The concept of the US Empire follows this line of thought. Existing literature on the US Empire is useful to explore the role of NATO. Can it be seen as merely a defensive instrument (as John Lewis Gaddis and other Cold War historians argue, see chapter 4: Literature Report), or is it a feature of the US Empire?

The historian Paul Kramer wrote an essay titled: “Power and Connection: Imperial Histories of the United States in the World.” He avoids using the term “empire” as a concept but as he finds the term “the imperial” more useful to study US history.<sup>80</sup> He prefers the latter term, as by referring to it as a degree of imperial behaviors forms a better a basis for analytical research rather than using the term ‘empire’ as that would lead to an unfruitful discussion if the US is or is not an empire. Kramer therefore argues that the term the imperial is “a useful concept in work that attempts to situate the United States in global history.”<sup>81</sup> The term imperial avoids the dichotomy of characterizing the US empire as a “formal” or “informal” empire. By using “the imperial” lens when researching the history of the CCMS, imperial manifestations and practices of the US can be discerned that may explain its behavior.

The historian Daniel Immerwahr, in contrast to Paul Kramer, perceives the United States as a formal empire. In his book *How to Hide an Empire: A History of the Greater United States*, he argues that the United States manifested itself as an empire. He points out that the US in the past ruled over colonies such as the Philippines and Puerto Rico. According to Immerwahr, the US continues to project its power over the world as an empire. The many military bases all across the globe safeguards their imperial assets. Immerwahr views NATO as a vehicle for military standardization. He argues in the book that the standardization process the US started after the end of the Second World War was a way for the US to increase its influence over the world.<sup>82</sup>

The historian Charles Maier contends in his book *Among Empires: American Ascendancy and Its Predecessors* that the US is not a new empire. He sees that the US empire shares the same

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<sup>80</sup> Paul A. Kramer, ‘Power and Connection: Imperial Histories of the United States in the World’, *The American Historical Review* 116, no. 5 (1 December 2011): 1348, <https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr.116.5.1348>.

<sup>81</sup> Paul A. Kramer, ‘Power and Connection’, 1348

<sup>82</sup> Daniel Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire: A Short History of the Greater United States* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2019), 586.

characteristics as other empires in the past (e.g. the Roman and Chinese empires). With regard to NATO, Charles Maier sees similarities with how former empires wielded power over its allies. Empires do not always expand as a result of conquest. States can according to Maier “join a federation to hold off a greater evil”.<sup>83</sup> He sees NATO in the same way: Western European nations sought to create a military partnership to deter the Soviet threat. According to Maier, the basis for NATO “rested on shared values and fears.”<sup>84</sup> Since the Western European states co-operated, the United States did not use force to assert its influence as it did with military operations in Guam, Angola and Cuba. Rather the US relied on rallying support in Europe “through shared security goals, economic support, cultural policies, and sometimes undercover subsidies.”<sup>85</sup>

### *Environmentalism*

A concept central to the topic of the CCMS is that of Environmentalism. According to the environmental historian John McNeill, Environmentalism can be linked to the Cold War.<sup>86</sup> Environmental awareness rose to prominence among the US public after the publication of Rachel Carson’s book *Silent Spring*, which describes how pesticides gravely damaged the environment and the public health. According to McNeill, this publication created a paradigmatic shift that showed the public how humans, instead of taking care of the environment, were the main ones responsible for its destruction.<sup>87</sup> According to the historian J. Brooks Flippen, author of the book *Nixon and the Environment*, the Nixon administration put the regulation and the projection of the environment on the agenda. Nixon’s efforts resulted in the signing of the National Environmental Protection Act in 1970 and multiple other initiatives. Flippen argues that while some leading figures in the Nixon administration were firm Environmentalists, to Nixon, the environment was a tool to gain support. He hoped that the popular theme of Environmentalism amongst the public would come to its aid at his reelection. Even if Environmentalism was cynically used by president Nixon to gain more influence over America’s European allies, it still shows how the environmental movement

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<sup>83</sup> Charles S. Maier, *Among Empires: American Ascendancy and Its Predecessors* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 2006), 35.

<sup>84</sup> Maier, 35.

<sup>85</sup> Maier, 35.

<sup>86</sup> See John Robert McNeill et al., *Environmental Histories of the Cold War* (Washington; Cambridge: German Historical Institute and Cambridge University Press, 2013).

<sup>87</sup> See J. R. McNeill, ‘Observations on the Nature and Culture of Environmental History’, *History and Theory* 42, no. 4 (December 2003): 5–43, <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1468-2303.2003.00255.x>.

impact reached the policymakers of the US. Therefore, Environmentalism is a useful concept in understanding the reasons for the establishment of the CCMS.

### **Structure**

The structure of this thesis is as follows:

Chapter 2: The historical context of NATO lays out the multiplicity of views historians and IR scholars have on the nature of the Alliance. Was NATO created as a tool for the United States to increase its influence on Europe or was the organization established because of the European desire for strong American military protection against the Soviet threat? This chapter analyses not only the military role of NATO but also the political function it played after its establishment. Moreover, this chapter provides an overview of the “third dimension” of NATO that encompasses scientific and technological cooperation between the members of the Alliance. This chapter relies mostly on secondary sources that describe the foundation process of NATO.

Chapter 3: The beginning years of the CCMS (1969-1975) explores the reasons why the CCMS was created and how it operated from 1969 to 1975. This chapter relies on both primary and secondary sources for information. As the literature report points out, the first years of the Committee have been researched by Evanthis Hatzivassiliou and Linda Risso.

Chapter 4: The CCMS between the years: 1975-1983, is the central part of the thesis. As of yet, this timespan has not thoroughly researched by scholars and therefore it is for this research proposal to soon to tell what will come out of the primary sources. Only that it is predicted by Hatzivassiliou that after 1975 the Committee functioned smoothly and Risso stating that at the end of the seventies concerns were raised that the CCMS suffered from a lack of attention by NATO. Based on internal documents from the US government it is assessed how the CCMS operated in the timeframe 1975-1983.

In the final chapter the research question is answered: *how did the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society develop between 1969-1983?*



## Chapter 2: The historical context of NATO

Because NATO has always been much more than a military alliance. It is a political alliance.

- NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, Berlin, November 7, 2019.<sup>88</sup>

The two main victors after the end of the Second World War, were the United States and the Soviet Union. The economic and ideological rivalry between the two countries resulted in the Cold War. Both superpowers felt increasingly threatened by each other and took defensive measures to protect their territories by cooperating with allied states. In the West, this led to the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949. To elucidate what the CCMS was, this chapter frames the Atlantic Alliance historically in order to understand its role. NATO's military and political roles are explored, as well as its lesser known scientific and technological "third dimension." In line with recent scholarship, the argument is made that NATO is part of the postwar American strategy to link Europe to the United States for both political and economic purposes. This in contrast to scholarship that emphasizes the Soviet military threat led to the emergence of NATO.

### **The beginning of the Cold War and the emergence of NATO**

As stated by the historians Stephen Ambrose and Douglas Brinkley: it is difficult to pinpoint the exact date when the Cold War started.<sup>89</sup> Some historians such as Walter LaFeber and Odd Arne Westad, argue that the end of the nineteenth century can be seen as the first starting point of the Cold War, when a rivalry was born between expanding Tsarist Russia and the US over influence in Asia.<sup>90</sup> According to Ambrose and Brinkley, the conflict finds its origins in the issue between the United States and the Soviet Union of dividing spheres of influence in Europe. The US did not accept the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe and wanted free elections to be held in those territories. The Soviet leader Josef Stalin had different plans in mind and wanted to make satellite states from multiple countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Stalin justified his actions by claiming that he needed these territories as a buffer to

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<sup>88</sup> 'NATO at 70 - The Bedrock of European and Transatlantic Security' - Speech by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the Körber Global Leaders Dialogue, Berlin', NATO, accessed 26 June 2020, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions\\_170606.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_170606.htm).

<sup>89</sup> Ambrose and Brinkley, *Rise to Globalism*, 52.

<sup>90</sup> LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-2006*; Westad, *The Cold War*, 13-14.

protect the Soviet Union against a possible future German invasion. The past has shown that Stalin's worries were not unjustified. However, Stalin's creation of satellite states was much to the dismay of the US.<sup>91</sup>

Two pivotal events in 1948 accelerated the Cold War. The first unfolded in Czechoslovakia, the only democratic state in Eastern Europe. After a successful Communist coup in February, the country came into Stalin's sphere of influence.<sup>92</sup> The second took place in June that year, when the Soviets blocked West Berlin.<sup>93</sup> These events led to a strong US response to counter Soviet influence in Europe. The belief arose in the West that a military partnership needed to be formed between the US and Western European states to limit the expansion of the Soviet Union. These developments would ultimately lead to the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949.<sup>94</sup>

### **The Treaty Organization**

With the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty on April 4, 1949, NATO was established, an intergovernmental military alliance between the US, Canada and Western European countries. In the treaty, the member states agreed to "unite their efforts for collective defense," as well as the promotion of political cooperation.<sup>95</sup> At its creation in 1949, NATO consisted of 12 member-states who pledged to come to each other's aid in the event of military aggression against one of the signatories, the renowned Article 5 of the Treaty.<sup>96</sup> The Alliance's membership grew to fifteen members, when Greece and Turkey joined NATO in 1952, and West Germany in 1955.

According to Article 9 of the Treaty, NATO's highest decision-making body is the North Atlantic Council (NAC). The Council is composed of representatives from the member-states and governs NATO. The NAC wields power to set up subsidiary bodies, including committees such as the Defense Planning Committee and the Committee on the Challenges of

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<sup>91</sup> Ambrose and Brinkley, *Rise to Globalism*, 54-56.

<sup>92</sup> Gaddis, *The Cold War*, 32-33.

<sup>93</sup> Gaddis, 33-34.

<sup>94</sup> See Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 39; Todd Sandler and Keith Hartley, *The Political Economy of NATO: Past, Present, and into the 21st Century* (Cambridge, U.K. ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 24.

<sup>95</sup> NATO, 'The North Atlantic Treaty' (Washington D.C., 4 April 1949).

<sup>96</sup> Initial negotiations started between the Brussel Treaty Powers (Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom), and the United States and Canada. Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Norway and Portugal later received an invitation to join the negotiations that would lead to the creation of NATO.

Modern Society.<sup>97</sup> Representatives from all the members meet at least once a week to discuss policy and for mutual consultation on various issues. Major policy decisions are usually made twice a year in a summit, at the level of ministers of foreign affairs and defense, and the level of heads of state.<sup>98</sup> Each member, has, according to Article 4 of the treaty, the right to request a meeting of the NAC when “the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened.”<sup>99</sup> What is vital to understand the workings of NATO, is the principle of unanimity and consensus in any of the decisions made by the NAC.<sup>100</sup> Unity, formed the basis of NATO’s strength as it consisted of sovereign states who joined the organization voluntarily. Therefore, safeguarding its unity was considered crucial for NATO.<sup>101</sup>

One of the most notable articles of the Treaty for NATO’s military component is Article 5. This article prescribes that: “An armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack on all of them.”<sup>102</sup> The signatories to the Treaty need to come to each other’s aid in the event of an attack on their territory. Article 5 implicated that Western Europe would come under the protection of the US’s nuclear umbrella, as the European members within NATO were the states closest to the military reach from the Soviets and had considerably less military strength than America.

In the first five years after its establishment, NATO was still in the process of shaping itself as a military organization. Although in 1949, a Military Committee consisting of the chiefs of staff from NATO members was created, it was not a centralized command, as subsidiary groups were charged for defense planning for different regions within the Alliance’s territory. In Western Europe, fears about their vulnerability in the event of a Soviet military attack arose. Moreover, Europeans grew reluctant about the prospect of the use of nuclear arms on their territories as the primary way for the US to protect them. On the other hand, in the US, domestic pressure and budget restraints caused American policymakers to be cautious to send US troops to Europe.<sup>103</sup>

When North Korea (backed by the Soviet Union and China), launched an attack in 1950 on South Korea (supported by the US), American policymakers became convinced of the

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<sup>97</sup> NATO, ‘The North Atlantic Treaty’; Sandler and Hartley, *The Political Economy of NATO*, 25.

<sup>98</sup> NATO, ‘North Atlantic Council’, 10 October 2017, [https://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/topics\\_49763.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/topics_49763.htm); Sandler and Hartley, *The Political Economy of NATO*, 25.

<sup>99</sup> NATO, ‘The North Atlantic Treaty’.

<sup>100</sup> NATO, ‘North Atlantic Council’.

<sup>101</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 20.

<sup>102</sup> NATO, ‘The North Atlantic Treaty’.

<sup>103</sup> Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 18-25.

necessity to send troops to Europe to deter the Soviets from initiating an attack on Europe. The fears of the European members were addressed when the US deployed in the 1950s, four US Army divisions to Western Europe. American boots on the ground in Europe made the North Atlantic Treaty “a viable defensive organization.”<sup>104</sup> According to the historian Timothy Sayle, NATO reached maturity in 1955 and became an institutionalized organization with an integrated military command.<sup>105</sup>

### **NATO’s political dimension**

The historian John Lewis Gaddis sees the formation of the Alliance as primarily a response from the US to counter Soviet expansion. However, other historians emphasize that the Soviet’s military threat to Europe was not the only consideration in the formation of the Treaty Alliance, but contend that it was a product of an American postwar strategy.<sup>106</sup> The military entanglement between Western Europe and the United States assured a “Pax Atlantica.”<sup>107</sup> As historian Geir Lundestad puts it, “NATO was the key link between the two sides of the Atlantic.”<sup>108</sup> According to Brinkley and Ambrose, the establishment of NATO would form the beginning of “an era of American military, political, and economic dominance over Europe.”<sup>109</sup>

In the same fashion, the literature on the “American Empire” points out the dominant role of the US after the Second World War, NATO, being a feature of the US Empire.<sup>110</sup> Empire or hegemony is a term used by scholars to describe the “preponderance of US power” after the Second World War.<sup>111</sup> In the postwar period, an “informal” American empire in Western Europe began to take shape.<sup>112</sup> The empire was informal in the sense that the US did not project military force to impose its political and economic preferences on the Western European countries. On the European continent, the majority of the elites and population

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<sup>104</sup> Leffler and Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, 86.

<sup>105</sup> Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 26.

<sup>106</sup> Gaddis, *The Cold War*, 33–34; Melvyn P. Leffler and David S. Painter, eds., *Origins of the Cold War: An International History*, 2nd ed, *Rewriting Histories* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 16.

<sup>107</sup> Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 2–3.

<sup>108</sup> Lundestad, ‘Empire by Invitation?’, 199.

<sup>109</sup> Ambrose and Brinkley, *Rise to Globalism*, 89.

<sup>110</sup> See e.g. Lundestad, ‘Empire by Invitation?’; Hopkins, *American Empire*; Maier, *Among Empires*.

<sup>111</sup> John Krige, *American Hegemony and the Postwar Reconstruction of Science in Europe*, *Transformations* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2006), 4.

<sup>112</sup> Krige, 4.

were receptive of the American involvement. Lundestad even asserts that Western European countries “invited” the US to play an active military and economic role on the continent.<sup>113</sup> The postwar strategy of the United States was to bind the industrial centers of Europe and Asia to them and prevent them from falling under Soviet influence.<sup>114</sup> US policymakers feared that the social turmoil as a result of poverty in Europe formed fertile ground for the Soviets to gain control through the rise of Communist parties in Europe. However, US policymakers did not expect the Soviet Union to launch a military invasion and to go to war.<sup>115</sup> The Marshall Plan in 1947 was part of this strategy to revitalize Europe’s economy and to link it to the US.<sup>116</sup> America’s aid to Europe was, therefore, not merely altruistic, but served the US’ political and economic purposes. Having access to European resources was considered vital for the US. American policymakers also planned to rebuild the economy of the western zones of Germany (the areas of Germany under American, British and French control). This initiative caused anxiety amongst British and French officials, who feared a militaristic German revival and wanted security guarantees from the US, which led to the formation of NATO. The Alliance, therefore, formed the military component of America’s postwar strategy.<sup>117</sup>

While the US was not eager to station troops in Europe, it was the price it had to pay for its political and economic goals. As Leffler reminds us: “The North Atlantic Treaty was the capstone of a grand strategy,” that would integrate West Germany “into a healthy Atlantic community led by the United States.”<sup>118</sup> With the establishment of NATO, the US would have a military presence in Europe. American troops on the ground would deter the Soviets, as well as prevent the resurgence of a militaristic Germany by having a check on its policy. Moreover, the Alliance would ensure the commitment from the US to Europe in the event of a potential isolationist turn in US politics.<sup>119</sup>

### **NATO’s third dimension**

Thus far, this chapter described the military and political dimensions of NATO. However, since the organization’s foundation, science and technology, the so-called “third dimension,” also

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<sup>113</sup> Lundestad, ‘Empire by Invitation?’, 263.

<sup>114</sup> Leffler and Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, 77.

<sup>115</sup> Leffler, ‘The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy, 1945-1952’, 18.

<sup>116</sup> Leffler and Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, 79.

<sup>117</sup> Hopkins, *American Empire*, 475.

<sup>118</sup> Leffler and Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, 81.

<sup>119</sup> Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 3.

played an important role. During the Cold War, it was considered vital by the members of the Alliance to keep their technological lead vis-à-vis the Soviet Union.<sup>120</sup> In the aftermath of the Second World War, the US already contributed towards the reconstruction of science in Western Europe through Marshall Aid. According to historian John Krige, these US efforts must be seen in the light of America's formation of empire, as support for European scientific practices also meant the promotion of US' political agenda.<sup>121</sup> Krige thereby alludes to the US imposing their will concerning environmental issues on to the European members.

Within NATO's various military authorities, joint scientific research was conducted in the fields directly linked to the military, such as aerospace developments and anti-submarine warfare. However, in order to close the scientific and technological gap between the US and Western Europe, the scope of joint scientific research and initiatives needed to be broadened to bolster the capabilities of the Alliance as a whole.<sup>122</sup> While talks about realizing this increased scientific cooperation commenced, in 1957 the Soviet Union sent its first Sputnik Satellites into space. These developments gravely upset American policymakers, as it appeared to them, that the Soviets were bridging the technological gap with the US. The so-called "Sputnik Shock," accelerated talks about closer scientific cooperation within the Alliance. The Atlantic Council swiftly approved the creation of the Science Committee in March 1958.<sup>123</sup>

The Science Committee aimed to strengthen NATO's third dimension.<sup>124</sup> The committee's main aim was to contribute towards the transfer of scientific and technological knowledge from the US to Europe.<sup>125</sup> The areas of focus from the Science Committee were in the fields most relevant to the military, such as oceanographic research (for detecting enemy submarines) and studies on how technological developments could change the future of warfare (such as electronic and environmental warfare).<sup>126</sup>

The cooperation within the Science Committee between the NATO members did not work smoothly. While in theory, all members were in favor of increased scientific cooperation, in practice, there was a lack of enthusiasm amongst the national governments to provide the projects with sufficient funding as they perceived the conducted studies to be unrealistic.

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<sup>120</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 507-8.

<sup>121</sup> See Krige, *American Hegemony and the Postwar Reconstruction of Science in Europe*.

<sup>122</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 508.

<sup>123</sup> Risso, 508.

<sup>124</sup> Risso, 507-8.

<sup>125</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 18.

<sup>126</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 18.

According to Linda Risso, national governments saw the Science Committee first and foremost as a way to attract funds for their own national research institutes. Moreover, the structure of the Science Committee was heavily bureaucratized, which hampered the progress of conducted project studies.<sup>127</sup>

NATO's third dimension would take a new turn with the establishment of the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS) in 1969. In contrast to the Science Committee, the CCMS focused on environmental issues, where scientific cooperation would be promoted outside the military realm and would be more practical and decentralized in nature than the Science Committee. However, as discussed in the next chapter, the CCMS had its own setbacks, hiccups, and criticism.

### **Conclusion**

The Soviet military threat to Europe only partly explains NATO's existence. What is crucial for understanding the nature of the Alliance, is that it was part of a broader American postwar strategy to link Europe to the US for its own political and economic agenda. Having access to Europe's resources was considered vital to the US. American policymakers feared that social turmoil on the Continent could lead to increased Soviet influence in Europe. The Marshall Aid to Europe formed the first step in America's strategy. US military commitment to Europe addressed British and French fears of Germany once more dominating Europe. With the creation of NATO in 1949, Western Europe became protected by the US' strong military presence on the Continent and its nuclear umbrella. The signatories of the North Atlantic Treaty declared to come to each other's aid in the event of an attack on their territory. While NATO's military and political dimensions are the most noticeable, the Alliance's scientific and technological "third dimension" is less known. Within NATO, scientific cooperation was stimulated and received a boost with the establishment of the Science Committee in 1958, which predominately focused on research relevant to NATO's military. The Alliance's third dimension took a new turn with the establishment of the CCMS in 1969. This Committee conducted scientific research on environmental issues outside the military realm.

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<sup>127</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 509-11.

### Chapter 3: The beginning years of the CCMS (1969-1975)

I believe we must build an Alliance strong enough to deter those who might threaten war, close enough to provide for continuous and far-reaching consultation, trusting enough to accept the diversity of views, realistic enough to deal with the world as it is, and flexible enough to explore new channels of constructive cooperation.

- Richard Nixon, *Address to the North Atlantic Council*, April 10, 1969<sup>128</sup>

When President Nixon addressed the North Atlantic Council on April 10, 1969, he proposed the idea to broaden the traditional scope of the Alliance by introducing the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS), NATO's Environmental Committee. The choice for launching an environmental committee within NATO was quite remarkable, as the Alliance is predominantly seen as a military structure. The Nixon administration put its weight behind the instalment of the Committee. However, there was many objections amongst the other members of the Alliance on how the Committee would function and revealed transatlantic tensions occurring at the time. This chapter analyzes how the CCMS overcame the initial skepticism from other members states and would perform smoothly within NATO's structure by 1975.

#### **The proposal for the CCMS**

In his speech, to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Alliance, President Nixon reflected on NATO's past accomplishments and referred to challenges laying ahead. According to him, NATO was politically divided, and the organization's popularity was declining as many people in the US, and Western Europe perceived it as "old-fashioned."<sup>129</sup> The Alliance needed to adapt to the conditions of a new era and collaboration between the members should be increased in new areas outside the traditional military sphere. A new social dimension needed to be formed within the Alliance. According to President Nixon, next to common defense and maintaining peace, NATO should also aspire "to deal with our concern for the quality of life in this last third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century."<sup>130</sup> He strongly urged for the creation of a "committee on the challenges of modern society". In this proposed Committee, the member-states would combine

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<sup>128</sup> 'Address by President Nixon to the North Atlantic Council, Washington, April 10, 1969.'

<sup>129</sup> 'Address by President, April 10, 1969.'

<sup>130</sup> 'Address by President Nixon to the North Atlantic Council, Washington, April 10, 1969.'



their experience and resources to explore ways how technology could be used “to enhance our environments, and not to destroy them.”<sup>131</sup> The fact that the term “challenges of modern society” was used over “environment”, shows that Nixon envisioned a comprehensive approach to all aspects connecting mankind’s with its surroundings.<sup>132</sup>

Despite America’s contributions to Western Europe, in the 1960s there was still a considerable scientific and technological gap between the US and Western Europe.<sup>133</sup> Nixon, however, stated in his address that US had also much to learn from the experiences from the European countries in how they dealt with contemporary challenges. He thereby mentioned, for instance, how they care for infant children in West Germany, how Italy handles the development of depressed areas, and the expertise of the Dutch, French and Norwegians in urban development.<sup>134</sup> Henry Kissinger, Nixon’s renowned National Security Advisor, mentions in his memoirs that he advised the President that the Alliance should not only be concerned with an external physical attack from the outside against one of their members. What was important as well according to Kissinger was “the ability of our countries to cope with the problems *within* our societies.”<sup>135</sup> In his view, all modern nations shared the same problems of environmental degradation and improving mobility which could have adverse effects on the quality of life of the industrialized countries.<sup>136</sup> With the proposed Committee, President Nixon hoped to address several issues that the North Atlantic Treaty faced.

#### *The Environmental context*

Although President Nixon is not widely known as a president committed to the environment, his administration played an essential role in creating a legislative framework to protect the environment. Moreover, Nixon was one of the first presidents to raise the importance of protecting the environment on an international level.<sup>137</sup> Notable examples of environmental measures taken by the Nixon administration include the signing of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1970, a central

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<sup>131</sup> ‘Address by President Nixon to the North Atlantic Council, Washington, April 10, 1969.’

<sup>132</sup> J. D. Hamblin, ‘Environmentalism for the Atlantic Alliance: NATO’s Experiment with the “Challenges of Modern Society”’, *Environmental History* 15, no. 1 (1 January 2010): 56, <https://doi.org/10.1093/envhis/emq008>.

<sup>133</sup> Risso, ‘NATO and the Environment’, 505.

<sup>134</sup> ‘Address by President Nixon to the North Atlantic Council, Washington, April 10, 1969.’

<sup>135</sup> Henry Kissinger, *The White House Years* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979), 463.

<sup>136</sup> Kissinger, 463.

<sup>137</sup> Turchetti, *Greening the Alliance*, 78.

authority dedicated to the protection of the environment.<sup>138</sup> Moreover, during the Nixon administration, numerous laws were passed to protect the quality of air, water, and coastal areas, as well as endangered species. Several authors argued that Nixon's dedication to preserving the environment could best be explained as a way to boost his public support.<sup>139</sup>

According to the historian J. Brooks Flippen, during his campaign, Nixon did not bring up the environmental theme as it was not an issue of significant importance during the elections of 1968.<sup>140</sup> However, just a few days after his inauguration in January 1969, Environmentalism came to the center of America's attention when vast amounts of crude oil spilt from an offshore drilling site into the sea and reached the beaches of Santa Barbara. This disaster led to great public outrage. As a result, Environmentalism became a topic that needed to be taken into account by the Nixon administration.<sup>141</sup>

The roots of ecological consciousness in the US, however, can be traced back to the beginning of the 1960s. In her famous bestseller, *Silent Spring*, published in 1962, the marine biologist Rachel Carson wrote on the widespread use of pesticides and what its impact was on the environment and the health of people.<sup>142</sup> The book became a "landmark" for the coming about of the environmental movement in the US, as it next to the use of pesticides, raised other ecological concerns on how pollution affected the quality of the water, air and soil.<sup>143</sup> Carson's publication amplified a broader environmental awareness on how technological advancements, also had its downsides, as it could threaten the society's quality of life.<sup>144</sup>

Due to the Santa Barbara oil spill, Environmentalism became a topic of political significance. Nixon soon realized that Democrats used his administration's handling of the oil spill as a way to achieve political gains.<sup>145</sup> Moreover, the environmental movement, strengthened by the recent oil spill, was more active and persistent than ever before. No longer could the new administration ignore the dangers to the environment and needed to take

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<sup>138</sup> See for more on the Nixon's administration and the environment: J. Brooks Flippen, *Nixon and the Environment* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2012).

<sup>139</sup> Stephen Macekura, 'The Limits of the Global Community: The Nixon Administration and Global Environmental Politics', *Cold War History* 11, no. 4 (November 2011): 493, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14682745.2010.498821>; J. Brooks Flippen, 'Richard Nixon, Russell Train, and the Birth of Modern American Environmental Diplomacy', *Diplomatic History* 32, no. 4 (September 2008): 614.

<sup>140</sup> Flippen, *Nixon and the Environment*, 19.

<sup>141</sup> Flippen, 25-26.

<sup>142</sup> Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, 40th anniversary ed., 1st Mariner Books ed (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002).

<sup>143</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 8.

<sup>144</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 9.

<sup>145</sup> Flippen, *Nixon and the Environment*, 24-26.

action. Subsequently, various meetings were held in the White House on creating new environmental policy. Noticeable environmentalists participated in these meetings, such as the Democratic Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan - who was an informal advisor of Nixon - and the conservationist Russel Train (both would play important roles in the establishment of the CCMS). The Nixon administration decided during the meeting to follow an “activist agenda” concerning the environment. Nixon believed that such a course would take the wind out of the sails of his political opponents. As a result of the Santa Barbara oil spill, the Nixon administration made a new turn that would lead to the creation of a large number of environmental policy measures.<sup>146</sup>

For governments, addressing environmental issues implicated more than merely taking domestic action. The pollution of the air and water were issues transcending the borders of states and required international efforts. Several institutions already initiated programs in the 1960s concerning the environment and improving the quality of life within society. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) established in 1961, started multiple programs researching the effects of air and water pollution on society. In 1966, the OECD concluded that these issues, alongside with road safety, could severely impact the economy.<sup>147</sup> The Council of Europe (CoE) and the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), later the European Economic Community (EEC), also started investigations on different sorts of air pollution.

While multiple bodies in the 1960s were looking into different kinds of environmental problems, it did not resemble a comprehensive response to the ecological challenges to society yet. As Hatzivassiliou points out, the efforts of these different bodies remained fragmented and uncoordinated. As the world’s most developed nation, the US stepped in when President Nixon proposed his idea of the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society to the North Atlantic Council. Through the CCMS, the US took the initiative for an all-embracing attempt to address environmental issues.<sup>148</sup> During his speech, Nixon emphasized the need for a Committee within NATO to deal with environmental problems and the diminishing quality of life the member-states faced as a result of industrialization. The Club of Rome’s report *Limits to*

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<sup>146</sup> Flippen, *Nixon and the Environment*, 28.

<sup>147</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 13.

<sup>148</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 13.

*Growth* published in 1972 voiced similar concerns on how modernization and the rapid increase of the population would lead to famine and damage to the environment.<sup>149</sup>

However, scholarship on the CCMS points out that Nixon aimed to use the Committee mainly as a response to geopolitical challenges the US faced.<sup>150</sup> The following paragraphs elaborate on the multiple themes that Nixon had in the back of his mind when he proposed launching the CCMS.

#### *NATO's waning popularity*

The 1960s witnessed increased domestic unrest amongst the public in the US and Europe over civil rights, the war in Vietnam and the pollution of the environment. The large-scale protests questioned the legitimacy of the state itself and various political institutions. Policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic worried that the demonstrations could destabilize their society.<sup>151</sup> As laid out in the previous paragraph, Nixon, saw Environmentalism predominantly as a means to increase political support for his administration. Furthermore, Nixon came to realize that the environmental theme could also be used for enhancing public support for political institutions such as NATO. In his April speech to the NAC, Nixon alluded to the Alliance's decreased popularity among the public when he referred to NATO as being perceived as "anachronistic".<sup>152</sup>

Especially amongst the younger generations, NATO became criticized, as it symbolized the Cold War and the nuclear arms race connected to it, which posed a threat to human lives and the environment.<sup>153</sup> According to historian Linda Risso, the Alliance needed to show its commitment to youth concerns like the environment, to gain their support.<sup>154</sup> Historian Timothy Sayle even goes that far in stating that the greatest threat to NATO during Nixon's administration was not the friction between its members "but that the citizens of NATO states would simply reject the necessity of an alliance."<sup>155</sup>

Addressing the concerns of younger generations and revitalizing their support for the Alliance is also part of the explanation of why NATO was chosen as a vehicle for protecting the

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<sup>149</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 10.

<sup>150</sup> See Hatzivassiliou, 15; Macekura, 'The Limits of the Global Community', 493; Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 510-14; Hamblin, 'Environmentalism for the Atlantic Alliance', 1 January 2010, 58.

<sup>151</sup> Macekura, 'The Limits of the Global Community', 494.

<sup>152</sup> 'Address by President Nixon to the North Atlantic Council, Washington, April 10, 1969.'

<sup>153</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 506.

<sup>154</sup> Risso, 507.

<sup>155</sup> Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 167.

environment. At first glance, the topic of environmental protection seems like a peculiar choice to be placed inside NATO, an organization commonly regarded as merely a military structure. The Nixon administration hoped by connecting Environmentalism to NATO, it would give the organization a popularity boost.

#### *Criticism from the inside*

Next to NATO being criticized among the public, at the end of the 1960s, the organization faced divisions in its ranks. Disagreements from the European members concerning America's role in the Vietnam War led to rising transatlantic tensions. Moreover, in 1966, the Alliance faced one of its greatest crises when France, which became under President Charles de Gaulle, more and more critical of the US, withdrew from NATO's integrated military command structure.<sup>156</sup> This is a recurring trend in the history of the Alliance. Fragmentation between its members regularly occurred when the Cold War tensions were at a low point. Likewise, in times of crisis in East-West relations, the member-states tended to find more common ground in their policy.<sup>157</sup>

France's departure brought about the need for a reform of the Alliance. The Belgian Foreign Minister Pierre Harmel in 1967 advocated in his "Report of the Council on the Future Tasks of the Alliance" that NATO needed to adapt to the change in the Cold War with the ongoing prospect of détente in the Cold War.<sup>158</sup> Policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic feared that with the thaw in the Cold War at the end of the 1960s, the Alliance's reason to exist would become increasingly questioned among the public. Moreover, one of NATO's original objectives of keeping Germany in check was no longer an issue of concern, as West Germany has been a member-state since 1955.

However, both European and American policymakers were aware that NATO remained necessary for the defense against potential Soviet military or political pressure. If politicians could no longer explain the added value of the defensive expenses to NATO, its deterrent effect would be severely diminished.<sup>159</sup> The findings of the so-called Harmel Report were heavily debated amongst the member-states but were in the end accepted.<sup>160</sup> The Report stressed that

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<sup>156</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 18; Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 511.

<sup>157</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 516.

<sup>158</sup> Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 148.

<sup>159</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 512.

<sup>160</sup> Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 148.

NATO in times of détente and with the upcoming negotiations with the Soviets, the organization needed to adapt to the tasks of both promoting détente through talks with the Soviets as well as continuing defensive spending to maintain the military balance *vis-à-vis* the Soviets.<sup>161</sup>

Moreover, the Harmel Report mentioned that to justify NATO's defensive expenses, the member-states needed to expand their political and scientific cooperation to appeal to a broader audience. Détente could be used by the public as an argument why NATO defense spending needed to be cut. The proposal for launching the CCMS by President Nixon in 1969 was part of this effort to increase the cooperation between the member-states in new areas and simultaneously provide the Alliance with a new sense of purpose during the period of détente.<sup>162</sup> As Nixon declared in his address to the NAC: "We must forge new bonds to maintain our unity."<sup>163</sup> Scientific collaboration between the member-states was already part of the Alliance's repertoire to avoid "thorny questions" and to strengthen the cohesion within NATO.<sup>164</sup> Nixon hoped that scientific cooperation with the neutral theme of the environment would even further incite the member-states to participate. As the next paragraph shows, this would prove to be far from the truth.

### **Nixon's coup and European objections**

Before Nixon announced in his speech to the NAC his plans for broadening the Alliance and setting up a new Committee (the CCMS), he already gave a glimpse of his plans in prior NATO meetings. In February 1969, during his first presidential visit to Europe, Nixon mentioned during a NAC meeting that the Alliance needed to rethink its role since tensions with the Soviet Union were cooling down. Contemporary problems to the environment, such as air pollution and the quality of living in urbanized areas, also needed to become a focus area for transatlantic cooperation.<sup>165</sup> However, Nixon made no concrete proposals during the February meeting, and the majority of the meeting focused on security issues rather than broadening NATO's endeavors. A month later, during a NATO Permanent Representatives meeting, the US signaled again at new ways between the allies to cooperate. The US representative Harlan

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<sup>161</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 18.

<sup>162</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 30.

<sup>163</sup> 'Address by President Nixon to the North Atlantic Council, Washington, April 10, 1969.'

<sup>164</sup> Turchetti, *Greening the Alliance*, 12.

<sup>165</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 30.

Cleveland spoke about how this new cooperation would entail “the social impacts as well as technical issues,” and that it should be a topic that needed to be discussed during NATO’s ministerial meeting in April.<sup>166</sup>

The reactions from the other members to the new course the US was hinting at in the February meeting were varied. Some member-states were initially sympathetic to America’s efforts as they could temper domestic unrest over contributions to NATO. At the time, other members, such as the British, regarded as staunch American allies, were reserved.<sup>167</sup> However, after the NATO meeting in March, most member-states raised several objections to America’s proposals. Critical voices pointed at possible duplication of environmental work being done by other international organizations, such as the UN. Another point of criticism was that the fields of environmental and social studies were no themes to belong in NATO and should instead be placed within a more suitable organization, such as the economic organization, the OECD.<sup>168</sup> Furthermore, the establishment of the CCMS would put more workload on the internal administration of the European member-states, whose scientific experts were already stretched thin as they were also needed at other international organizations, such as the UN and OECD.<sup>169</sup>

The objections from the European members must be seen in the light of their fear from America abandoning their military commitment to Europe. Although President Nixon acknowledged the importance of the Alliance, the public opinion and the American Congress could pressure him to commit less military and economic support to Europe’s defense.<sup>170</sup> The European members could interpret the new direction president proposed for the Alliance in new fields of cooperation as a way for the US to decrease their military commitment to their defense.<sup>171</sup> This new course of the US seemingly wanted to take sparked anxiety among the British who refused the word “environment” to be included in the draft communique for the April NATO ministerial meeting in Washington. Also, other European members reacted cautiously to America’s proposals. In the end, the communique only made some general

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<sup>166</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 32.

<sup>167</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 30.

<sup>168</sup> Risso, ‘NATO and the Environment’, 518.

<sup>169</sup> Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, ‘Nixon’s Coup: Establishing the NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-70’, *The International History Review* 38, no. 1 (January 2016): 88.

<sup>170</sup> Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 173.

<sup>171</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 32.

mentions of the environment, and the US did not bring any concrete proposals about setting up a committee to the table.<sup>172</sup>

Therefore, the European members were unpleasantly surprised when on 10 April 1969, President Nixon proposed his idea of setting up a committee dedicated to the environment and on social issues. Hatzivassiliou referred to Nixon's speech, where he proposed the CCMS as a magnificent coup.<sup>173</sup> With Nixon expressing his idea personally in front of the public, the ministers from other member-states attending the following meeting could not directly oppose Nixon and had to follow along, albeit reluctantly. Kissinger wrote in his memoirs about the unenthusiastic support from their allies to Nixon's proposal of the CCMS. He complained about Europe being "ambivalent about major American initiatives," while the Nixon administration at the same time had to deal with a growing domestic backlash on US military commitments to Europe.<sup>174</sup>

However, European worries that America's goal of adding a new social/environmental dimension to the Alliance was a sign of diminishing US military commitment to their defense was not their only concern with Nixon's speech. As mentioned in chapter 2 of this thesis, a vital part of understanding the dynamics of NATO is that its highest decision-making, the NAC, works based on the consensus of its members. In Nixon's April speech, the president, planned the CCMS to fall under the deputy foreign ministers' meetings rather than under the NAC. This Council guaranteed each member's sovereignty with their decision-making. Nixon's line in his speech, "we must devise better means of harmonizing our policies," worried European members that the US planned to override the unanimous based workings of NATO.<sup>175</sup>

Because the US was by far the most powerful member of the Alliance, according to Hatzivassiliou, America needed to act cautiously and with self-restraint, to not spark the weaker European members' fear of US imposition.<sup>176</sup> A prominent member of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), even went so far in calling the US' proposal to change the dynamic of NATO as "empire building."<sup>177</sup> To European members it felt that Nixon's

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<sup>172</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 33.

<sup>173</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society*, 34.

<sup>174</sup> Kissinger, *The White House Years*, 463.

<sup>175</sup> See 'Address by President Nixon to the North Atlantic Council, Washington, April 10, 1969.' and Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 35.

<sup>176</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 20.

<sup>177</sup> As quoted by Hatzivassiliou, 36.



surprising proposal in his April address was conducted without properly consulting them beforehand.<sup>178</sup>

### **Towards setting up the CCMS**

The first step for the US to get the CCMS installed was to obtain “an early agreement in principle” from the other member-states to establish the Committee.<sup>179</sup> Although most European members objected to NATO’s new environmental initiative, it was out of the question to directly undermine Nixon’s proposal for the CCMS, as this would lead to a crisis within the Alliance.<sup>180</sup> Their main approach would be to appear receptive to the US proposal but to stretch the negotiations while hoping that eventually, nothing tangible would come out of it.<sup>181</sup> This hope proved to be futile as the US eagerly pushed forward towards a quick installment of the Committee in the autumn of 1969. An exploratory committee needed to be formed during the first stage, which included “high caliber names” to discuss topics suitable for the CCMS.<sup>182</sup> The exploratory committee would present their findings to the Deputy Foreign Ministers. They could accept or adjust the preliminary plans and had the last say to decide setting up the CCMS.<sup>183</sup> Nixon appointed the Democrat and environmentalist Daniel Patrick Moynihan to lead a large to Brussels with the purpose of impressing the other Allied members to follow along with the new US proposal to bring Environmentalism to NATO.<sup>184</sup>

The critical European members underestimated America’s persistence to the project. To get the other member-states to follow along, the US instructed their Ambassador’s in the European countries to put diplomatic pressure on them to get them to support the initiative.<sup>185</sup> In the following month’s the European members came to realize the US’ commitment to the project and that their only option was to some degree modify the procedure towards setting up the CCMS. Once again, the British in internal documents complained about the US decision to bypass the NAC as “empire building.”<sup>186</sup> Also, other member-states objected and tried to tone down the US proposal.

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<sup>178</sup> Risso, ‘NATO and the Environment’, 518.

<sup>179</sup> ‘Doc 16, Memorandum From the Under Secretary of State (Richardson) to President Nixon, Washington, May 6, 1969.’, Foreign Relations of the United States 1969–1976 Volume XLI Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972.

<sup>180</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 37.

<sup>181</sup> Risso, ‘NATO and the Environment’, 520.

<sup>182</sup> ‘Doc 16, Memorandum From the Under Secretary of State (Richardson) to President Nixon,

<sup>183</sup> ‘Doc 16, Memorandum From the Under Secretary of State (Richardson) to President Nixon; Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 37.

<sup>184</sup> Turchetti, *Greening the Alliance*. Chapter 4, 24.

<sup>185</sup> ‘Doc 16, Memorandum From the Under Secretary of State (Richardson) to President Nixon.’

<sup>186</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 39.

NATO's Secretary General Manlio Brosio managed after multiple consultations to find a compromise between the US and European wishes. The NAC reinforced with high-level experts would be in control of the process of setting up the Committee. Moreover, the planned role of the CCMS was toned down. It would become a platform to make recommendations to the NAC on a variety of pilot studies. The outcomes of the pilot studies would be handed out to governments within and also outside NATO. This remarkable last feature underlines the US motive to use the Environment as a neutral theme to stimulate East-West relations.<sup>187</sup> When the negotiations concluded, some of the European reluctance towards the project was cleared. However, some different member-states had in varying degrees still reservations about the project and the degree they had to participate in it.<sup>188</sup> What is telling for the tensions at the time is that even the wording of the term "recommendations" as the conclusion of the pilot studies was rejected by Britain and Canada. These countries feared this phrasing would lead to US imposition and proposed the term "suggestions." Typically for NATO negotiations, the decision was made to refer to it as "suggestions or recommendations."<sup>189</sup>

### **From doubt to acceptance**

With significant press coverage, the CCMS held its first meeting in Brussels on December 8, 1969.<sup>190</sup> The dedicated media attention served one of the Committee's goals to convince the public of the added value of NATO during times of détente in the Cold War and to improve its public image by showing its dedication to environmental protection.

While the American documents concerning the first meeting depict a fruitful and positive atmosphere, British reports provide a different viewpoint. While the American's and the German's were well-prepared in presenting their ideas, the British were underrepresented and ill-prepared. Britain, who took during the setting up stage of the CCMS the lead in voicing the concerns of the member-states towards the US initiative, realized, that now that the Committee was established, the other member-states "started to take the whole question more seriously."<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975* 46-48.

<sup>188</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 520.

<sup>189</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 59.

<sup>190</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 50.

<sup>191</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 53.

During the next meeting of the CCMS on February 16, 1970, the procedures of the Committee finally took shape. As a result of the critic of the European members on the US proposal during the negotiations of setting up the Committee, the CCMS would have a limited mandate and would operate without a budget and a full-time staff.<sup>192</sup> To avoid duplication of research being conducted by other (international) organizations, the CCMS would build on research already underway in the member-states countries by pooling together the expertise and technology within the Alliance to arrive at conclusions and recommendations for further action.<sup>193</sup>

#### *How did the CCMS work?*

According to NATO's Secretary General Luns, the CCMS works in a unique way: "one is struck above all by the CCMS recourse to the mechanism of the pilot country, which does not have a counterpart to my knowledge in any other international organization, whether concerned with the environment or not."<sup>194</sup>

Three fundamental concepts would characterize how the CCMS worked. First is the pilot country concept. One country of the Alliance leads a project, usually with other countries participating as co-pilots to help the study with funds, or by providing their technical or scientific expertise. Second, the pilot studies are directed for the short-term, conclusions needed to be reached within a few years to give recommendations for the next steps to take for governments regarding policy measures to improve the quality of life for their citizens. Third, is the principle that all the CCMS activities would be open to observers from non-member states, even the countries belonging to the Warsaw Pact and other international organizations.<sup>195</sup> This last principle played into Nixon's goal for the CCMS to play a role in improving East-West relations. By making the results of the pilot studies openly available to all parties, other institutions and organizations could conduct follow-up research in the respective area's and therefore lead to a broader implementation of the findings.<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 513.

<sup>193</sup> NATO, *Aspects of NATO. The Challenges of Modern Society*. (Brussels: Information Service NATO, n.d.), 4.

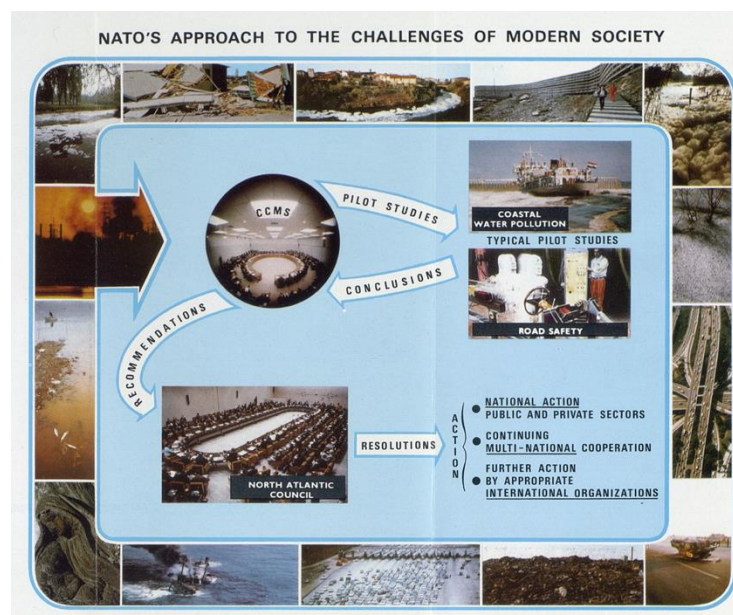
<sup>194</sup> As quoted in NATO, 'Man's Environment and the Atlantic Alliance', NATO Archives Online, 1974, [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2016\\_08/20160830\\_160830-sps-ccms-concepts-methods.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2016_08/20160830_160830-sps-ccms-concepts-methods.pdf).

<sup>195</sup> NATO, *Aspects of NATO. The Challenges of Modern Society*., 5-6.

<sup>196</sup> NATO, 5-6.

In the final agreement signed by the members of NATO, the CCMS would hold two times a year a plenary meeting. The chairman of the CCMS (NATO's Secretary General) or member-states could request additional meetings if deemed necessary. If a country decides to lead a pilot study, its proposal first needs approval by the NAC. The pilot country then would be responsible for the progress of the research and by reporting their progress. Because the CCMS secretariat was limited, for setting up contacts and drafting reports the pilot-countries could use the bureaucracy of NATO's International Staff.<sup>197</sup>

When a pilot study concluded, it would be discussed during the CCMS plenary meeting. In the meeting, recommendations for further action or follow-up research would be formulated and after that be submitted to the NAC for final approval. The NAC decided what to do with the recommendations: to provide action points to the public and private sector, to continue multi-national cooperation in the field of study, or to pass the research on to other international organizations.<sup>198</sup> The illustration below provides a schematic overview on how the CCMS worked.



Taken from the pamphlet *Man's Environment and the Atlantic Alliance* distributed by NATO's Information Service in 1974.<sup>199</sup>

### *The politics behind the CCMS*

<sup>197</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 60.

<sup>198</sup> NATO, 'Man's Environment and the Atlantic Alliance'; Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 60.

<sup>199</sup> NATO, 'Man's Environment and the Atlantic Alliance'.

In the spring of 1971, the CCMS started a re-evolution of its workings after NATO's Secretary General Brosio received complaints from the other member-states on how the Committee functioned. The Germans participated in the pilot studies because of pressure applied by the US and thought that they were doing work already done by other organizations. The British stated that they did not like the CCMS because it was a project of "White House empire builders."<sup>200</sup> During a private meeting, Danish, Dutch and Norwegian NATO delegates agreed that themselves and many others were unenthusiastic about the Committee.<sup>201</sup> Moreover, there was criticism on the CCMS's lack of progress on some of its research, the uncoordinated way the research was followed-up, the lack of publicity, and that the countries contributing towards the pilot studies received insufficient support from NATO's International Secretariat.<sup>202</sup>

Secretary General Brosio stressed that the CCMS deliberately kept their bureaucracy small as that would lead to higher costs and become more inefficient. His solution to address the new concerns from some of the member-states was instead of expanding the CCMS's secretariat, to have more ad-hoc meetings before the CCMS's plenary sessions. Moreover, the follow-up process of the pilot studies would be improved, and an officer would be appointed responsible for the CCMS's publicity. The NAC approved the suggestions of Brosio.<sup>203</sup>

The US was the driving force behind the CCMS in the years 1970 and 1971 and heavily funded the Committee's projects. While the US officials were enthusiastic about the CCMS, they continuously needed to put effort into ensuring the commitment from the other member-states.<sup>204</sup> However, even after the suggestions from Brosio were implemented, the British remained skeptical about the CCMS. Up until 1972, the British would stay the staunchest critic of the CCMS.<sup>205</sup> While reluctant to the Committee during its establishment, West Germany became next to the US, one of the most active participants of the CCMS. The French were at the beginning ambivalent towards the CCMS. Their reluctance reflected the tensions which followed after they departed NATO's integrated military command in 1966. However, due to fruitful cooperation with the US in the pilot studies, their position towards the Committee became more favorable.<sup>206</sup> The attitude of the rest of the member-states varied.

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<sup>200</sup> Hamblin, 'Environmentalism for the Atlantic Alliance', 1 January 2010, 59.

<sup>201</sup> Hamblin, 59.

<sup>202</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 63-64.

<sup>203</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 64.

<sup>204</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 69.

<sup>205</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 73.

<sup>206</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 75-76.

Still, in general they disliked the pressure applied by the US. Especially the smaller members felt they were pressured to participate in research while they lacked the resources and their experts were stretched thin.<sup>207</sup>

The reluctance of the European members to the CCMS became to change by the beginning of 1972. Many member-states by then agreed that the pilot studies brought valuable results and developed a more positive attitude towards the Committee. Moreover, their participation in the pilot studies increased.<sup>208</sup> By 1972 also the role of the US evolved as they no longer needed to press their allies for cooperating in the Committee that began to work more smoothly. The US did not cease their commitment to the CCMS, but some indications appeared that high-level US officials doubted the CCMS's effectiveness.<sup>209</sup>

By the year 1973, even Britain, the country who had the most objections to Committee, fully accepted the CCMS and stated it was a forum where environmental matters could be discussed without political considerations. Moreover, in that year, nearly all of the CCMS reports were quickly approved by the NAC meeting. The almost automatic approval of these reports indicates according to Hatzivassiliou that the Committee was working smoothly.<sup>210</sup> Only the Dutch delegation remained critical that new proposals could duplicate research conducted by the OECD. This criticism could stem from the critical attitude towards NATO in general by the Dutch left-wing government that came to power in 1973.<sup>211</sup>

#### *The pilot studies (1969-1975)*

The first proposals for pilot studies were both technical and social in nature such as the British research on work satisfaction in a technological era. In the early years of the Committee's existence, some of the studies caused additional tensions between the member-states as they could bear political and economic consequences. By 1975 a new balance was reached, and the tensions regarding the content of the pilot studies were resolved, and the NAC approved a new wave of studies.<sup>212</sup>

From the first wave of seven pilot studies launched in 1969, the US was the pilot nation of three of them. The survey on Air pollution piloted the US and with West Germany and

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<sup>207</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 528.

<sup>208</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 77.

<sup>209</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 70.

<sup>210</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 80.

<sup>211</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 80-81.

<sup>212</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 119.

Turkey as co-pilots became successful in formulating recommendations on how to improve the air quality in polluted cities. The findings were approved in 1971 and its success interested other member-states in becoming involved as well.<sup>213</sup> However, one aspect of the pilot studies concerning establishing legislation on cleaner automobile engines caused the British to fear that this would lead to the US imposition. The British tried in vain to oppose the new standards as they feared this would impact their car exports to the US due to stricter regulations.<sup>214</sup>

The same attempts by the British to protect their car manufacturers appeared in the road safety pilot study.<sup>215</sup> The road safety study reveals how the US was more forward-looking than the Europeans concerning to safety standards from cars. Thereby, they even went against the wished of their domestic car manufacturers. Finally, after negotiating back and forth between the European members and the US, in 1973, recommendations were approved by the NAC, which would lead to the implementation of legislation concerning seat belts and airbags.<sup>216</sup>

The first wave of pilot studies showed a high level of success amongst the technical research. The social studies, however, did not produce significant results. Therefore, when in 1972, the second wave of pilot studies started, they were more technical in nature. The change of perception amongst many member-states to the CCMS was reflected in the fact that they began to initiate more pilot studies.<sup>217</sup> As a result of the oil crisis in 1973, more emphasis within the CCMS was placed on energy projects and several pilot studies regarding alternative sources of energy, such as geothermal energy, started. Although the energy crisis gave an impetus to research within the CCMS on energy, it also caused the slow-down of implementing new environmental standards.<sup>218</sup>

According to Hatzivassiliou, the year 1975 was a “watershed” moment for the CCMS’s pilot studies.<sup>219</sup> The first projects were completed, and new ones were underway. A balance point regarding the content of the studies was found and the members of the Alliance were fully participating in it. Also, Risso states that the perception of the other member-states

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<sup>213</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 126.

<sup>214</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society*, 126–27.

<sup>215</sup> Risso, ‘NATO and the Environment’, 528.

<sup>216</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 140.

<sup>217</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 145–46.

<sup>218</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 152.

<sup>219</sup> Hatzivassiliou, 157.

changed as they learned they benefitted from the scientific and technological transfer by cooperating in the pilot studies with the US.<sup>220</sup>

However, still, some critical notes on the CCMS appeared, even from the US representative to the CCMS Russel Train. He argues in a paper written in 1974 that the concept of the CCMS's pilot studies permitted the Committee to be flexible, he pointed to several of its weaknesses. Thereby he mentions the tendency of the European members to believe NATO was not the appropriate forum for environmental research and therefore were not as active in the Committee as the US. Also, the fact that industrialized non-NATO members such as Sweden and Japan could not fully participate within the CCMS due to political concerns from those countries was a sign of the weakness of the Committee.<sup>221</sup>

The scholar Patrick Kyba wrote about the workings of the CCMS and voiced many critical points. According to Kyba, the CCMS's environmental goals came second to their aims of creating allied unity. Moreover, due to the small secretariat from the CCMS and the fact that they conducted just two plenary meetings a year, and the working of consensus inside the NAC resulted in slow overall progress.<sup>222</sup> However, the CCMS's "saving grace" would be according to him its successful pilot studies which contributed towards the Committee's endurance.<sup>223</sup> According to Risso, the CCMS did prove valuable in raising awareness of new problem areas. They contributed to the debate that led to the implementation of several policy measures by national governments. However, many of the Committee's recommendations "remained on paper" and became primarily a group of "experts talking to experts."<sup>224</sup> Historian Simone Turchetti agrees with this notion and writes that many of the proposals made by the CCMS "never saw the light of the day."<sup>225</sup>

A valid point of concern voiced by Kyba, which the CCMS never looked into, was addressing the pollution generated by NATO's military projects. According to Kyba, minimizing the pollution caused by NATO's military would be a focus area better suited for the CCMS to avoid duplication especially as other international bodies concerning the environment were established such as the United Nations Environmental Programme

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<sup>220</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 531.

<sup>221</sup> Russel E. Train, 'A New Approach to International Environmental Cooperation: The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society', *University of Kansas Law Review* 22, no. 2 (Winter 1974): 189.

<sup>222</sup> Patrick Kyba, 'Environmental Co-Operation to Meet Political Objectives', *International Perspectives*, July 1977, 13-14.

<sup>223</sup> Kyba, 14.

<sup>224</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 533-34.

<sup>225</sup> Turchetti, *Greening the Alliance*. Chapter 5: 16/52.



(UNEP).<sup>226</sup> According to Risso, the CCMS became eventually sidelined by the UNEP as it encompassed a larger number of countries to address environmental issues on a global scale.<sup>227</sup> The CCMS refused to be part of the UN conference that led to the UNEP because they feared the role of Eastern Bloc countries and nonaligned developing countries would play in addressing environmental problems.<sup>228</sup> The wish from Nixon for the CCMS to play a role in East-West negotiations remained limited. Apart from paving the way for a bilateral agreement between the US and the Soviet Union on Cooperation on Environmental Protection, the proposed cooperation across ideological lines did not work out as planned as interests towards it faded away.<sup>229</sup>

The efforts to make the results of the pilot studies known to the public did also not work out as intended by the US. Secretary General Luns repeated that the effort put in by the other member-states was insufficient and the US was the only country that put effort towards its publicity.<sup>230</sup> Risso doubts that the CCMS contributed to one of its aims to generate support for NATO amongst the public. She argues that efforts of the CCMS in comparison to the Environmental Programme of the UN hardly was discussed in newspapers.<sup>231</sup> Even according to officials within NATO, the CCMS proved unable to bolster NATO's popularity amongst the younger generations.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> Patrick Kyba, 'CCMS: The Environmental Connection', *International Journal* 29, no. 2 (1974): 256.

<sup>227</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 532.

<sup>228</sup> Turchetti, *Greening the Alliance*. Chapter 5: 18/52.

<sup>229</sup> See Turchetti, *Greening the Alliance*. Chapter 4: 34/50.; Hamblin, 'Environmentalism for the Atlantic Alliance', 1 January 2010, 63.

<sup>230</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 65.

<sup>231</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 534.

<sup>232</sup> Risso, 534.

**Conclusion:**

The end of the 1960s increasingly witnessed the rise in popularity of the environmentalist movement in Western countries. President Nixon aimed with the establishment of the CCMS, NATO's Environmental Committee, to boost the Alliance's popularity amongst the public. Moreover, without the apparent threat of a Soviet military attack, Nixon aspired that scientific and technological cooperation conducted by the Committee would provide the Alliance with a new purpose in times of détente and would bring about a higher level of cohesion amongst the member-states.

The process of setting-up the CCMS after Nixon launched his proposal was marked by high degree tensions between the US and the other members of the Alliance. The European members feared US imposition on their national policy and doubted if NATO was the appropriate organization for Environmental studies. On top of that, the European members worried that the American initiative of creating a new environmental dimension inside NATO would be at the cost of their military commitment towards Western Europe. Following negotiations, the European members managed to water down the US proposal. The CCMS could only provide recommendations to the NAC where the rule of unanimity applied.

During the first three years of the CCMS, the European members in varying degrees remained critical of the Committee. The saving grace of the CCMS proved to be the result of their pilot studies. The successful outcome of many of the survey's changed the mind of the skeptical European members, who by 1975 saw the CCMS as an asset rather than a burden. Although the CCMS was born out of political motives rather than environmental ones, it formed the start of international research on new problem areas industrialized countries faced. The US's ambitious goals for the CCMS during its establishment in 1969 were adjusted. By 1975, a balance point was reached, and the Committee worked smoothly as part of the Alliance.

## Chapter 4: The CCMS: turnaround of positions

Secretary Schultz and I both find it perplexing in the extreme that the U.S., which fought to create the CCMS, should now be seen walking away from it.

Lawrence S. Eagleburger, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, *Letter to the EPA*  
Washington, September 13, 1983.<sup>233</sup>

The previous chapter described the change in perception by the reluctant European members towards the CCMS until the turning point in 1975 when the Committee worked smoothly within NATO. This chapter explores how the CCMS developed from 1975 to 1983. Curiously as seen in the quote above, the US, the country that eagerly initiated the CCMS, no longer supported it in 1983. This chapter examines how this change came about by analyzing various declassified US documents on the pilot studies and their reviews on the CCMS. Moreover, this chapter explores how the end of détente impacted the Committee.

### *The CCMS after the Nixon presidency*

As the previous chapter illustrated, the idea of launching the CCMS was initiated by President Nixon. During the first years of the Committee, Nixon demonstrated his commitment to the conducted projects. Not only was this expressed in the pressure applied by the US during the initial negotiations in setting up the CCMS but also in more sophisticated and “friendly” ways. Several letters and personal messages were sent from Nixon to CCMS plenary sessions, and conferences illustrate Nixon’s commitment to, arguably, a minor Committee within NATO.<sup>234</sup> Therefore, when Nixon resigned from office in 1974 after his involvement in the Watergate affair became known, the question arose whether the CCMS would continue to exist after Nixon’s departure.<sup>235</sup> However, the CCMS proved to be durable, and remained for the rest of

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<sup>233</sup> Lawrence S. Eagleburger, ‘Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Letter to the EPA’ (Washington D.C., 13 September 1983), U.S. Declassified Documents Online.

<sup>234</sup> NATO, ‘Man’s Environment and the Atlantic Alliance’, NATO, accessed 25 June 2020, [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2016\\_08/20160830\\_160830-sps-ccms-concepts-methods.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2016_08/20160830_160830-sps-ccms-concepts-methods.pdf); Hatzivassiliou, ‘Nixon’s Coup’, 60.

<sup>235</sup> Turchetti, *Greening the Alliance*, 108.

the decade under the subsequent Ford, Carter administrations and later under president Reagan when he took office in 1981.

It should be noted that although the CCMS existed until 2006 - when it merged with the Science Committee into the Science for Peace and Security Committee - it received in the years of this chapter's timeframe, varying degrees of support from NATO's member-states. Specifically, the US, the main driving force behind the CCMS during its first years of existence, showed in the late 1970s and beginning of the 1980s, an ambivalent attitude towards the Committee.

Signs of the US contemplating the usefulness of the CCMS already appeared at the end of 1973. As a result of the oil crisis in 1973, a financial recession hit most of the Western countries. The crisis had its impact on the environmental programs set out by the Nixon administration. The EPA, who shouldered a substantial part of the CCMS projects became affected by budget cuts as a result of the deteriorating economic situation in the US.<sup>236</sup> Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, put the CCMS under review in 1973 and asked the US representative to the CCMS, Russel Train to evaluate four options for the Committee's future: 1) boost its activities though renewed presidential support, 2) transfer its research to the OECD, 3) call for a meeting with the environmental ministers of the NATO member-states, or 4) to just "let it wither away."<sup>237</sup> The outcome of the review of 1973 would be that the CCMS would continue to exist, with only the necessary funds at its disposal, depending on the economic situation, to keep the Committee functioning and alive.<sup>238</sup> Although the CCMS survived the outcome of the review, Kissinger's decision shows a stark contrast with the US' commitment and positive attitude towards the CCMS in its beginning years.

President Gerald Ford did reaffirm in his speech during the NATO summit of June 1975 the importance of the CCMS in "addressing the problems of the industrialized nations." Moreover, he stated that in times where it was hard to find common ground within the Alliance, the CCMS was "instrumental" in finding a response to the economic and social challenges the member-states faced.<sup>239</sup> However, in his term President Ford followed the lines set out by Kissinger's review of 1973, which means that there would be no new initiative by

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<sup>236</sup> Turchetti, *Greening the Alliance*, 109.

<sup>237</sup> Turchetti, 109.

<sup>238</sup> Turchetti, 109.

<sup>239</sup> 'NATO's Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS) Meets President's Ford's Call for Allied Cooperation' (5 June 1975), Press releases United States Department of State.

Ford to boost the CCMS's endeavors by generating more support for environmental practices.<sup>240</sup>

### *President Carter and the CCMS*

At the beginning of 1977, Jimmy Carter became the new US president. With regard to the environmentalist context, Carter took a different approach than his predecessor Ford. While Ford mainly focused on “restraining and balancing environmentalist forces,” Carter had a track record as an “advocate” for environmentalism as the governor of Georgia.<sup>241</sup> However, as a governor, Carter took economic and technical considerations into account and did not always pursue the environmental option in his policy. Nevertheless, with Carter coming to power as president, Environmentalists hoped and expected to see a new turn towards environmental protection.<sup>242</sup> Would this possible environmentalist be reflected in renewed policy in the CCMS?

Joseph Luns, NATO's Secretary General at the time and chairman of the CCMS underlined during a US State Department meeting the importance of the research being conducted by the Committee. Thereby he emphasized the Committee's role in improving the image of NATO in the world and the practical results stemming of the successful pilot studies.<sup>243</sup> In the meeting, the head of the EPA stated that the new US administration would continue actively in international environmental programs, including the CCMS. Moreover, he reported that the EPA investigated ways to strengthen their involvement in the Committee in multiple project areas and expressed that President Carter, who according to him had a record as an environmentalist, would continue to support NATO's environmental program.<sup>244</sup>

The expectation that president Carter would support and perhaps even expand the operations of the CCMS proved initially to be accurate as internal documents reveal.<sup>245</sup> While President Ford did not launch new initiatives or generate renewed interest in the Committee, President Carter sent a letter to the Committee on the occasion of their plenary meeting in

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<sup>240</sup> Turchetti, *Greening the Alliance*, 109.

<sup>241</sup> P. S. Ward, 'Ford and Carter: Contrasting Approaches to Environment', *Journal (Water Pollution Control Federation)* 48, no. 10 (1976): 2243.

<sup>242</sup> Ward, 2243.

<sup>243</sup> 'Memorandum of Conversation: US Participation in International Environmental and Scientific Activities' (12 April 1977), Department of State.

<sup>244</sup> 'Memorandum of Conversation: US Participation in International Environmental and Scientific Activities'

<sup>245</sup> Jimmy Carter, 'Letter by President Carter to the U.S. Representative to the NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society' (Washington D.C., 23 April 1977).

October 1977. In his letter, Carter strongly supported the CCMS. He mentioned that the Committee is “a vital part of our common endeavour” and proved to be valuable in finding solutions to contemporary problems.<sup>246</sup> Moreover, Carter stressed the importance of the Committee in forging closer bonds between the members of the Alliance and how the pilot studies encouraged scientific exchange.<sup>247</sup> What may have contributed towards the decision from the Carter administration to strengthen environmental cooperation through the CCMS, was the Ekofisk oil blowout in the North Sea in the Spring of 1977. According to Luns, the oil blowout made it once again clear how modern technology could severely impact the environment.<sup>248</sup> Internal US memoranda from August 1977 indicate that the US again wanted to play a leadership role within the CCMS by launching two new project proposals in the areas of urban quality and urban transportation.<sup>249</sup>

Although President Carter might have had genuine intends to strengthen the CCMS, in 1977, the military dimension of NATO came increasingly to the center of concern. When NATO’s Defense Ministers met in December, they stated that the balance of conventional troops on the ground in Europe shifted in favor of the Warsaw Pact countries. Moreover, they noted that the Soviet Union increased its military spending and focused on improving its offensive capabilities.<sup>250</sup> While the ministers agreed that the current balance on the ground still deterred the Soviets, they doubted that this would remain the case in the future if the trend of increased Soviet spending continued. Therefore, the ministers recognized the need to increase their annual defense budgets. The renewed emphasis within the Alliance to their military dimension could be at the cost of their “third dimension” as the annual meeting concluded that within NATO’s budget, re-equipment and the modernization of their forces needed to be their main priority.<sup>251</sup> This chapter analyzes if the CCMS’s pilot studies were affected by the renewed attention to NATO’s military aspect in 1977.

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<sup>246</sup> James G. Sampas, ‘New US Administration Reaffirms Strong Support for CCMS During Plenary Session’, *NATO Review* 25, no. 6 (December 1977): 20.

<sup>247</sup> Sampas, 20.

<sup>248</sup> Sampas, 19.

<sup>249</sup> Elizabeth Cotsworth, ‘United States Environmental Protection Agency Memorandum’ (Washington D.C., 11 August 1977).

<sup>250</sup> W.F. Mumford, ‘1977/78: Vintage Years for NATO Defence Planning’, *NATO Review* 25, no. 6 (December 1977): 3.

<sup>251</sup> W.F. Mumford, ‘1977/78: Vintage Years for NATO Defence Planning’, 3.

### *Progress of the pilot studies*

As described in the previous chapter, the scholar Patrick Kyba called the pilot studies the CCMS's "saving grace." This paragraph analyzes internal US documents on the progress of the pilot studies ongoing in 1977 as well as the US assessment of the commitment from the other member-states towards the projects. The analysis contributes towards a better understanding on how the other members of the Alliance viewed the projects from the CCMS. The obvious limitation is that the overview relies on the US perspective of the other allied states' dedication towards the CCMS. Nevertheless, because the document is used for internal distribution, it provides important insights. As described in the previous chapter, in the beginning, the nature of some of the pilot studies caused tensions between the US and the other members of the Alliance. According to Hatzivassiliou, by 1975, a balance was reached. Did this remain the case in 1977?

According to historian Jacob Hamblin, the CCMS "soldiered on," after 1975, and received continuous support for its research projects.<sup>252</sup> In 1977, Secretary General Luns stated that the CCMS was an important part of NATO. It looked into contemporary problems of societies and not the ones just related to the Cold War.<sup>253</sup> By 1975 the second wave of pilot studies was underway, all technical in nature rather than at the beginning years of the Committee when some social surveys were conducted.<sup>254</sup> In 1977, twelve pilot studies were underway. The fact that the US was the pilot-country of seven of these surveys shows their continued commitment to the CCMS. In contrast to the first wave of pilot studies, the European members were more active in the surveys and became more involved as co-pilot countries.

This section provides a brief overview of the state of the pilot studies in 1977. The pilot study on Advanced Waste Water Treatment was led by Britain with France, West Germany, and the US as co-pilots. Due to both a lack of funding and enthusiasm, progress for this pilot study went at a "snail's pace."<sup>255</sup> The German-led project on the disposal of hazardous wastes fared a better course. The cooperation between German and US scientific experts in this

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<sup>252</sup> Hamblin, 'Environmentalism for the Atlantic Alliance', 1 January 2010, 70.

<sup>253</sup> F. Allen Harris, 'Background Information Provided by the U.S. Coordinator to the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society towards the US Delegation' (Washington D.C. / Buenos Aires, 2 October 1977), 9, United States Environmental Protection Agency Documents.

<sup>254</sup> Hatzivassiliou, *The NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1969-1975*, 157.

<sup>255</sup> Harris, 'Background Information Provided by the U.S. Coordinator to the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society towards the US Delegation', 9.

project led to promising preliminary results. Moreover, this project showcased the strength of the CCMS as nearly all of the member-states shared the same experiences concerning the disposal of hazardous waste. Therefore, cooperation between the countries went on smoothly as they were interested in sharing their respective approaches and scientific findings with each other. The successful cooperation in this pilot study contributed to setting up procedures and regulations on the issue of disposing hazardous waste.<sup>256</sup>

Another example of successful cooperation within the CCMS is the US-led pilot study: Solar Energy in Heating and Cooling Systems in Buildings. The research that was in 1977 at its final phase received input from multiple European countries interested in the study. The French took the lead in a subgroup that looked into the use of solar energy of passive systems in buildings. The Danes, Germans, and British cooperated with the US in designing new thermal houses that depended on their heating on solar power.<sup>257</sup>

Two pilot studies that concluded in 1977 were the US-led Geothermal Energy program and the project on the Rational Use of Energy. The outcome of the first pilot study resulted in a geothermal information exchange program in which experts from around the globe could participate. The geothermal pilot study, therefore, showcases a successful follow-up of the research conducted by the CCMS. The study on the rationalizing the use of energy brought experts together from nine different countries to develop new techniques on how to conserve energy in industrial processes. The European experts focused on this study on how to utilize the leftover heat from power plants. Moreover, this pilot study created a new protocol in cooperation with the US Weather Bureau in comparing weather data that would be used as an international standard.<sup>258</sup>

Some of the pilot studies focused only on creating new standards or modules such as a survey on Air Pollution Assessment Methodology and Modeling.<sup>259</sup> The goal of these studies was to contribute towards the creation of new international standards on new environmental themes that required international cooperation. Besides the CCMS, also the OECD investigated ways to create new modules for calculating air pollution. However, the studies did

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<sup>256</sup> Harris, 'Background Information', 10.

<sup>257</sup> Harris, 10.

<sup>258</sup> Harris, 10-11.

<sup>259</sup> Harris, 11.



not overlap as the CCMS focused on pollution on the scale of cities and regions, whereas the OECD looked into long-range air pollution.<sup>260</sup>

The study conducted on developing automotive propulsion and low pollution power systems led by the US Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA) was unsuccessful. This research aimed to design more energy-efficient and less polluting automobile engines. What threw a spanner in the study's works was the fact that the different car manufacturers were unwilling to share new technology with each other as it was part of their company secrets.<sup>261</sup>

The pilot study on health and nutrition also was a study that did not work out as envisioned by the CCMS. The survey led by Canada aimed to research the relationship between the health of the population with the food they consumed. What obstructed this compelling research was that nearly all of the countries' bureaucracy were not adjusted to research this topic. The American CCMS coordinator noted that other member-states faced the same internal struggles concerning this research as the US faced domestically. Namely, that the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture quarreled with each other on the question of who is responsible for the research. Therefore, the pilot study therefore changed its goal of laying the foundation for research, which could be followed-up by other organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO).<sup>262</sup> Although the survey on health and nutrition did not bring any significant results, it underlines how the CCMS helped to bring attention to new fields of research that benefited from international cooperation.

One of the pilot studies that was perceived positively is the research on the desulfurization of flue gas. This US-led pilot study contributed towards efforts addressing air pollution and would to draft an international document with their findings.<sup>263</sup> West Germany, the co-pilot of the survey, cooperated closely with the US on this research. Both countries witnessed an increasing demand for their domestic supply of coal and therefore searched for ways to limit the pollution caused by coal. The US and West Germany conducted related research as well within the OECD and shared legislation on how to control the levels of pollution.<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>260</sup> Harris, 'Background Information', 11.

<sup>261</sup> Harris, 11.

<sup>262</sup> Harris, 12.

<sup>263</sup> Harris, 12.

<sup>264</sup> David H. Strother, *EPA Journal* (The Office, 1979), 29.

The Drinking Water program led by the US with the participation of Britain, the Netherlands, France, and the Federal Republic of Germany just started in 1977. The study researched the micropollutants found in the drinking water from industrialized countries. The US coordinator to the CCMS notes that the research topic “was a strong fit” for technological exchange between the members of the Committee.<sup>265</sup> Published documents from 1983 show that the pilot study was highly successful, and several subgroups within the pilot study were created for additional research. The scientists participating in the study noted in the report that “The CCMS mechanism has been the most effective mechanism for international contact and information exchange in the rapidly developing area of the science and technology of drinking water.”<sup>266</sup> The pilot study and its related subgroups concluded with several reports with recommendations for policy action to be taken by governments to safeguard the safety of drinking water and suggestions for further research.<sup>267</sup> Although the report acknowledges that the topic of clean water is researched by other international organizations such as the Environmental Programme of the UN, the CCMS avoided overlap. It focused on addressing drinking water supply problems for industrialized nations. In contrast to underdeveloped countries, research on the water quality of industrialized countries needed to consider the high-volume use of consumers and ensure that there would be no microbiological contamination by the reuse of water.<sup>268</sup>

The overview of the pilot studies from 1977 shows the US coordinator regarded most of the research from the CCMS as a success. From the twelve pilot studies underway in 1977, seven are viewed as contributing towards creating new policy measures or standards to be adopted by national governments. Furthermore, the overview shows that many pilot studies, due to their limited timespan, helped lay the foundation for possible follow-up research by other international organizations.

#### *The US perception of the other member-states*

Documents from the US coordinator to the CCMS also provide insights into how he perceived the dedication of the representatives of other countries within the Committee. In general, the

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<sup>265</sup> Harris, ‘Background Information’, 12.

<sup>266</sup> Ervin Bellack and Joseph A. Cotruvo, *Drinking Water Pilot Study: Summary* (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Drinking Water, 1983), 3.

<sup>267</sup> Bellack and Cotruvo, 3.

<sup>268</sup> Bellack and Cotruvo, 17.

coordinator saw the attitude from the European and Canadian representatives towards the CCMS as positive. However, there were different opinions between the countries. Some favored tight environmental laws such as the US and West Germany. Whereas Britain, Italy, and Turkey favored less strict environmental regulation. Canada played between those two camps, the role of mediator.<sup>269</sup> What stands out is the close cooperation between the US and West Germany in the CCMS, who cooperated in several pilot studies. The US coordinator states that convincing West Germany of the American point of view is crucial as it leads “to a favorable response on these issues within international fora.”<sup>270</sup>

The smaller countries within NATO struggled to participate actively as they lacked the necessary resources. Greece had few resources but did contribute positively to a few surveys. On the other hand, Portugal and Turkey did not contribute to the research and tried to get ideas out of the CCMS meetings they could use within their national borders.<sup>271</sup>

As demonstrated in chapter 3, the British were since the beginning of the CCMS critical of environmental cooperation. By 1977, the American documents state that the British delegation avoided in the CCMS to comply with stricter environmental standards “they cannot afford at this time.”<sup>272</sup> The US coordinator claims that the British reluctance to accept tighter legislation recommended by the CCMS does not necessarily reflect their environmental or public health standpoint but is due to the difficult circumstances they faced.

The opinion from the Dutch officials concerning the CCMS remained the same as described in chapter 3. The Dutch government contained some parties highly critical of NATO.<sup>273</sup> According to the US coordinator, the Dutch “used CCMS as a whipping boy for their anti-NATO sentiments.”<sup>274</sup> In plenary meetings, therefore, the Dutch sometimes complained about the CCMS to appease some of their government parties. However, the coordinator states that the Dutch scientist contributed positively to several CCMS pilot studies despite their occasional critical comments.<sup>275</sup>

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<sup>269</sup> Harris, ‘Background Information’, 1.

<sup>270</sup> Harris, 3–4.

<sup>271</sup> Harris, 4–8.

<sup>272</sup> Harris, 7.

<sup>273</sup> Reformatorisch Dagblad, ‘Premier Den Uyl Tussen Twee Vuren. Speelbal van PPR?’, 9 June 1973, <https://www.digibron.nl/viewer/collectie/Digibron/id/ae9288219f621dcd2dca85f719c47947>.

<sup>274</sup> Harris, ‘Background Information’, 6.

<sup>275</sup> Harris, 6.

### *The end of détente*

Earlier, this chapter concluded that President Carter supported the CCMS endeavors. This commitment was reflected by the new US initiatives to lead new pilot studies. However, during the Carter administration, Cold War tensions flared up again. Therefore, the purpose of the CCMS to provide NATO with a new goal in times of détente, became less relevant. Turchetti contends that with the increasing Cold War tensions at the beginning of the 1980s, “NATO first dimension (defence) continued to attract more funds than any other sponsor initiative.”<sup>276</sup> Although the CCMS’s research was financed by the pilot and co-pilot countries, the financial commitments and attention to the Committee began to fade. Reflecting on the achievements of a decade CCMS, the US coordinator wrote already in 1978 that the CCMS despite its initial success over the years “began to suffer from lack of high level political attention and support and the absence of a sufficient focused programme concept.”<sup>277</sup> Later this chapter analyzes if this lack of attention was reflected in the US commitment to the CCMS with the continuation of Cold War tensions.

When President Carter came to office in 1977, he had the intention to continue improving relations with the Soviet Union.<sup>278</sup> His opinion changed when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan and stated to counter the Soviet’s military whenever they posed a threat towards the US in the Persian Gulf region. Subsequently, Carter ordered an increase of the US defense budget and expected their European allies to increase their budgets as well.<sup>279</sup> The European members followed the US in condemning the Soviet invasion and raised to some extent its expenses to NATO. The European members, especially West Germany, were not keen on escalating the Cold War and favored diplomatic solutions. The lack of European support frustrated the Carter administration and contributed to strained transatlantic relations at the time.<sup>280</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> Turchetti, *Greening the Alliance*. Chapter 6, 31/31.

<sup>277</sup> Paul von Ward, Glen R. Kendall, and James C. Bresee, ‘Ten Years of CCMS. The Record and the Future.’, *NATO Review*, February 1978, 13.

<sup>278</sup> Geir Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe since 1945: From ‘Empire’ by Invitation to Transatlantic Drift*, 1. publ. in paperback (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005), 201.

<sup>279</sup> Lundestad, 208.

<sup>280</sup> Lundestad, 208–10.

*The CCMS during the Reagan administration*

With the election of Ronald Reagan in 1981 as President, the United States moved further away from détente, and their increasing spending's to the military sparked more Cold War tensions. The European members did not match the increase in defense budget from the US and did not even meet the rise in defense spending's to NATO from the Carter era. Although at the beginning of the 1970s, the European members feared the lack of US military commitment to their defenses, they also disliked the hawkish language from the Reagan administration. That Regan talked about the possibility of waging nuclear war with the Soviet Union went beyond just deterring the Soviets and causes fear among the European public.<sup>281</sup> Transatlantic tensions became visible on the question about the negotiations with the Soviet Union on arms limitations. While Reagan wanted to negotiate "from a position of strength," the European members "favored a continuation of serious arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union."<sup>282</sup> The American renewed focus on containing the Soviet Union was met with resistance among the European public. Peace movements grew, and also the governments of the Western European countries aimed to limit the Cold War tensions. However, Lundestad contents that the transatlantic tensions did not result in a crisis as the European members also moved towards a more anti-Soviet direction. Moreover, with the election of Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Reagan gained an ally with similar views on foreign policy and containing the spread of Communism. Although, in general, the European public opinion was against the nuclear presence of the US on the continent, they still supported NATO and the presence of American troops in Europe.<sup>283</sup>

President Reagan's emphasis on expending the military had its effects on the other parts of government that faced budget cuts. Reagan, who favored keeping the government limited, pushed proposals for budget cuts to Congress. The environmental programs of the US government were no exception. According to the political scientist Michael Kraft, "few environmental programs escaped sharp cuts."<sup>284</sup> The EPA, the department most active in the CCMS, funds were cut by more than half between 1981 and 1984. The Reagan administration's overall spending on environmental protection decreased by thirty-two percent

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<sup>281</sup> Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe since 1945*, 211.

<sup>282</sup> Lundestad, 212.

<sup>283</sup> Lundestad, 213.

<sup>284</sup> Michael E. Kraft and Norman J. Vig, 'Environmental Policy in the Reagan Presidency', *Political Science Quarterly* 99, no. 3 (Autumn 1984): 430.

compared to the previous Carter administration.<sup>285</sup> Despite widespread opposition from Congress and the public, the Reagan administration succeeded in reducing the size and impact of environmental agencies.<sup>286</sup> The next part of this chapter analyzes the effects of the budget cuts on the workings of the CCMS.

#### *US review of the CCMS*

In the fall of 1982, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) announced they were doing a “zero-based” review on the value of the US participation to the CCMS.<sup>287</sup> During the by then thirteen years of the CCM’s existence, the Americans were by far the most active member within the CCMS. The US led or co-piloted over seventy-five percent of the research conducted within the Committee.<sup>288</sup> The outcome of the OSTP review on the US participation in the Committee concluded that the “CCMS was of marginal benefit, and recommended that CCMS activities be either transferred to other international environmental forums or merged into those of NATO’s Science Committee.”<sup>289</sup> These recommendations by the OSTP resemble the options put forward nearly a decade earlier by Kissinger. Still, it is striking that the US, who were eager to launch the Committee, now made a radical turn by viewing the CCMS as redundant. Turchetti argues that US’ renewed attention to contain the Soviets at the beginning of the 1980s meant fewer funds to NATO’s environmental projects.<sup>290</sup>

Risso suspected that the CCMS became sidelined due to the other organizations that included a larger number of countries.<sup>291</sup> The OST review underlines her notion. It states that one of the most important reasons for the CCMS’s waning importance was the rise of other international fora for environmental research such as the OECD Environmental Committee and the UN Environment program.<sup>292</sup> The question of overlap between the CCMS and the other organizations is difficult to assess. On the one hand, the report from the pilot studies

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<sup>285</sup> Kraft and Vig, 'Environmental Policy in the Reagan Presidency', 430-31.

<sup>286</sup> Kraft and Vig, 437.

<sup>287</sup> Richard Burt and Harry Marshall, 'Action Memorandum: CCMS - next Steps' (29 July 1983), 2, US Declassified Documents Online.

<sup>288</sup> Burt and Marshall, 1.

<sup>289</sup> Burt and Marshall, 2.

<sup>290</sup> Turchetti, *Greening the Alliance*. Chapter 7, 10/51.

<sup>291</sup> Risso, 'NATO and the Environment', 532.

<sup>292</sup> Burt and Marshall, 'Action Memorandum: CCMS - next Steps', 1-2.

indicates that duplication is avoided by researching other fields or by setting-up the stage of research that could be used for follow-up research by the other organizations.

On the other hand, US officials wrote in a reflection of 10 years of CCMS published in NATO Review that other international organizations tended to “defend their turf from encroachment” by the CCMS.<sup>293</sup> Because of the military character of NATO, the other organizations were at times hesitant to cooperate with the CCMS. In the same reflection, the US official acknowledged that although the pilot studies produced results, several of the conclusions were “quietly filed away in national archives.”<sup>294</sup>

Following the recommendation of the OSTP, internal documents from the Department of State reveal that parts of the US government wanted to get out of the CCMS by 1983. What is remarkable is that when the US informed them about their plan during the CCMS plenary meeting, that the reaction to it from the once skeptical European members to the Committee was “very hostile”.<sup>295</sup> Nearly all European members within the CCMS expressed their continued support to the Committee and wanted it to be “strengthened rather than diminished.”<sup>296</sup> Due to the workings of NATO’s rule of consensus, the US could not directly end or change the CCMS without the approval of other members. However, as the most significant contributor towards the pilot studies, it would be highly unlikely for the CCMS to continue without strong American support.

The documents from the State Department show their objection to the recommendations made by the OSTP to end or merge the CCMS. Not because they doubted the validity of their assessment that the Committee’s work could be handled better by other organizations but because of the strong sentiments among the Europeans to continue the CCMS. Therefore, according to State Department officials, preserving the CCMS was vital to safeguard transatlantic unity within the Alliance. Moreover, the officials argued that the US efforts to dismantle the CCMS would be perceived by the other members of the Alliance as if America only cared about the military aspect of NATO to confront the Soviets.<sup>297</sup> The State Department, therefore, requested the EPA to resume its leading role in the CCMS. The EPA dropped out of the role of CCMS coordinator in 1982. This withdrawal was because their

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<sup>293</sup> Ward, Kendall, and Bresee, ‘Ten Years of CCMS.’, 18.

<sup>294</sup> Ward, Kendall, and Bresee, 18.

<sup>295</sup> Burt and Marshall, ‘Action Memorandum: CCMS - next Steps’, 2.

<sup>296</sup> Burt and Marshall, 2.

<sup>297</sup> Burt and Marshall, 4.

resources were stretched thin due to President Reagan's budget cuts when he came to office. Despite the budget cuts, the State Department asked the head of the EPA to reconsider their position to the CCMS to avoid "creating political controversy within the Alliance by trying to kill off our own initiative."<sup>298</sup>

#### *New US review of the CCMS*

The fact that the European members staunchly wanted to preserve the CCMS is equally remarkable as the U-turn made by the US that wanted to end the CCMS. After ten years, the positions of both sides shifted completely concerning the Committee. In contrast to the first years of the CCMS, in 1983, the US doubted the CCMS's viability, whereas the Europeans wanted to broaden the Committee.<sup>299</sup> The US State Department, who favored the continuation of the CCMS because of diplomatic reasons, arranged an interagency review in November 1983 to reassess the US position to the Committee.<sup>300</sup> In preparation for this meeting, an overview of the Allied views on the question of the CCMS's continuation was drafted. What explains the positive European attitude to the CCMS?

Several European members expressed the sentiment that they viewed the Committee as beneficial to highlight that NATO is more than just military organization. The Danish argued that "it might be inappropriate to terminate one of the civilian activities of NATO at a time when at least part of the Western public is strongly criticizing the military programs of the Alliance."<sup>301</sup> In the same fashion, the Dutch objected to the US intention to downgrade the CCMS as it would "reinforce the perception of many Europeans that the US administration is only interested in weapons."<sup>302</sup>

Other members like Belgium recognized some of the CCMS's problems, such as overlap with other international organizations. They favored expanding the research of the Committee to socio-economic challenges to society. France supported the CCMS's continuation as long it was limited to a technical level and would not interfere with the national governments' policy. West Germany, one of the most active members within the Committee were realistic to the results of the CCMS. They argued that the Committee was never intended to solve major

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<sup>298</sup> Eagleburger, 'Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Letter to the EPA'.

<sup>299</sup> Burt and Marshall, 'Action Memorandum: CCMS - next Steps', 2.

<sup>300</sup> 'USG Review of NATO's Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society' (Washington D.C., 23 November 1983), U.S. Declassified Documents Online.

<sup>301</sup> 'USG Review of NATO's Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society'.

<sup>302</sup> 'USG Review of NATO's Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society'.



problems due to their limited budget and perceived the CCMS as “a valuable instrument of cooperation in environmental problems and policy.”<sup>303</sup>

The British statement shows their complete turn in attitude toward the CCMS. According to the UK delegate to the CCMS “the pilot studies had produced excellent results and reflected a degree of cooperation and understanding at the working level which has been equaled in few other international organizations.”<sup>304</sup>

What is arguably the most crucial factor contributing to the positive view of the European members to the CCMS is provided by Greece and Turkey. They acknowledge that the added value of the CCMS is to obtain technological knowledge from the US through the pilot studies. Risso also indicated that the most obvious result of the Committee was the exchange of scientific and technological knowledge between the members of the Alliance.<sup>305</sup> Especially the smaller members within NATO that had little to contribute to the research were keen on reaping the benefits of the US’ continued commitment to the CCMS.

#### *Results of the review*

In the new review, various departments of the US government reached a conclusion on the workings of the CCMS. The report mentions that the Committee succeeded in its initial purpose. It “provided the seed” for the spread of environmental research between the members of the CCMS due to its successful pilot studies.<sup>306</sup> However, the review concluded “that the CCMS fell into something of a rut” due to the rise of other international organization’s research on the environment and because of the lack of implementation of the studies’ recommendations.<sup>307</sup>

Moreover, the review focused on the political implications of altering the CCMS. As shown earlier in the chapter, the other NATO members unanimously supported keeping the CCMS. The US feared that discontinuing the Committee would lead to a political backlash by the other members. Pushing for the end of the CCMS would aggravate sentiments among other NATO members of unilateral American action. It would set a negative precedent for the US in different fields of the Alliance.<sup>308</sup> The review concluded with the recommendation that the

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<sup>303</sup> ‘USG Review of NATO’s Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society’.

<sup>304</sup> ‘USG Review of NATO’s Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society’.

<sup>305</sup> Risso, ‘NATO and the Environment’, 533.

<sup>306</sup> ‘USG Review of NATO’s Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society’.

<sup>307</sup> ‘USG Review of NATO’s Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society’.

<sup>308</sup> ‘USG Review of NATO’s Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society’.

CCMS should focus more on scientific innovations rather than contributing formulating policy recommendations to countries. The US would take on a leading role in the CCMS by starting new pilot studies.<sup>309</sup>

### **Conclusion**

After President Nixon's resignation, the CCMS continued to exist under the Ford presidency. When Carter came to office in 1977, it appeared that the new president with a track record of environmentalism would strengthen the CCMS. However, by 1979 new Cold War tensions marked the end of détente, and NATO's military dimension received increased attention that went of the cost of NATO's environmental endeavors. Most pilot studies at the end of the 1970s were largely successful. Cooperation between the members of the Alliance remained working went smoothly, and the once reluctant European members now fully accepted the Committee.

President Reagan continued at the beginning of the 1980s efforts to contain the Soviets and increased military spending. Reagan's dramatic budget cuts in government expenses impacted the US departments who participated in CCMS pilot studies. As a result of fewer funds, their participation in the CCMS was put on the back burner. On top of that, a zero-based review concluded in 1983 that the CCMS was not effective and should be abolished or merged with other organizations dedicated to environmental protection established in the 1970s. Unanimously, the Europeans rejected the US plan and stated that they valued the Committee because of the pilot studies. It highlighted that NATO was more than a Cold War instrument. Taking into account the political backlash by pulling out of the CCMS, the US concluded to resume its commitment to the Committee.

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<sup>309</sup> 'USG Review of NATO's Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society'.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

This research focused on the question of how the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society developed between the years 1969-1983. The proposed Committee by President Nixon as launched in 1969. His aim was primarily to unify the members within NATO, that during times of détente, needed an additional role to show its relevance. The first years of the Committee witnessed tensions between the US and the European members of the Alliance. European fears of US imposition on their national policy through the CCMS and suspicions of the US's focus on the environment would be at the cost of their military commitment to Europe. However, after negotiations, the CCMS became more clearly defined, and its pilot studies, convinced the skeptic European members of the Committee's added value. By 1975, the CCMS adjusted after some initial hiccups, and the pilot studies succeeded in drawing attention to international environmental protection.

This thesis contributed to the existing literature of the CCMS by researching the years after 1975. An overview of the pilot studies conducted in 1977 demonstrates that cooperation within the pilot studies still functioned smoothly. However, some critical notes on the lack of implementation of the Committees recommendations were placed. As a result of renewed Cold War tensions and President Reagan's election, the attention of the US government shifted to sharp increases in military spending. It led to radical budget cuts in other areas. The US departments that participated in the pilot studies reduced their activities inside the CCMS due to budget cuts.

The lack of attention and funds dedicated to the CCMS at the beginning of the 1980s resulted in a US review of the Committee. It concluded that the CCMS was ineffective, and the US planned to abolish to Committee or to merge it with other international organizations. In the 1970s, the UN and the OECD included environmental protection to their tasks. These, to some extent, overlapped with the CCMS's research. The European members fiercely objected to the US plans to abandon the CCMS. They valued the pilot studies and that it showed the public that NATO was more than just as a military organization to confront the Soviets. Moreover, the CCMS benefitted smaller members of NATO who profit from the US transfer of scientific and technological knowledge through cooperation in the pilot studies.

The US Department of State took into account the political backlash America faced if they decided to unilaterally end their participation in the CCMS. After new considerations, the US agreed to continue its leadership role in the Committee.

The existing scholarship on the CCMS mostly focused on the problems the Committee faced in its first years. This research sheds new light on the Committee by the sudden change of roles in 1983. Remarkably, the US, who eagerly pushed the CCMS in its first years, now wanted to get out of it. Moreover, this thesis underlines the notion of Hatzivassiliou that claimed that after 1975 the European members fully accepted the Committee. The Europeans' favorable views on the pilot studies and their unanimous objection to the US plan to end the CCMS reflect his claim. The CCMS was not fostered by the US's commitment to the environment but mainly to keep the members of the Alliance unified. The promotion of environmental activities and to maintain the CCMS was mostly born out of diplomatic necessity.

#### *Limitations and recommendations for future research*

The primary sources this research relied on are mostly US documents on the CCMS. The choice of sources limits the findings of the thesis to a predominant US account of the CCMS from the period 1975-1983. Therefore, the research does not go into depth on the considerations the European members had to the CCMS. Including internal documents from the departments of other CCMS members can provide additional insights on the workings of the CCMS. This research focused mainly on the politics of the Committee. What could shed a better light on the usefulness of the CCMS is research comparing the efforts of the CCMS with the UN Environmental Programme and Environmental research by the OECD. The outcomes of such inquiry could answer the question to what extent duplication of environmental research occurred. New research on the CCMS could contribute to the discussion of NATO's endurance, as the Committee just like the Alliance, overcame multiple crises.

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