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ARMS CONTROL: NEW
APPROACHES IN EUROPE

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ARMS CONTROL IN EUROPE: ESSENTIAL FOR GORBACHEV

In foreign affairs, nothing is more dangerous for Gorbachev than uprisings in Eastern Europe. These have occurred already and periodically in '53, '56, '68 and '80. Now they are even more likely. Spurred by Soviet glasnost and perestroika, eastern europeans can be expected to want long overdue changes in their own societies. Less passive than the Soviet population, and much more aware of what these new Soviet ideas can and should mean for them, they may move more quickly than the Soviet defense establishment can accept.

This is the real meaning of an agreement between East and West on conventional and nuclear weapon levels in Europe. For General Secretary Gorbachev, it represents a way to announce to the Soviet apparat that the security problem for Eastern Europe is vastly diminished. And in that new context, vigorous changes in the governments and societies of Eastern Europe can be simply dismissed by Soviet authorities as reflecting different roads to socialism.

Put another way, the arms control possibilities discussed in this report can insulate the Soviet Union from the compulsion to repress change in Eastern Europe. For them, the long-awaited post-war settlement can be largely equated with some kind of major agreement in

Europe. It is for this reason that the Soviets have to be considered serious when they propose asymmetrical reductions.

The letter of November 16, 1987 to FAS Fund Chairman Frank von Hippel (and three others) from Gorbachev, (see pages 14-15) shows the Soviets working on "real and radical reductions, and the elimination of asymmetry and imbalance by reducing accordingly the arms of the power that is in the lead" and by "removing from a zone between the Warsaw Pact and NATO the most dangerous offensive weapons and by reducing to a minimum agreed level the concentration in this zone of armed forces and armaments."

Considering current trends in thinking by analysts and Gorbachev's interests in making good on something like this, the possibility of really major agreements in Europe can no longer be dismissed.

But one thing is certain: the West has no idea what it wants in the way of a conventional and nuclear arms agreement in Europe.

It better find out. Gorbachev represents a unique and unexpected window of opportunity to vastly improve the security situation of both Western and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and ourselves.

THE FUTURE OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS CONTROL IN EUROPE

Thomas K. Longstreth

The completion and signing of the "Treaty on Eliminating Intermediate and Shorter Range Missiles" or INF Treaty has led analysts and observers to shift their attention to a number of other arms negotiations—including the long neglected area of conventional military force reductions in Europe.

The elimination of all Soviet and American ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometers means that the military confrontation in Europe will be dominated more by conventional military forces and by the preponderance of short-range tactical nuclear weapons still in place on both sides of the inner-German border and throughout Europe.

Past attempts at achieving significant reductions in the levels of NATO and Warsaw Pact conventional military forces and armaments in Europe have been unsuccessful. The Vienna negotiations on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) in Europe have been ongoing since 1973, but the two sides remain deadlocked on issues of initial troop data and verification.

But several positive recent developments suggest the need for an intensive examination of new approaches to

conventional arms control that might produce an agreement reducing confrontation and increase stability in Europe.

First, the MBFR Talks will soon be supplemented and probably replaced by a new forum, sometimes called the "Conventional Stability Talks (CST)." There are signs that both sides are entering these new talks with a renewed purpose and an intention to achieve concrete results, while avoiding the problems and pitfalls that led to stalemate at MBFR.

(Continued on page 2)

GORBACHEV, SAKHAROV AND FAS

On January 15, FAS Fund Chairman Frank von Hippel and FAS President Jeremy J. Stone met in Moscow for three hours with General Secretary Gorbachev—in a seventeen person meeting that included Andrei Sakharov—to inaugurate a new International Fund for the Survival of Humanity. A report on this meeting, the first between Gorbachev and Sakharov, will be contained in the March *Public Interest Report*.

Secondly, there is also hope that East and West can build on the experience and progress gained through completion of both the 1986 Stockholm Conference on Disarmament in Europe (CDE) Agreement on confidence and security building measures (CSBMs) and the U.S.-Soviet INF Treaty.

Thirdly, the Soviet leadership appears anxious to achieve conventional arms reductions and more willing to discuss "asymmetries" in the balance of forces between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. A wealth of recent public statements by Soviet leaders indicate that they may be putting forward proposals in this area that would previously have been considered radical or impossible.

There are also hints of a significant change in Soviet military doctrine, in both the nuclear and conventional realms, towards a "reasonable sufficiency" of forces, offering some hope that the Soviet leadership will back up its rhetorical support for conventional reductions with concrete steps toward their realization.

Finally, France, which has always refused to participate in MBFR and has been generally hostile to the concept of mutual force reductions, will be a participant in CST. Because of France's large standing army and leadership position on security issues, this was considered by many to be an essential step, albeit one with the potential to create sharp divisions in NATO's negotiating position.

Influential politicians, military leaders, and security experts in the United States and Western Europe are responding to these encouraging signs by re-analyzing western defense and arms control objectives.

Some see a requirement to build up NATO's forces and take other steps to redress the alleged imbalance of forces between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Others see the need to reduce those forces on both sides (especially the Warsaw Pact) most likely to be used in an offensive assault. Still others stress the need for a discussion between East and West on strategic and operational concepts and possible changes in doctrines toward more defensive postures. Some advocate all of the above.

Opposition and Opportunity

There are many who are skeptical about the prospects for additional arms control measures in Europe. They are concerned that the elimination of SRINF and INF missiles will put NATO on a "slippery slope" towards removing all short-range, tactical nuclear weapons from Europe, without corresponding reductions in the Soviet armored divisions and other offensively-oriented forces against which NATO's thousands of tactical nuclear weapons are supposed to defend.

RAND corporation expert Scott Thompson believes that NATO's forward defense is very sensitive to even modest force reductions while the Warsaw Pact could absorb easily even large ones. Thompson suggests that even an agreement which would require the Warsaw Pact to reduce 3-5 times as many forces and armaments as NATO might have a negligible impact on Soviet offensive capabilities but could push NATO below the minimum level necessary to cover the front. *(Continued on page 3)*

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U.S. M-1 Tank on maneuvers in West Germany during 1985 NATO exercise.

Others see the new forum as a trap for NATO, one in which the Soviet Union will attempt to exploit the lack of NATO consensus or public support for NATO's "first use" policy to widen divisions within the alliance.

And other problems exist. France and the U.S. have already been at loggerheads over the basic mandate and scope of CST. The U.S. will also insist that CST cannot begin until the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), now meeting in Vienna, agrees on new human rights provisions expanding on those set forth in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and 1983 Madrid follow-up conference. But progress on human rights at the Vienna CSCE meeting has been slow, and this could delay the initiation of CST.

Defense Problems Ahead for East and West

Whatever the prospects for a negotiated solution, both East and West face a range of difficult defense problems in the coming years.

Despite significant investment over the past decade in order to improve the alliance's conventional defense posture, NATO is still short of the force structure and rearmament goals established in the late 1970s and early 1980s as necessary for a robust forward defense posture. Indeed, most NATO nations have been unable to sustain even the modest 3% annual real growth (after inflation) in defense spending agreed to back in 1977.

Nor do the forecasts appear optimistic for the rest of the 1980s and early 1990s. The United States, for example, which has maintained the highest rate of defense spending growth over the past seven years among the allies, has a 1988 defense budget that will actually *decrease*, in real terms, from the previous year, and the same is likely in 1989. This will mean a cutback in the production of major conventional weapons systems that are intended to modernize U.S. forces in Europe and elsewhere. West Germany, which contributes the largest share of forces for the defense of Central Europe, will achieve only 1-2 per cent real growth in its 1988 defense budget. Great Britain, Italy and other NATO countries face similar budgetary constraints.

In addition, demographic trends could create significant shortages of available manpower for NATO in the 1990s. In almost every NATO country the number of draft-age

men is expected to continue to decline between now and the end of the century. In West Germany, for example, the number of men between 18-22 years old will decrease 70% by the year 2,000. Given these economic and demographic constraints, western governments will more likely be trying best to manage a *contraction* of the force structure and defense investment, not its expansion.

Nor is the Soviet Union immune to these problems. Most Soviet specialists suspect that a principal motivation for Gorbachev's strong interest in conventional force reductions is his desire to re-channel investment away from the military sector towards revitalizing the Soviet economy. Military spending, the bulk of which is spent on conventional, not nuclear forces, accounts for some 15% of the Soviet GNP, as compared to about 6% of the U.S. GNP.

The Soviets are also expected to experience a shortage of native Russians available for the armed forces during the next decade, which would force them to maintain a higher percentage of Moslems and other minorities in uniform if they chose to keep their overall force structure at current levels.

Among western politicians, there is also an appreciation of the widespread popular support, especially in Europe, for conventional arms reductions, reducing tactical nuclear weapons, and other measures that might ease the military confrontation between East and West. Whatever their own misgivings about the efficacy of additional arms control in Europe, popularly elected officials cannot ignore this public sentiment.

A Need for New Thinking

Senator Sam Nunn, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, summed up NATO's current dilemma (and opportunity) in a speech delivered on the Senate floor in April 1987:

"(1) Western publics are becoming increasingly allergic to nuclear weapons and will become increasingly aware that NATO relies on the early use of nuclear weapons in response to non-nuclear attacks.

(2) NATO has no revolutionary plan for implementing conventional force improvements or for bold innovative conventional arms control proposals which could combine to eliminate its reliance on the early first use of nuclear weapons.

(3) NATO faces a Soviet leader—whatever his long run intentions may be—who appears willing, in the parlance of the American card game called poker, to 'call NATO's bet and up the ante.' "

NATO must begin to reassess its own fundamental goals and objectives in the area of conventional defense and arms control, both in order to see what concrete agreements might be in its security interest and to prevent deterioration of alliance cohesion if—as is likely—the Soviet Union seizes the conventional arms control initiative.

In preparation for CST, NATO must begin to define a consensus negotiating position that is both realistic and imaginative. What, then, are the ingredients that go into formulating a common position for the upcoming talks?

most Warsaw Pact tanks are older T-54/-55 models, built in the 1950s. Most NATO tanks are newer models, built in the 1970s and 1980s. (See chart below.)

In fact, NATO's military capability, measured in an absolute sense, has never been stronger. Substantial investment in force modernization throughout the 1970s and 1980s, taking advantage of the technological revolution, has improved NATO's combat strength tremendously. The kill power of the average NATO tank, anti-tank weapon or strike aircraft of today is far greater than it was even ten years ago.

Qualitative Factors

Standard comparisons of NATO and Warsaw Pact forces exclude a number of NATO strengths that, while difficult to measure, are critical to success in battle. These include, but are not limited to:

1) *Weapons Technology*—NATO has attempted through the years to make up for inferiority in weapons quantity with weapons quality. For example, the Warsaw Pact simply does not have combat aircraft comparable to the front-line F-15, F-16 and Tornado aircraft deployed by NATO. In 1986, then Air Force Chief of Staff General Charles A. Gabriel stated that the Soviets were ten years from having combat aircraft comparable to the U.S. made F-15 and F-16—and that by then we would possess the far superior Advanced Tactical Fighter (ATF) now in development.

In some cases NATO's technological edge is narrowing but in other areas, such as the incorporation of "stealth" technologies into weapons design, the use of sophisticated on-board computers for more combat tasks, and the development and deployment of true "fire-and-forget" weapons—the gap may actually be widening.

2) *Training and Readiness of Forces*—NATO (and particularly American) forces go through far more rigorous and realistic training overall than do their Warsaw Pact counterparts.

For example, U.S. intelligence estimates divide Soviet ground forces into different standards of readiness: from the most capable and best-equipped (Category I) to the those forces without adequate equipment and well below adequate standards of readiness (Category III). As conventional arms expert John Mearsheimer has noted, Soviet Category II and III divisions—which are equivalent in many respects to U.S. national guard and reserve units—receive little or no annual refresher training. U.S. reservists receive thirty to forty-five days of individual and unit training annually.

Other recent evidence indicates that even Soviet forces in East Germany, all of which are their best trained and equipped forces and the vanguard of any would-be invasion, are at a lower state of readiness than previously believed. They are certainly below U.S. standards of high readiness.

U.S. and NATO tactical air forces keep an edge on their counterparts through extensive training and realistic exercises such as the famous "Red Flag" in Nevada where

aircrews perform simulated air-to-air combat against "aggressor" squadrons that use specially adapted aircraft and tactics designed to mimic those of the Warsaw Pact.

Finally, NATO conducts more frequent, more realistic and larger joint exercises on land and sea than the Warsaw Pact.

3) *Reliability of Allies*—The cooperation of the military forces of non-Soviet Warsaw Pact (NSWP) armies in conducting offensive operations into NATO territory is subject to serious doubt. Yet, these NSWP forces would be vital to a successful implementation of Soviet strategy. The Pentagon publication *Soviet Military Power 1987* acknowledges this important consideration by stating that, "NWSP forces would be called upon to participate in and would be critical to the success of Soviet plans for early offensive operations. . . . but their willingness to support Soviet aggression against NATO territory, and forces capable of retaliation, is not a certainty."

5) *Logistics and Support*—Many observers bemoan the fact that Warsaw Pact forces have a higher "tooth to tail" ratio—that is, a higher percentage of manpower actually slated for combat—than NATO. This higher percentage simply means that NATO maintains a large number of troops for support and logistics duties (transportation, resupply, maintenance, command and control, etc.) for each combat division.

For example, NATO divisions average about 16,500 men each (U.S. are even larger) versus about 11,500 men per division for the Warsaw Pact. But in addition, NATO

(Continued on page 6)

MANPOWER/TANK BALANCE IN EUROPE		
CATEGORY 1 WARSAW PACT FORCES IN EAST GERMANY, CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND POLAND VS. NATO ACTIVE DUTY FORCES IN WEST GERMANY		
	<i>Personnel in Combat Units</i>	<i>Tanks</i>
Warsaw Pact	542,938	13,013
NATO	408,764	6,672
Ratio of WP: NATO	1.33 : 1	1.95 : 1
CATEGORY 1 WARSAW PACT FORCES IN EAST GERMANY AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA VS. NATO ACTIVE DUTY FORCES IN WEST GERMANY		
	<i>Personnel in Combat Units</i>	<i>Tanks</i>
Warsaw Pact	437,338	10,120
NATO	408,764	6,672
Ratio of WP: NATO	1.07 : 1	1.52 : 1
CATEGORY I WARSAW PACT FORCES IN EAST GERMANY, CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND POLAND VS. NATO ACTIVE DUTY FORCES IN WEST GERMANY, BELGIUM, THE NETHERLANDS AND FRANCE		
	<i>Personnel in Combat Units</i>	<i>Tanks</i>
Warsaw Pact	542,938	13,013
NATO	539,158	8,611
Ratio of WP: NATO	1.01 : 1	1.5 : 1

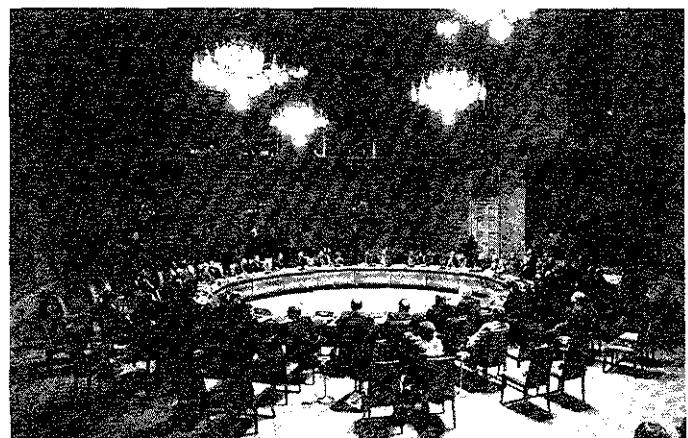
The charts above demonstrate that Warsaw Pact and NATO active duty forces and tanks are more closely matched near the central front than is commonly believed. Figures are based on forces that would be available to either alliance on short notice, i.e., active duty combat forces at or near the central front. Generally speaking, NATO's biggest difficulty is not the relative balance of forces, as depicted here, but the fact that, in peacetime, many of its forces are deployed well back from the inner-German border away from the positions they would need to take up in the event of a short-warning Warsaw Pact attack. (Source: Senator Carl Levin, *Beyond the Bean Count: Realistically Assessing the Conventional Military Balance in Europe*. January 20, 1988.)

has another 25,000 troops in support of each division, whereas the Pact generally has far fewer—about 8,500 per division.

This fact reflects a difference in philosophy—and a NATO strength. For these troops directly support the effectiveness and combat capability of the division by providing the logistics “tail” that keeps NATO aircraft flying more “sorties” and NATO artillery firing more shells per day than their Warsaw Pact counterparts. NATO’s heavy emphasis on logistics and support means that, on average, its combat divisions should be able to fight longer and more effectively than Warsaw Pact divisions.

6) *Asymmetries in Goals and Tactics*—NATO views itself as a *defensive* alliance and, as such, it possesses certain inherent advantages that strategists usually ascribe to the defense. For example, while there are no certainties in combat and plenty of exceptions to any rule, it is generally assumed that, to have a moderate to high chance of success, the offense must achieve favorable local force ratios of from 3:1 to 5:1 at the point of attack. The Warsaw Pact does not have sufficient overall quantitative superiority to make it easy to achieve and sustain such local advantageous ratios.

NATO would also have the advantage that, in any war in Europe, it would most likely be defending its own familiar territory. Moreover, NATO’s objective on any conflict would be to *delay* Warsaw Pact offensive long enough for its reinforcements to come into place and stalemate the battle without ceding territory—it does not have to “win.” The Warsaw Pact’s objective—to seize as much territory and eliminate NATO’s warfighting capability as quickly as possible—is much more difficult.



NATO and Warsaw Pact delegations at MBFR talks in Vienna.

PAST EFFORTS IN CONVENTIONAL ARMS CONTROL

Currently, two sets of negotiations between East and West are taking place that focus on conventional arms control. Their history and mandate are summarized briefly below.

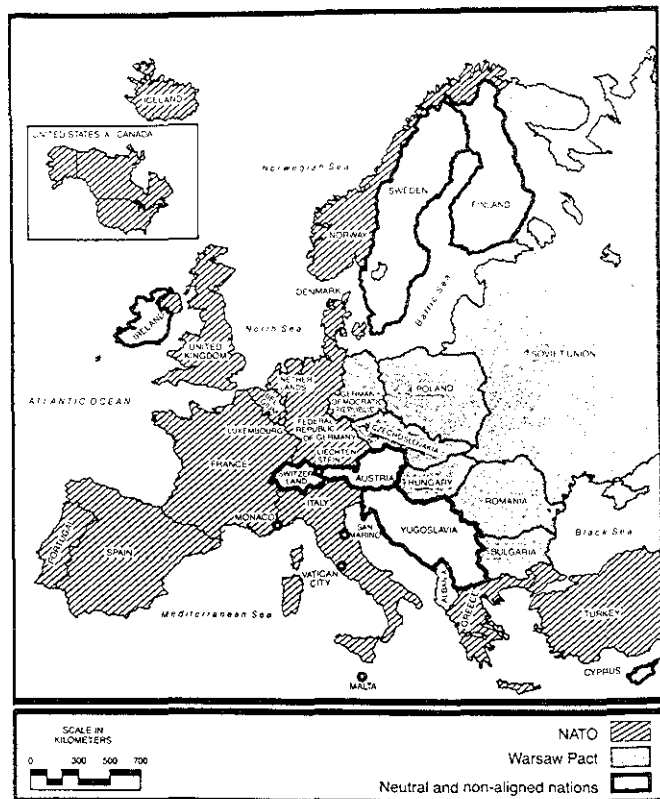
Conference on Disarmament in Europe (CDE)

The Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe (CDE), opened in Stockholm, Sweden, on January 17, 1984. It was created by a mandate from the second meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation on Europe (CSCE), held in Madrid, reviewing implementation of the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. CDE’s purpose was to build on the modest confidence and security building measures (CSBMs) contained in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act to reduce fear of surprise attack or miscalculation during military maneuvers.

The CDE Agreement requires that by November 15 of each year all parties must submit a detailed forecast of military exercises for the following year expected to involve more than 40,000 troops. Two years’ advance notice is required for exercises involving more than 75,000 troops. Forty-two days’ notice is required for maneuvers of over 13,000 troops or 300 tanks.

The CDE Agreement was also the first time that the Eastern bloc agreed to on-site “challenge” inspections. Each side is permitted three such inspections of suspicious military activities per year. Any request for inspection must be granted within 24 hours, executed within 36 hours, and can last up to 48 hours.

The Stockholm agreement also requires participants to invite other parties to observe any exercises involving more than 17,000 troops. The U.S. expressed its approval recently of the way in which the Soviet Union cooperated during western observation of an August 1987 military exercise in the Soviet Belorussian Military District. Four U.S. inspectors spent two days observing the exercise and taking almost one thousand photographs. In recent testimony before the Senate, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Admiral William J. Crowe stated that, “those inspections have been very successful.”



CDE participants.

From Jonathan Dean, *Watershed in Europe*

U.S. military observers have commented that these experiences improved their confidence in NATO's ability to comprehend and defend against Warsaw Pact tactics. One such observer, Major General Philip Mallory (USA), said that it reminded him of exercises at the U.S. Army's National Training Center (NTC) at Ft. Irwin, CA:

"It was just like I was standing out at the NTC watching the OPFOR [Opposing Force]. Our Opposing Forces execute Soviet tactics better than the Warsaw Pact. We really do understand how the Soviets will fight."

Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR)

Since 1973, representatives from NATO and the Warsaw Pact have been meeting regularly in Vienna in an attempt to reach agreement to reduce their respective military forces in central Europe, thus far without success. For the West, participation is limited to those countries with forces deployed along the central front: Belgium, Canada, West Germany, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom and the United States. France, which withdrew from formal military participation in NATO in 1966, has always refused to be involved. All Warsaw Pact countries participate in the talks.

The area of reductions discussed in MBFR is limited to central Europe: the two Germanies, the Benelux countries, Poland and Czechoslovakia. Naval forces were not included in order to simplify matters. While in recent years the MBFR talks have focused on troop reductions, at various times the two blocs have discussed reductions in all forms of land-based armaments.

MBFR has a long and complicated history of proposals and counter-proposals. NATO has sought asymmetrical reductions that would lead to a common ceiling on overall military manpower in the reductions area. The Pact has argued for equal reductions from current totals, asserting that rough parity already exists.

Over the years, the two sides have reached some common ground by agreeing on: 1) reductions to common ceilings of 700,000 ground force personnel and 900,000 ground and air force personnel, total; 2) phased reductions to those levels, with the U.S. and USSR making the initial cuts, and; 3) pulling back withdrawn forces to national territory and not simply re-deploying them outside of the reductions zone.

The two most difficult disputes at MBFR have been over the initial baseline data on forces deployed in the reductions area and the number and nature of inspections needed to verify compliance. NATO has continued to insist that the Warsaw Pact has more forces deployed than it concedes. The Warsaw Pact has disputed NATO's data, but has not provided detailed data of its own that repudiate NATO's claims.

In a December 1985 proposal, NATO offered to dispense with agreement on the baseline data and initiate smaller cuts in U.S. and Soviet forces while working to resolve the dispute through a series of on-site inspections. The Pact refused, saying that the number and intrusiveness of the proposed inspections were not justified, given the



First time released publicly photo of Soviet and American officers conferring during inspection of Soviet exercise under CDE Agreements, August 1987. Notice videotape and camera equipment.

limited nature of the proposed initial cuts. The Warsaw Pact's own most recent proposal is the June 1986 "Budapest Appeal," described on page 8.

A New Mandate

In December 1986, NATO ministers answered the Budapest Appeal by stating their support for a new set of negotiations that would examine conventional arms reductions "from the Atlantic to the Urals."

During 1986-87, "Mandate Talks" were held in Vienna, within the framework of the CSCE, during which the two sides discussed possible approaches to the new talks, but divisions remained both between the alliances and among the western nations (especially between France and the U.S.). These disagreements involved both procedural and substantive issues, such as whether or not nuclear weapons should be included and what the status of neutral or non-aligned countries should be at CST.

In July, the NATO nations and France did table a proposal outlining a general approach to CST, but by the end of 1987, they were still debating amongst themselves the basics of an actual negotiating position.

At the mandate talks, the two sides have agreed to the following objectives for CST:

"to strengthen stability and security in Europe through the establishment of a stable and secure balance of conventional armed forces, which include conventional armaments and equipment, at lower levels; the elimination of disparities prejudicial to stability and security; and the elimination, as a matter of priority, of the capability for launching surprise attacks and for initiating large-scale offensive action."

The CST talks are now not expected to begin until sometime in the late summer or early fall of 1988. When CST finally does commence, the West is expected to move away from MBFR's approach of aggregate manpower ceilings and instead propose parity in ground force armaments—principally tanks and self-propelled artillery—at or slightly below current NATO levels. NATO is also expected to continue to oppose the inclusion of tactical nuclear weapons and strike aircraft in initial reductions.

CHANGES IN SOVIET DOCTRINE?

A number of encouraging statements coming out of the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries suggest that fundamental changes in Soviet military doctrine and thinking may be taking place, spurred by the rise to power of Mikhail Gorbachev.

Gorbachev's admission that reductions must address existing "asymmetries" in opposing forces and deal with the problem of surprise attack, his concept of Soviet force procurement and deployment decisions being guided by the principle of "reasonable sufficiency," and his push for a declaratory policy of "defensive defense" all indicate that he may be willing to offer the same kinds of concessions on conventional forces that he has made in the nuclear area.

On April 18, 1986, Gorbachev delivered a speech in East Berlin in which he called for new negotiations to reduce ground and tactical air forces in Europe. He conceded that the area covered would have to extend "from the Atlantic to the Urals," including armaments on Soviet territory.

On June 11, 1986, all the Warsaw Pact states issued a comprehensive new proposal on conventional force reductions. In this "Budapest Appeal," the Warsaw Pact leaders called for each alliance to reduce its forces in this zone "by 100,000 to 150,000 troops on each side within one or two years." The Budapest Appeal further stated that:

"... the Warsaw Pact member states are ready to carry out further significant reductions, as a result of which the land forces and tactical air forces of both military alliances in Europe would, by the early 1990s, be reduced by some 25% as compared with present levels."

The Budapest Appeal also addressed NATO concerns about surprise attack:

"The Warsaw Treaty member states propose to work out such a system of reductions in armed forces and conventional armaments under which the process of reduction would result in the lessening of the danger of surprise attack . . ."

But the Pact leaders had a slightly different view than NATO on how to best reduce this mutual fear:

"agreement should be reached on a significant reduction in the tactical air forces of the two military-political alliances in Europe and on lowering the level of troop concentration along the dividing line between the two alliances . . . [and] on limiting the number and size of larger military exercises . . ."

On April 10, 1987, in Prague, Gorbachev repeated many of these proposals and went on to acknowledge that "asymmetries" in NATO and Warsaw Pact forces existed and again mentioned "reasonable sufficiency" as the guidance for structuring military forces and armaments. Stated Gorbachev:

"In the west they speak about inequality, imbalance. Of course, there is asymmetry in the

armed forces of both sides in Europe dictated by historical, geographical, and other factors. We are for eliminating any elements of inequality that have arisen, but not through a buildup by those who are behind, but through a reduction on the part of those who are ahead. We see the process of reducing military confrontation in Europe as a phased process, observing balance at each stage at the level of reasonable sufficiency."

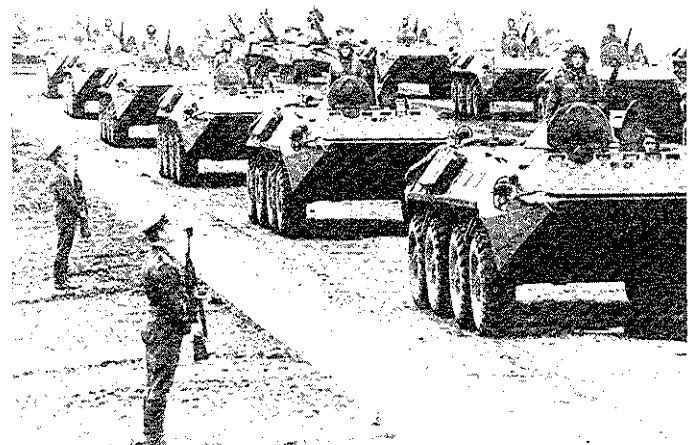
There are other examples of this apparent new thinking, and they have generated considerable excitement in both East and West.

But, thus far, there is no true evidence that the Soviet Union has actually put this doctrine into effect. Nor have Soviet military or civilian leaders been forthcoming on the specifics of how moving to a doctrine of "reasonable sufficiency" would change the size and nature of their existing forces.

In fact, speeches and articles from the Soviet military suggest that they have their own quite different interpretation of what "sufficiency" actually means. Soviet specialist Robert Legvold makes the point that, "Where Gorbachev and the civilians stress the notion of 'reasonable sufficiency,' the Soviet military substitutes 'defense sufficiency,' a concept that sets a considerably higher defense requirement."

Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev, chief of the Soviet general staff, has stated that sufficiency does not mean "unilateral disarmament or a unilateral reduction of our defense forces." In a widely distributed article on Warsaw Pact military doctrine in *Pravda* in July 1987, Soviet Defense Minister Dimitri Yazov—while embracing the concept of "sufficiency"—cautioned that "It is not we who set the limits of sufficiency, it is the actions of the United States and NATO."

Another fact to bear in mind is that when Soviet leaders speak of "asymmetries," they also have in mind areas in which they contend that NATO is superior. Soviet documents show NATO ahead in such armament categories as attack helicopters, ground attack aircraft, and others.



Soviet armored vehicles and tanks on parade.

THE VIEW FROM WESTERN EUROPE

As U.S. officials have repeatedly emphasized of late, the new Conventional Stability Talks are multilateral and thus any negotiating position must be coordinated between all the allies. Yet, while the principal allied participants welcome the new talks as an alternative to MBFR, so far there is little agreement on even the basic elements of a negotiating position and considerable pessimism that significant results will be achieved.

The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) is one of the main driving forces behind the new talks and understandably so, given the vast numbers of troops, combat equipment and nuclear weapons located in the two Germanies. West German officials on all sides of the political spectrum are acutely aware that there is enormous popular support in Germany for reducing the military confrontation between the two alliances, and that the public will likely grow increasingly impatient with any government that fails to achieve results.

Senior German leaders have discussed the need for the new talks to address the so-called third-zero, that is, the removal of the remaining thousands of short-range tactical nuclear weapons that will remain in East and West Germany, even after INF missiles are removed. Germans speak of the "singularity" issue: the fact that, as the now famous quote from West German parliamentarian Volker Ruhe goes, "the shorter the range, the deader the Germans."

This rising sentiment in West Germany against *all* nuclear weapons is what concerns leaders in France, the United Kingdom and the U.S. most. Both cynics and those hopeful for the CST talks believe that the Soviets and their East European allies will exploit this potential split between West Germany and the rest of the alliance. Many were not surprised when, in a New Year's Day speech, East German leader Erich Honecker expanded on Gorbachev's proposal for a nuclear-free zone along the inner-German border by calling for the removal of all tactical nuclear weapons (ranges below 300 miles) from the two Germanies. As already mentioned, Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze made a similar proposal more recently.

Perhaps most nervous about this shift in German opinion is France. France's current interest in both participating in CST and forging new areas of defense cooperation with the FRG seems to be motivated primarily by a fear that the dynamics of German politics in the wake of the INF Treaty are making more real the possibility that it could drift further away from common NATO objectives and towards a more neutralist stance.

One way that France is attempting to confront its fears about the future direction of German politics is through closer defense cooperation between their respective military establishments. Last year, with great fanfare, French President Francois Mitterrand and West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl announced a number of steps to be taken to forge closer defense ties between the two countries. These included: a reiteration by Mitterrand that the defense of France and West German were inextricably linked and that France would come to West Germany's aid in the

event of any hostile attack; 2) joint military exercises involving regular French forces and West German territorial troops; 3) the establishment of a joint Franco-German brigade; 4) discussion of further ties between the military structures of the two countries. In January of this year, the two leaders formally announced the formation of a Joint Defense Council.

What effect all of this will have on France's role in the new talks is uncertain. Other NATO countries will undoubtedly continue to do everything possible to accommodate France's interests, out of a desire to see France continue its trend toward renewed cooperation and interaction with the military structure of the alliance. However, diplomats from other countries remain uneasy about the new Franco-German alliance and skeptical that France's contribution to CST will be positive. France can also be expected to lead the opposition to any reductions in NATO's short-range ballistic missiles or tactical strike aircraft, both of which some experts believe are the best candidates to trade for large reductions in Soviet armor.

Like West Germany, the British government has strongly endorsed the new negotiating forum and would prefer that it concentrate initially on land-based equipment rather than manpower. Like France and the U.S., the Thatcher government is adamantly opposed to the inclusion of tactical nuclear weapons in the reductions, as Prime Minister Thatcher expressed to Gorbachev personally in their private meeting before the December 1987 Washington Summit. In general the British government is also opposed to any restrictions on advanced weapon technologies or reductions in NATO's ground attack aircraft.

Overall, countries like West Germany can more readily appreciate the political benefits that would result from an agreement at CST both for the Soviet Union and Western Europe. American analysts tend to view CST in a narrower, strictly military sense, which may account for their more pessimistic outlook on possible arms trade-offs.

Expansion of the Western Countries from the seven involved in MBFR to the 16 included in CST means that nations like Spain, Greece, and Turkey which have outlooks considerably different from each other and the rest of NATO will also have to be accommodated in the drafting of negotiating positions.

(Continued on page 11)



U.S. M-1 Abrams tank unit in staging area in West Germany during 1987 NATO exercise, "Certain Strike."

NON-PROVOCATIVE DEFENSE

Non-provocative or defensive defense is a concept that is gaining a considerable following, particularly in Germany. The advocates of non-provocative defense claim that the current strategy, types and deployments of forces, and numbers and types of combat equipment of both alliances contribute to instability. According to proponents of this concept, while each side professes to be a "defensive" alliance, neither side trains or arms its troops to fight a strictly defensive battle.

Consequently, each side interprets the other's preparations as primarily offensive in nature. Proponents of non-provocative defense believe that any reductions framework should concentrate on removing "offensive" weapons and forces while permitting the retention of "defensive" forces and equipment.

Skeptics of this concept argue that virtually any piece of combat equipment can be used either offensively or defensively depending on the tactics employed—there is no such thing as an inherently defensive weapon.

Advocates of non-provocative defense respond that the approach does not lie with any particular weapon systems but rather with a comprehensive scheme that takes into account weapons, tactics, training, forces and doctrine in order to reduce the offensive potential of both alliances. If equipment essential to an offensive capability (armor, attack helicopters, etc.) is pulled back from the immediate front or withdrawn completely, then the remaining weapons and forces will assume a more defensive character in the mind of the opponent, decreasing tensions and building confidence. Many advocates of this concept believe that NATO should unilaterally institute such changes, even if the Warsaw Pact does not.

While there is no one proposal for moving towards a non-provocative defense posture, many of the ideas discussed by its proponents include proposals put forward in the "mainstream" of conventional arms control. Some of these include:

1) an asymmetrical zone of military disengagement along the NATO-Warsaw Pact front in which heavy mobile weapons like tanks and attack helicopters, as well as bridging equipment, would be banned from an area of 50-100 kilometers on the western side and 100-200 kilometers on the eastern side, within the disengagement zone, either side could prepare defensive positions and barriers;

2) ceilings and reductions in combat arms and equipment best suited for offensive operations, including but not necessarily limited to tanks, armored helicopters, ground-attack aircraft, ground-launched ballistic missiles and bridging equipment;

3) movement away from operational concepts and training that emphasize attacks and counterattacks—whether ostensibly "defensive" in purpose or not—deeply into the opponent's territory. According to this view, NATO should abandon the Follow-on Forces Attack (FOFA) strategy and the weapons to implement that strategy. The Warsaw Pact should abandon its own plans that call for massive armored breakthrough and encirclement of NATO forces on NATO territory;

4) abandonment of NATO's nuclear "first use" policy and a general de-emphasis and eventual removal of tactical and theater nuclear weapons on both sides.



First time released publicly photo of Soviet and American officers posing together during official CDE inspection of Soviet exercise in Belorussia. August 1987.

NEGOTIATING OBJECTIVES

Even given the current lack of consensus in allied conventional arms control policy, most alliance members could support some type of conventional arms control if it were compatible with fundamental security concerns. But what would the basic structure of such an agreement look like? What should be NATO's underlying objectives? And what are the possible tradeoffs between NATO and Warsaw Pact advantages which might be both politically acceptable within each alliance and militarily useful?

A guiding principle should be that any agreement must enhance deterrence by decreasing the possibility that Soviet leaders would ever seriously contemplate an attack on Western Europe in the belief that it could succeed. (An agreement must also address Soviet fears that NATO is developing an offensive capability.) As John Steinbruner of the Brookings Institution puts it, "Both NATO and Warsaw Pact forces should have . . . the operational capacity to hold their current territory with confidence . . .

neither should be able to attack forward with any reasonable expectation of success."

Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs)

Any agreement should build on previous efforts to reduce the risk of war through accident or miscalculation. Increasing the frequency and scope of CSBMs is one such step. Such CSBMs could be implemented more swiftly and easily than actual reductions and, consequently, could be the first phase of any new agreement. This concept could also be expanded to limit the size of any military exercises in the reductions zone to a ceiling of, perhaps, 50,000 troops initially with a gradual reduction in the threshold.

Former U.S. MBFR negotiator Jonathan Dean has proposed the establishment of a defensive zone of 100-150 kilometers on either side of the inner-German border within which no offensive equipment (tanks, self-propelled ar-

(Continued on page 12)



Russian and American officers confer in Ostenholz, West Germany during 1987 NATO exercise. Soviet officer is official Warsaw Pact observer under CDE Agreement.

Negotiating Objectives (Continued from page 11)

tillery and attack helicopters) would be allowed—a concept advocated by proponents of non-provocative defense. He also advocates pulling back major ammunition and fuel storage depots behind this zone as a further CSBM.

In addition, the two sides could place permanent observers at major airports, seaports, and rail junctions to add to warning of mobilization and preparation efforts—a measure already agreed to in principle at the MBFR talks.

Finally, NATO should take up the Warsaw Pact's proposal for a series of military-to-military exchanges to discuss *mutual fear of provocative strategies* and other defense matters. Recent Senate testimony by JCS Chairman Crowe and Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci indicates the U.S. is quite interested in such exchanges. Said Carlucci before the Senate Armed Services Committee: "At the Summit, General Secretary Gorbachev suggested that I and my counterpart meet for the purpose of setting up a series of military-to-military contacts and I have agreed to that . . . it would include discussing avoiding dangerous activities; [an] arms control discussion and doctrine and tactics . . ."

Zone of Reductions

Increasing the area of reductions in the new talks to "the Atlantic to the Urals" is seen by some as a positive step but by others as one that will complicate the negotiations considerably.

The advantage of such a zone is that it includes the USSR's western military districts and theaters of military operations (TVDs) and, therefore, reductions would presumably include the large Soviet forces in those areas. But increasing the zone of reductions also means that force deployments in additional countries like Spain, Italy, Turkey and others must be taken into account. Moreover, the Soviet Union will undoubtedly be very reluctant to include in the reductions border guards and other security forces located on its soil that it claims are not troops.

One possibility is to stagger the reductions so that the first phase would apply to the central (MBFR) zone and later reductions would take the entire Atlantic to the Urals area into account.

There is also a strong case to be made for asymmetrical withdraw of forces. Former Supreme Allied Commander

in Europe (SACEUR) General Bernard Rogers believes that, since it would be more difficult for the U.S. to bring back forces and equipment from across the ocean than it would for the Soviet Union to bring them back across land, the U.S. should be permitted to retain equipment for any withdrawn forces in storage in Europe—perhaps in the United Kingdom or France—while the Soviets should be required to withdraw forces and equipment at least behind their western TVDs.

Force Reductions

There appears to be widespread agreement, at least in the West, that the new talks should move away from overall manpower ceilings toward reductions in specific units (divisions, regiments, battalions, etc.) This is so that units could not be left in place and partially reduced, in order to meet manpower ceilings, then quickly restored to full strength (with the infrastructure already in place) during a crisis.

Many feel that any reductions will have to be highly asymmetrical (on the order of 3:1 to 5:1) and should concentrate on active-duty Soviet armored divisions in East Germany. There is strong resistance to the inclusion of tactical combat aircraft or nuclear weapons in any reductions scheme.

Armaments

Western experts agree that tanks and artillery are the most important armaments to include in any reductions scheme, but have different ideas on how to limit them.

Former Carter national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski has written of the need for 50% reductions in tanks and the creation of a "tank-free zone" in Central Europe to mitigate the dangers of Warsaw Pact attack. Brzezinski believes that such a NATO proposal would be a useful political initiative, even if the Warsaw Pact rejected it.

Some experts point out that even substantial reductions in Soviet tanks in Eastern Europe would be relatively meaningless if the tanks were older T-54 and T-62 models, or if they were only pulled back to a point inside the Soviet Union where they could be moved back into the front in a short period of time.

Dean proposes that, at least initially, negotiators focus on tanks held by Category I and II units in the Central European area. This could lead to a reductions scheme that, while asymmetrical in NATO's favor, might actually be negotiable and work to NATO's advantage. In the central area, the Pact has about 15,000 tanks in Category I and II units and NATO about 11,000. Agreeing to an equal ceiling of 10,000 would mean that NATO would have to reduce by about 1,000 tanks and the Warsaw Pact would have to remove 5,000 of its most modern T-72 and T-80 tanks.

But, what NATO should be willing to trade in return for such one-sided reductions. The Soviet view is that NATO has a number of "asymmetrical advantages" of its own, including superior tactical air forces and qualitative superiority in "emerging technologies" (e.g., new air-and
(Continued on page 13, column 2)

THE VIEW FROM CAPITOL HILL

A number of knowledgeable senators and congressmen have introduced their own new ideas on the best approach to the new talks. Senator Nunn, in particular among American politicians, has stressed the need for renewed efforts toward conventional arms reductions in the wake of the INF Treaty.

In April 1987, at a speech in Brussels, Nunn described several ideas which he represented as merely "a beginning point for formulating discussion."

He suggested that NATO renounce its policy of the "first use" of nuclear weapons in exchange for Warsaw Pact willingness to disperse its tank formations and move them away from the central front. Nunn also proposed that, as an initial step, the U.S. and USSR could each withdraw 50 per cent of their forward deployed forces. For the U.S., this would mean the removal of about "2 plus" divisions from West Germany, and for the Soviets the removal of about "13 plus" divisions from East Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia.

House Armed Services Committee Chairman Les Aspin has also given considerable thought to both conventional defense improvements and arms control.

With regard to defense improvements, Aspin has proposed: building tank barriers in West Germany such as trenches, canals, concrete walls, and mine fields; deploying more, and more effective infantry-fired anti-tank weapons; concentrating on better close air support for our ground forces in Europe, and; deploying additional operational reserve units equipped with anti-tank weapons to neutralize any Warsaw Pact armor that should penetrate the central front.

On arms control, Aspin has stressed the need for much larger cuts on the part of the Warsaw Pact. But he also believes that the fear of a short warning Warsaw Pact attack has been overstated and that, historically, the Soviets do not use short-warning attacks. Moreover, claims Aspin, their forces in East Germany are at a lower state of readiness than has been assumed previously.

Aspin has outlined no specific arms control proposals, other than stressing the need for asymmetric cuts, but he lists the most difficult problems for negotiators as: 1) verification of armament reductions; 2) how to achieve equal lower levels of armaments that enhance stability; 3) the geographic boundaries of the limits; and 4) which armaments and forces, other than tanks, should be limited.

Other Senators; Levin, Quayle, and Biden to name a few, have their own ideas on the best approach to arms reductions and defense improvements.

Negotiating Objectives (Continued from page 12)

ground-launched missiles with high accuracy and capable of carrying either nuclear or non-nuclear, high explosive warheads). It views these as key elements of NATO's offensive strategy that should be included in any reductions scheme.

Warsaw Pact leaders point to NATO plans to introduce some 400 U.S. F-15E long-range nuclear strike aircraft, beginning in 1989, to supplement hundreds of existing F-111, F-16 and Tornado bombers. The capabilities of these forces may well be increased by advanced, long-range, air-to-surface missiles using "Stealth" technologies and capable of carrying both conventional and nuclear warheads. NATO also plans to introduce a new conventional ballistic missile (ATACMs) and a follow-on to the short-range Lance nuclear missile in the early 1990s.

Some western experts believe that NATO should consider trading reductions in its strike aircraft or limiting deployment of emerging technologies in return for large-scale withdrawals of Soviet tanks, attack helicopters and self-propelled artillery from the central front, as well as a ceiling on Soviet deployment of similar-type missiles.

But there is deep reluctance among western military leaders to trade away limited qualitative advantages that could spell the difference between victory and defeat, even if the trade leads to a large-scale removal of modern Soviet combat equipment.

One might accommodate these new armaments by agreeing to a ceiling on the deployment of ATACMs and any Lance follow-on that would keep their numbers limited. Any such limit should also mandate reductions in Soviet missiles—the hundreds of SS-21, SCUD and FROG short-range ballistic missiles that will remain deployed in Europe even after the destruction of INF and SRINF missiles is completed.

NATO should also be willing to consider limits on the modernization of its ground-attack aircraft, particularly those like the F-111 and F-15E capable of striking well inside the Soviet Union. A common ceiling on armored attack helicopters, where NATO currently has an advantage, would also seem appropriate.

Finally, consideration should be given to supplemental restrictions on other units and equipment necessary to sustain offensive combat operations, including armored reconnaissance units, mobile air defense units and bridging equipment.

Verification

This issue has plagued MBFR from the outset and could derail any future negotiation. But the two sides are gaining valuable experience with the data exchanges and on-site inspections that are part of the CDE Agreement. And the far more comprehensive inspections of missile deployments, production facilities and destruction contained in the INF Treaty should go far toward eroding the resistance of both Soviet and western military establishments toward more intrusive means of verification. Any NATO proposals should reflect this added confidence and experience and remain ambitious in their verification and inspection provisions.

(Continued on page 14)

ANALYSTS ADDRESS GORBACHEV

10 October, 1987

Mikhail S. Gorbachev, General Secretary
CPSU
Moscow, USSR

Dear General Secretary Gorbachev,

We are a group of scientists from Western countries who have been working on the problems of easing both the nuclear and nonnuclear military confrontations in Europe. We have noted the statements, made by you (most recently in Pravda) and by the Warsaw Treaty Organization (from Budapest and Berlin) that the doctrine of WTO and NATO forces should be defensive and that a stable balance should be achieved by reductions in offensive forces rather than by build-ups.

We are very much interested in these statements. We have reached similar conclusions. We would like to share them with you and ask you to respond with an elaboration of your ideas.

Current fears of war in Europe are due primarily to the offense-capable structure of the military forces on both sides. These structures give forces the capability for surprise attack and conquest. They feed the fears which are used to justify very high levels of military spending and a continued technological arms race after more than 40 years of peace in Europe. These same fears are also used to justify reliance on nuclear weapons as a deterrent to nonnuclear aggression.

Reductions of the current forces without changes in their composition would preserve their offensive structure and the associated fears of aggression and therefore would perpetuate the justification for relying on nuclear weapons in Europe. We believe that there should be reductions in non-nuclear forces designed so as to simultaneously cut drastically their offensive capabilities and preserve the defensive capabilities on each side. That would implement the doctrine of defensiveness and lead to a stable condition that we would term "mutual defensive sufficiency." At that point, we believe that the popular willingness to maintain large armed forces and to sustain the risks of the nuclear confrontation would rapidly erode.

We would suggest the following approach: from the Atlantic to the Urals, reduce the numbers of strike

aircraft, tanks, armed helicopters and long-range artillery on each side to equal levels well below the current levels of the lower side; and ban ballistic missiles in Europe with ranges greater than approximately 50 km.

Although the reductions required to reach equality will be unequal, the security of both sides will be increased. Reducing long-range strike capabilities would reduce incentives for preemptive strikes in time of crisis. Reducing numbers of tanks and artillery available for massed attacks relative to decentralized defensive forces would reduce the capability for capturing foreign territory. And, with the fear of conventional aggression reduced, "battlefield" nuclear weapons could be withdrawn from Europe and destroyed, thereby reducing the danger of nuclear war. Then the technological resources of both East and West could be freed to concentrate on the social, economic and environmental improvement of Europe and the rest of the world.

We would also urge that, as part of the new extension of glasnost to the military area, the Soviet government publish its own numbers for Soviet weapons systems in different categories. Otherwise, independent analysts will continue to have only NATO estimates—which are often biased upwards by worst-case assumptions.

We would be interested in your reactions to these thoughts and in your own ideas for implementing your proposals for reducing the continuing senseless and dangerous military confrontation in Europe.

Sincerely,

Anders Boserup
University of
Copenhagen
Denmark

Robert Neild
Cambridge University
United Kingdom

Frank Von Hippel
Federation of
American Scientists
Washington, D.C.
U.S.A

Albrecht von Mueller
Max Planck Society,
Starnberg
Federal Republic
of Germany

(Members of the Pugwash Study Group on
Conventional Forces in Europe.)

Verification problems might be eased if the two sides move away from manpower ceilings—which many experts believe are the most difficult to verify accurately—to limits on armaments. However, a recent House Intelligence Committee Report on verification concluded that while "Military manpower is one of the most difficult items to verify . . . the withdrawal or the deactivation of units required under an MBFR agreement could be monitored without significant problems." The report went on to state that:

". . . the general size and disposition of Warsaw Pact forces, as well as their organization and armaments, can be monitored with consid-

erable confidence. Additionally, in a major crisis, our capability is sufficient to detect rather promptly a major mobilization and movement by Warsaw Pact forces to a war footing."

Tactical Nuclear Weapons

This will be one of the most difficult issues to resolve in the new talks. The Soviet Union can be expected to continue to press for reductions in tactical nuclear weapons and challenge NATO's first use policy, since it gains considerable propaganda advantage by doing so in all of Western Europe but especially West Germany, where pressure to remove short-range nuclear weapons is growing.

Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze's proposal

GORBACHEV'S REPLY

16 November, 1987

Dear Messrs von Mueller, von Hippel, Boserup and Neild,

I was interested in your letter, in which you laid out some ideas on the complex and very poignant problem of how most effectively to lower the level of military confrontation in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals, in order to limit the possibility of a new war on the European continent.

You approach this in conceptual and practical terms which might well provide the basis of a solution to the problem.

In practical terms, as far as I understand it, the question concerns the realization of measures to limit and restructure the armed forces and conventional weapons with which the two sides confront each other in Europe, in such a way as to keep on both sides the basic capability for non-offensive defense.

This is very close to our understanding of the problem. The Soviet Union abides by the principle of reasonable sufficiency of armed forces and armaments. This reflects the strictly defensive orientation of the military doctrine of our country and our allies in the Warsaw Pact. The path towards the realization of reasonable sufficiency we see in governments not having more military strength and armaments than is necessary for their reliable defense, and also in their armed forces being structured in such a way that they will provide all that is needed for the repulsion of any

possible aggression but could not be used for offensive purposes.

We are actively engaged in preparing for negotiations in the near future on the limitation of armed forces and conventional weapons in Europe. As you know, at the moment a mandate is being agreed for such negotiations at the CSCE in Vienna.

In this preparatory work, we are basing ourselves on the known proposals of the Warsaw Pact concerning real and radical reductions, and the elimination of asymmetry and imbalance by reducing accordingly the arms of the power that is in the lead, by removing from a zone between the Warsaw Pact and NATO the most dangerous offensive weapons, and by reducing to a minimum agreed level the concentration in this zone of armed forces and armaments. In the course of this work we will pay great attention to the concrete ideas laid out in the memorandum attached to your letter.

I want to underline again that we attach great significance to the active participation of learned people in seeking solutions to what are the most pressing military-political and international problems. We are all doing one thing directly connected with the central problem of the contemporary world—the problem of how to ensure the survival of mankind.

With respects,

Mikhail Gorbachev

to eliminate all tactical nuclear weapons from the two Germanies, announced during a recent trip to Bonn, was seen by some as one more example of this attempted manipulation. Yet, Shevardnadze also opened the possibility of deferring reductions in tactical nuclear weapons until after conventional arms reductions were completed. This could be a positive step.

However, there remains strong resistance within the western alliance to even discussing the removal of tactical nuclear weapons in the same context with conventional force reductions. Some military leaders, like General Rogers, argue that NATO should maintain and continue to modernize its tactical nuclear arsenal even if conventional parity is achieved—an unlikely prospect.

The intransigence of NATO's position on the question of tactical nuclear weapons is increasingly unrealistic in light of growing public impatience. NATO as an alliance can only remain strong and cohesive so long as there is wide-spread public support in Western Europe for its underlying objectives and strategy.

NATO must stake out a reasonable compromise position that takes into account the concerns of all alliance members and the public. The alliance should be willing to discuss reductions in tactical nuclear forces in principle, but it should lay down a tough bargaining position at the outset and proceed cautiously. Trading tactical nuclear weapons for reductions in armor would not seem to be a wise stance unless the Soviets are also willing to agree to

substantial and verifiable reductions in their own tactical nuclear capability. A useful bargaining position for NATO to agree to discuss reductions in tactical nuclear weapons after conventional force reductions are completed—a stance hinted at by Shevardnadze in Bonn.

Nuclear-Free Zones

While NATO must be willing to at least discuss reductions in tactical nuclear weapons, implementation of such reductions through concepts like nuclear-free zones has many shortcomings. The most obvious one is that, unless some provision is made for the actual destruction of the nuclear warheads or their delivery systems, they could be easily reintroduced into the forward battle area in a crisis, particularly air-delivered weapons. This reintroduction could create a more de-stabilizing sequence of events than if the weapons were already in the theater.

Force Improvements

Negotiating objectives must also be compatible with unilateral steps taken to improve NATO's military posture. Modernization and improvement of NATO's military forces should be undertaken with NATO's negotiating position in mind, and vice versa, but there are obvious problems in making this coordination a reality.

There is an inherent tension between potential arms control trade-offs and NATO's "Follow-on Forces Attack" (FOFA) strategy. It will be difficult for NATO to



U.S. Army

First time released publicly photo of U.S. Army colonel asking questions to Soviet artillery crew in Belorussian military district, August 1987. U.S. officer was official CDE inspector.

achieve reductions in Soviet forces and boost its own strength by deploying sophisticated new missiles without increasing Soviet fears that it is increasing its offensive capabilities.

However, many of the improvements that NATO could implement are less provocative. For example, increasing the pre-positioning of adequate supplies of combat equipment, ammunition, fuel, lubricants, and other war reserve stocks for reinforcements is stressed by all military commanders and civilian experts.

Many experts also agree that there should be an increased emphasis on maintaining sufficient operational reserve forces to counterattack in the event that the Warsaw Pact achieves a breakthrough. An increase of 10-15 reserve

divisions to NATO's force posture would improve significantly the prospects for mounting a successful forward defense and would be far less expensive than adding active forces—an unlikely possibility in any event given budgetary constraints.

In addition to these "hard" improvements in NATO's force structure and materials, there are "soft" improvements that could increase NATO's responsiveness to warning. Of course, to enhance deterrence, either hard or soft improvements should be made apparent to Soviet military and civilian leaders. Ironically, hard improvements may be easier for the Warsaw Pact to detect but soft improvements may actually improve NATO's defense posture to a greater extent.

Conclusion

New Conventional Stability Talks are coming for which NATO is ill-prepared. NATO leaders, if they hope to prevent ceding the arms control "high ground" to the Soviet Union must begin new thinking about innovative solutions to the military confrontation in Europe. This issue of the *Public Interest Report* has tried to call attention to the opportunities and dilemmas that the alliance faces.

Of course, the CST talks will not reach agreement overnight and, indeed, it will be well into the next U.S. President's term before they produce results. This means that any talk of holding a strategic arms reduction (START) Treaty hostage to progress in conventional arms control is a prescription for failure in both arenas. But with time and patience, the logjam can be broken and a new era of stability in Europe achieved.

FAS analyst Thomas Longstreth has reviewed the prospects for conventional arms control with a view to introducing our members and others to the options available. Under a research and writing grant from the MacArthur Foundation, he will be continuing this investigation (among other subjects he pursues) over the next fifteen months.

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