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Conventional forces and arms limitation in Europe

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prepared under the direction of Pierre Lellouche and Jérôme Paolini*



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PREFACE

In paragraphs 81 and 82 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, the most comprehensive consensus statement on disarmament formulated to date by the international community, it was considered that "Together with negotiations on nuclear disarmament measures, the limitation and gradual reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons should be resolutely pursued within the framework of progress towards general and complete disarmament". States with larger military arsenals were especially urged to pursue such endeavours and Europe was specifically singled out as a priority region of the globe where agreement on mutual reductions and limitations of military potential could greatly contribute to the enhancement of international peace and security.

The Washington Treaty between the USA and USSR on the Elimination of their Intermediate-range and Shorter-range nuclear missiles has given new momentum to discussions for further disarmament measures between the two main military alliances in both the nuclear and conventional fields and brought to the fore the controversial issue of the correlation between nuclear and conventional weapons in securing military stability in Europe.

Situated as they are in the most densely armed region in the world, and having experienced two devastating wars in this century, the European states are the first to acknowledge the fundamental importance of reducing military tensions among themselves. However, divergences remain as to the concrete ways and means for the attainment of their security objectives on the basis of mutually acceptable reductions of their respective forces.

This research report on conventional arms control has been prepared by a working group set up by IFRI. It begins by reviewing the long history of the MBFR process, the negotiating stances and the changes in them, and then indicates the current problems related to preparations for the future conference on conventional stability in Europe. There follows an analysis and assessment of the conventional forces which are concentrated in the central European zone, and a detailed presentation of the Western and Soviet approaches to conventional disarmament in the region. These factual sections, together with the evaluations based on them, are then taken up for the purposes of a discussion on the prospects for conventional stability, in which two different viewpoints are expressed.

The report ends with a general conclusion, which emphasizes the recent rapid evolution in Soviet positions and proposals, as well as the need for the Western countries, and especially those in Western Europe, not to maintain a passive attitude in this regard. Thus the report constitutes a contribution to thinking on this subject, without seeking to provide a complete and definitive handbook for negotiations. UNIDIR is happy to publish it as such, as it has already published and will continue to publish a variety of viewpoints on this particularly important, complex and topical subject.

It is UNIDIR's hope that such research reports will promote better appreciation of countries' security requirements, thus helping to foster understanding to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Jayantha DHANAPALA
Director, UNIDIR

UNIDIR

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

UNIDIR is an autonomous institution within the framework of the United Nations. It was established in 1980 by the General Assembly for the purpose of undertaking independent research on disarmament and related problems, particularly international security issues.

The work of the Institute aims at:

(a) Providing the international community with more diversified and complete data on problems relating to international security, the armaments race, and disarmament in all fields, particularly in the nuclear field, so as to facilitate progress, through negotiations, towards greater security for all States and towards the economic and social development of all peoples;

(b) Promoting informed participation by all States in disarmament efforts;

(c) Assisting ongoing negotiations on disarmament and continuing efforts to ensure greater international security at a progressively lower level of armaments, particularly nuclear armaments, by means of objective and factual studies and analyses;

(d) Carrying out more in-depth, forward-looking, and long-term research on disarmament, so as to provide a general insight into the problems involved, and stimulating new initiatives for new negotiations.

The contents of this publication are the responsibility of the authors and not of UNIDIR. Although UNIDIR takes no position on the views and conclusions expressed by the authors of its research reports, it does assume responsibility for determining whether they merit publication.

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FOREWORD

Since the end of the Second World War, the political and military division of Europe has been characterized by a face-off between two military alliances and an unprecedented concentration of conventional forces on either side, with the military presence of the United States and the Soviet Union in the heart of the continent. Despite this confrontation, the numerous arsenals in the region and the tensions of the cold war, the longest period of peace experienced in European history has been preserved. Yet this peace - in which a decisive role has been played by that fundamental tool of deterrence and stabilization, nuclear weapons - was brought about only at the cost of political and human division of the peoples of Europe.

To date the effort to control conventional weapons in Europe has played only a marginal role in this armed peace. The MBFR talks begun in October 1973, in which France did not participate, covered only a limited area in central Europe and failed to achieve the slightest tangible result in over 450 sessions and 15 years of negotiations. Above and beyond the intrinsic technical complexity of conventional disarmament - counting rules, methods and means of imposing cuts or ceilings - the fact is that the parties, especially the United States and the Soviet Union, preferred to reach their objective of stability in Europe essentially by maintaining a military and political *status quo* rather than through mutually acceptable cuts in their arsenals.

With the opening of new talks on conventional forces in Europe in Vienna on 6 March 1989, this state of affairs is being radically modified. These talks, which are linked to the CSCE process and gather together all the countries with a direct interest in the European security order, including France, in a truly significant area stretching from the Atlantic to the Urals, are taking place in a much more favourable context than in the past. The new directions of Soviet policy in the field of disarmament and the December 1987 Washington Treaty on the elimination of Soviet and American intermediate-range nuclear missiles have led to a marked quickening of the pace of the discussions on conventional disarmament, opening up prospects for continued stability in Europe but with genuinely lower force levels and more defensive military postures. But disarmament or the reduction of conventional arms and armed forces in Europe also means the inevitable modification of the political and territorial order inherited from the Second World War - an order characterized by the presence of American and Soviet forces in the heart of a divided Europe. Above and beyond the former *status quo*, what is really at stake in the Vienna talks seems to be the prospect of a radical recasting of the post-war system of security. With the process of internal reform under way in the Soviet Union, and the still uncertain trends in the countries of Eastern Europe, conventional disarmament could be one of the essential components of the redefinition of the European order.

It is precisely this question mark over the future security of the Old Continent as a result of conventional disarmament which this research report is designed to highlight. The report, prepared by IFRI for the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research as part of the preparations for the Vienna talks, sets out an analysis of the factors which should be taken into account in any evaluation of the prospects for the undertaking now beginning. An outline of the background to the conventional arms control effort in Europe and its principal lessons is followed by a description of the present military

context and a study of the approach to conventional disarmament both West and East. Finally, before the general conclusion of the report, two different viewpoints on the process now getting under way are presented in the form of a debate.

For the purpose of carrying out such a complex study, in both political and military terms, the IFRI team of researchers was able to draw on the skills of the foremost French experts in conventional disarmament, who met regularly in a working group during 1988. Although the conclusions and analyses set out here are the sole responsibility of their authors and the IFRI researchers, we would like to thank each of the distinguished figures who have contributed to our work, whose names are listed in this volume. We also wish to thank Professor Serge Sur, Deputy Director of UNIDIR, for his contribution to our efforts. Their assistance was indispensable in offering what we consider to be as full an analysis as possible of what is at stake in conventional disarmament in Europe. It will be for the reader to tell us whether the objective has been achieved.

Pierre Lellouche and Jérôme Paolini
April 1989

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CHAPTER 1

CONVENTIONAL DISARMAMENT IN EUROPE FROM THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS TO THE CONVENTIONAL STABILITY TALKS

Walter SCHÜTZE

Historical background

The conclusion of the Paris Agreements in October 1954, under which the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) became a member of the Atlantic Pact and NATO's military system - which resulted in the creation of the Warsaw Pact - brought about a situation which was characterized by antagonism between the two military alliances. During the 4-Power conferences at Geneva (at the Summit in July 1955 and in October/November at the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs), disagreement both as regards the substance and form of future European security was obvious. The Western Powers were seeking rapid and specific disarmament solutions (particularly through the "Eden Plan" for an inspection zone along the demarcation line and corresponding in general to the Van Zeeland, Mendès-France, Jules Moch and other plans aimed at partial and controlled demilitarization on the territory of the two German States). The USSR, on the other hand, maintained the position that it had already developed at the 4-Power Berlin Conference in 1954, which consisted in proposing a pan-European collective security treaty accompanied by a treaty on the renunciation of the use of force and recognition of the status quo, in other words, the existence of the two German States. The Western Powers continued up to 1967 to link progress on disarmament with the solution of the German problem, namely, reunification on the basis of free elections. The schism was quite obvious and it has persisted up to the present time - at least up to Mr. Gorbachev's accession to power:

- The West opted for a *functional approach*, seeking to settle problems raised by the imbalance of forces in Europe, particularly in its central region.
- The East opted for a *declaratory approach*, seeking first of all to establish new security arrangements which, according to the 1954/55 proposals, were to take the form of the withdrawal of foreign forces stationed in the two Germanys and the dissolution of military pacts.

Following the disagreement at Geneva, the question of general disarmament was referred to the London Commission of five Powers and, from the 1960s, to the United Nations at Geneva. Regional disarmament, limited to Europe, resurfaced only two years later as a result of the "Rapacki Plan" for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

The significance of the Rapacki and Gomulka Plans

On 2 October 1957 Adam Rapacki, the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs, proposed at the United Nations General Assembly in New York the creation of a zone completely free of any nuclear weapons, to include the territory of the two German States, Poland and Czechoslovakia. The details of this proposal were set out in a Polish memorandum transmitted in February 1958 to the Governments of the countries directly concerned, and provided for a guarantee by the nuclear-weapon Powers not to use their nuclear weapons in the zone, in the event of war, as well as an “effective inspection system” by aerial and ground means.

This Polish initiative was launched within the framework of the efforts made by Warsaw to recover a certain amount of diplomatic autonomy at the European level as a result of the “Polish Spring” of 1956, during which Mr. Gomulka returned to power and the Soviet Marshal Rokossovsky (of Polish origin) departed. Its obvious purpose was to prevent the introduction of so-called tactical nuclear weapons into the arsenals of the European members of NATO and the deployment of intermediate-range ballistic missiles (Thor and Jupiter) in Turkey, Italy and Great Britain (France having refused the United States offer). Although the Atlantic Council, meeting at the Summit in December 1957 at Paris, had agreed to the introduction of these weapons (the nuclear warheads were to remain under the exclusive control of the Americans), Poland pursued its efforts which were in line with Soviet policy (Andrei Gromyko, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR had already, in March 1956, proposed a denuclearized zone with a reduced level of conventional weapons in the two German States and adjacent countries, and Mr. Bulganin, the Soviet Prime Minister, renewed this proposal in notes to Bonn and other Western Powers in December 1957 and January 1958).

The NATO countries pointed out that a nuclear-weapon-free zone of that nature would merely enhance the Warsaw Pact’s superiority in conventional weapons (this superiority was offset by the decision of the Atlantic Council of December 1957, which provided for the introduction of nuclear weapons). In response to these Western objections, Warsaw in November 1958 proposed the “Gomulka Plan” with, in a first stage, a freeze of nuclear weapons deployed in the Rapacki zone and, in a second stage, their elimination in parallel with a reduction of conventional forces. This new regional approach was, however, rejected by the Western Powers and particularly by the Adenauer Government, which was afraid that a zone of reduced military density and therefore with a special status would cut off the FRG politically and militarily from its allies. As a matter of principle, Bonn refused any negotiations with the Eastern countries that would have the effect of recognizing the German Democratic Republic (GDR) as a valid interlocutor and a sovereign State (which was precisely the purpose of the Polish and Soviet initiatives). Félix Gaillard, the President of the French Council, in a note to Mr. Bulganin of 14 January 1958 stated that, for his part, he was prepared to discuss the Rapacki Plan subject to the express condition that the USSR would agree to the reunification of Germany on the basis of Western proposals. It was clear that the German problem was blocking any progress towards a limitation of forces in Europe, and it took a change of attitude on both sides for the process to resume both at the level of the two great Powers (SALT) as well as at the level of the two alliances (MBFR talks) and the CSCE.

From the Harmel Report to the MBFR talks

A change in the climate surrounding East-West relations, in other words the policy of détente occurred at the end of 1965 in the United States (President Johnson accepted, in December 1965, Zbigniew Brzezinski's ideas about the need for "bridge-building" between the two systems) and was promoted by General de Gaulle. It removed the German obstacle by subordinating the solution of the problem of German unity to progress in relations with the Eastern bloc. President Johnson, in a speech at New York in October 1966, for the first time publicly suggested the possibility of a negotiated reduction of forces in Europe, and the Atlantic Council at its meeting in Brussels in December 1967 adopted the "Harmel Report" on the future objectives of the Alliance: defence and deterrence on the one hand and dialogue and co-operation with the countries of the East on the other. The Harmel Report had - at least implicitly - opened the way for NATO/Warsaw Pact negotiations and for the famous "Reykjavik signal" (Atlantic Council in the Icelandic capital in May 1968), mainly as a result of the initiative of Willy Brandt, the new Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Great Bonn Coalition.

For the members of NATO's integrated system (and therefore with the exception of France which did not sign the paragraph in the Reykjavik communiqué concerning the reduction of conventional forces) there were two major motivations:

- On the United States side, the Johnson Administration had, from 1966 and owing to the war in Vietnam, withdrawn some of its troops stationed in the European theatre. Officially 35,000 men, i.e. over one-tenth of the total, including entire brigades in the FRG, were brought back home (their heavy equipment remained and a system of rotation and annual manoeuvres (Reforger Plan) was devised for their return in the event of war). At the same time, the BOAR was reduced by 6,000 men. Washington (as well as London) in this way displayed new interest in the stabilization forces on the continent through an agreement with the Warsaw Pact. On the German side, the prospect of a partial disengagement of British and United States forces had been a source of very considerable concern, and in 1965 the Erhard Government had set up a Committee of Experts (military and diplomatic) under the presidency of General Heusinger, Chief Inspector-General of the Bundeswehr, to examine the problem. Its report was submitted in February 1967 and in its conclusions the Committee stated that it was in favour of mutual and negotiated reductions as the only means of avoiding the weakening of Western forces in relation to those of the Warsaw Pact, notwithstanding certain reservations concerning the lack of depth of NATO's Central European theatre, in view of the fact that this geographical and strategic disparity was aggravated even further by the withdrawal of France from the integrated command system.

- On the German side, it was felt, particularly by those close to Willy Brandt and his Director of Planning, Egon Bahr, that a process involving an agreed limitation of forces in Europe and particularly in its central region, would have a positive effect on political relations with the countries of the East by creating conditions favourable to rapprochement with the GDR. The new "arms control" strategy should, according to this view, enable the Europeans to participate in future United States-Soviet negotiations in order to defend their own security

interests. The occupation of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact forces in August 1968 served to emphasize the need for negotiations - on the military level, because the USSR had increased its potential in the heart of Europe by five divisions (60,000 men) but particularly on the political level, since the suppression of the "Prague Spring" also put an end to the hopes entertained by Social Democratic and Liberal leaders in Bonn of being able to avoid recognition of the GDR.

From the very beginning of the process which was lead up to the MBFR talks, the two main motivations - military stabilization (position of the United States and of the Christian Democrats in Bonn) and a political instrument to promote détente between East and West and between the two Germanys (position of the Social Democrats and the Liberals) coexisted to the point of being in conflict, and this ambiguity as regards objectives has persisted up to the present time. The Soviet Union failed to react to the "Reykjavik signal" and pursued the policy formulated in the Bucharest Declaration (meeting of the Warsaw Pact's Advisory Committee in the summer of 1966) and which corresponded to its traditional demand for the dissolution of military "blocs" and their replacement by a system of collective security.

The Warsaw Pact, at its Budapest meeting in March 1969 had, however, made a major concession by agreeing for the first time that a pan-European conference on security could include the United States and Canada. The Budapest "signal" was discussed at the Atlantic Council's meeting held in April of the same year in Washington, where Mr. Brandt's highly favourable reaction encountered express reservations on the part of Mr. Michel Debré, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs. Nevertheless, NATO agreed to envisage a conference of that nature and the major problem in subsequent years was how to combine the two "signals" of Reykjavik and Budapest. The United States, encountering new pressure from Congress (the Mansfield resolution on the unilateral withdrawal of some of the United States troops on the Continent), tried to separate the negotiated reduction of forces from the preparations that were to lead to the CSCE, whereas the European Allies - and above all the FRG - wanted to discuss problems of security in the framework of the 35-country forum. But Washington was in a hurry and Moscow indicated that it was prepared to separate the two levels of the CSCE and the MBFR talks - as was demonstrated by Mr. Brezhnev's speech at Tbilisi on 14 May 1971 which, in point of fact, was simply a restatement of his speech to the Twenty-Fourth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in March 1971 - so that, disregarding the objections of their respective allies as well as those of the neutral countries, the two great Powers agreed to discuss the limitation of conventional armaments in the circumscribed framework of the members of the two alliances, referring the question of "confidence-building measures", and therefore the somewhat psychological aspects of security, to the CSCE.

The MBFR negotiations

The Brandt/Scheel Government's new *Ostpolitik* had, in November 1969, removed the main obstacle to negotiations with the East by recognizing the East German State as *de jure* partner. The Atlantic Council at its Rome meeting in May 1970 adopted the following four guidelines gover-

ning NATO's position (without France) on the MBFR negotiations:

- Equal security without any disadvantage for either of the two parties;
- Mutual and balanced reductions of forces in a region to be specified;
- Reductions both of forces stationed in the zone (modestly called the NGA = *NATO guidelines area*) and of national forces (as well as weapons systems); and
- Creation of a climate of confidence throughout Europe and adoption of adequate control and verification measures.

The rather vague nature of these principles failed to conceal basic differences of view between the United States approach on the one hand and that of Bonn on the other. On the initiative of Helmut Schmidt, the new German Minister of Defence, the Ministry's Planning Group and private experts drew up a plan which, apart from the fact that it emphasized an organic link with the CSCE and full participation by forces stationed in the NGA zone, called for a significant reduction in offensive weapons in order to prevent a surprise attack, the inclusion of tactical nuclear weapons (so-called "battlefield" weapons) and the adoption of measures restricting the movement of troops outside the NGA reduction zone. This ambitious programme was rejected by Washington, which was interested only in reaching an agreement as rapidly as possible on the level of forces stationed in the central region in order to block the Mansfield initiative. The FRG played a leading role in subsequent inter-allied negotiations, which continued up to June 1973 (Geneva Protocol on the MBFR negotiations). The European partners adopted a somewhat guarded approach: France refused to participate, Great Britain (the Heath Cabinet) concentrated on its membership in the European Community, the countries on NATO's northern and southern flanks were more concerned about the negative effects that a reduction of military capability in Central Europe could have on the balance of forces in their own region, and only the Netherlands, Belgium and Denmark really supported the MBFR project and the FRG's ideas - although in these three latter countries the prospect of being able thereby to reduce military expenditure played an important role.

The position of the Warsaw Pact countries

When the Vienna Conference opened at the end of October 1973, the USSR had its way on two major points. First, the official acronym was MURFAAMCE (Mutual Reductions of Forces and Armaments and Associated Measures in Central Europe) and not MBFR, because the East had rejected the B (balanced) to signify that there was no question of accepting the NATO version of a balanced reduction and therefore equal ceilings. Secondly, the USSR had managed to eliminate Hungary as a direct participant (NATO having then refused to include Italy) as well as Romania's demands, and the meeting in the Hofburg in Vienna was therefore limited to 11 full participants (the four countries deploying forces in the zone, i.e. the United States, Great Britain, Canada and the USSR) and the seven countries constituting the zone (the FRG, the Benelux countries, the GDR, Poland and Czechoslovakia); the other members of the two alliances were only given observer status (apart from France, which had refused to participate and Iceland which had no armed forces).

On 8 November 1973, the four Pact countries submitted a draft agreement for a proportional reduction of forces and their weapons in three phases: 20,000 men on each side at the end of two years, 5 per cent the following year and 10 per cent in 1977. These successive reductions were to affect foreign forces as well as national forces and their equipment. The units withdrawn, demobilized in the case of the latter, were not to leave their equipment which would be returned to the country of origin or destroyed in the case of national forces.

The position of the NATO countries

On 22 November the Western Powers submitted their own principles for an agreement, stipulating asymmetrical - and not proportional - reductions of ground forces in two phases:

- First, a reduction of 15 per cent affecting only United States and Soviet forces,
- Secondly, a reduction affecting all forces to arrive at common ceilings of 700,000 men on each side, together with adequate verification and "stabilization" measures in order to prevent the possibility of a surprise attack (the *associated measures* in the official title).

The positions of the two sides were obviously incompatible and their objectives quite different:

- The objectives of the Warsaw Pact:

The USSR's position was obviously in line with its previous policy and consisted simply in reducing the alleged balance of forces in Europe.

This for two reasons:

First, political, since the limitation of negotiations to the central region would *ipso facto* create a zone with a special status by enhancing the political autonomy of the FRG to the detriment of the three Western Powers and thereby promoting the rapprochement of the two German States by consolidating the *status quo*.

Secondly, military, since the Warsaw Pact project would have had the effect of considerably reducing the size of the Bundeswehr, the most powerful conventional army and almost as large as the Soviet Army on the central front (495,000 as against 506,000 men). Subsequently, this concentration on the Bundeswehr was reflected in the Soviet demand to limit a foreign or national contingent to 50 per cent of the total forces on each side. For the West, this could apply only to the forces of the FRG. In addition, all contingents were to be reduced proportionately.

For the rest, the ratio of forces in Central Europe would not have been affected by the proposal of the Pact countries, and geographical asymmetries would have been completely to the detriment

of NATO in view of the fact that United States forces would no longer have had the right to maintain weapons and equipment stockpiled under the *Reforger Plan*, whereas the Soviet Union would have remained completely free to bring up, in the event of war, its second-line formations by land.

In comparison with the principles set forth at Rome in 1970, the Western proposals contained significant concessions on a number of basic points:

- The reductions envisaged, apart from the fact that they excluded air forces, were not “balanced” in the sense that common ceilings would not have implied sub-ceilings for various national contingents.
- Nor were the proposals in any way balanced in respect of armaments: in exchange for the withdrawal of an entire Soviet armoured army of 68,000 men and 1,700 tanks from GDR, the United States would have withdrawn only 29,000 men.
- Nuclear weapons were excluded, and no “associated measure” was to have been applied outside the zone or to have restricted in any way the political, military or operational freedom of action of the partners.

These two last points concerned above all the FRG which obviously had the greatest interest in an MBFR agreement, but which now faced the dilemma of not having been able to gain acceptance of its views within NATO nor of being able to accept the Warsaw Pact project. In addition, the demand made by the Eastern countries to impose, at the beginning of the Vienna negotiations, a freeze of opposing forces in the region was rejected by the United States, which regarded it as an attempt to freeze the modernization of armaments by preventing the introduction of new technology.

In the circumstances, the Vienna talks turned out to be an exercise in double tomfoolery, in which each side sought to limit the options of the other by refusing to accept genuine military constraints. The deadlock persisted, despite the amendment of the Pact’s initial project relating only to proportional reduction procedures. On 16 December 1975, NATO nevertheless adopted an attitude that was completely new and inconsistent with its initial project. Reflecting Washington’s sudden interest in a reduction of its tactical nuclear weapons on the continent, the so-called “Option III” offered, in exchange for the withdrawal of the Soviet armoured army (68,000 men and 1,700 tanks), the withdrawal of 1,000 nuclear warheads and 90 delivery vehicles (54 Phantom aircraft and 36 Pershing missiles). The European partners had only reluctantly agreed to this United States idea, since they feared that the USSR would seize the opportunity to call for a general limitation of NATO’s tactical nuclear weapons. And not without reason, as the Pact countries proposed in February 1976 an equal reduction of nuclear delivery vehicles (combat aircraft, ballistic missiles and ground-air missiles) and a freeze of nuclear systems remaining in the MBFR zone. Option III was then virtually abandoned by NATO, which took advantage of the “double decision” of December 1979 that included among other things the announcement of the unilateral withdrawal of 1,000 United States nuclear warheads from the European theatre, to bury it officially. The Vienna negotiations had meanwhile concentrated on the “discussion of data”, in other words the controversy about the forces stationed in the zone, including air forces whose inclusion in an agreement had been proposed by NATO in December 1975. Official figures did not tally, since the two sides were far from agreement about the criteria to be used for enumeration purposes

**COMPARISON OF NATO/WARSAW PACT FORCES
IN THE MBFR IN 1975¹**

	Forces		Equipment	
	Land	Air	Tanks	Aircraft
NATO				
United States	198,000	41,000	2,100	280
Great Britain	55,000	9,000	650	130
Canada	3,000	2,000	30	50
Belgium	63,000	20,000	375	140
Netherlands	78,000	21,000	525	160
FRG	345,000	117,000	2,650	550
Total	742,000	210,000	6,330	1,310
France	58,000	–	325	–
TOTAL	800,000	210,000	6,655	1,310
WARSAW PACT				
USSR	460,000	45,000	8,000	1,200
Czechoslovakia	155,000	45,000	2,600	450
GDR	100,000	28,000	1,650	325
Poland	210,000	60,000	3,200	825
TOTAL	925,000	178,000	15,450	2,800

¹ Source: IISS, *Military Balance 1975/76*, London, IISS, 1975, p.102.

(complicated by the fact that the status of the French forces in the FRG had not been clarified, since Paris refused to have them counted as NATO forces). As regards ground forces, the Pact admitted to a superiority of only some 15,000 men, whereas according to NATO it amounted to about 200,000. This discussion was all the more absurd since the number of servicemen in the zone was constantly changing (the USSR having withdrawn - at least officially - 20,000 men in 1980 and the United States having increased its forces in the FRG by over 40,000 since that time) and it served above all to cover up the deadlock reached in the negotiations.

On 8 June 1978, the Pact countries had amended their initial project in one most important respect by accepting the Western principle of the establishment of equal ceilings: 700,000 men for ground forces, a freeze at 200,000 for air forces and also the reduction, in a first stage, of the Soviet and United States contingents (30,000 and 14,000 men respectively). But the East maintained its demand for a balanced withdrawal of nuclear warheads and delivery vehicles and the deadlock remained unbroken. Apart from the controversy about the opposing forces, one of the major obstacles to any progress was the blunt refusal of the Western Powers to withdraw, as demanded by the Pact countries, tactical units with their equipment and their insistence on remaining completely free as to the American soldiers who to be repatriated. Subsequently, the demands of the Eastern countries were scaled down (July 1980) to the withdrawal of 20,000 Soviet troops (not taking into account the two divisions and 1,000 tanks "withdrawn" unilaterally in 1980 against 13,000 Americans in a first stage, accompanied by a freeze of forces remaining in the zone.

A Polish proposal of February 1986, taken up by the USSR, reduced this figure still further to 11,500 Soviet and 6,500 American troops, but despite this "strip-tease" an initial agreement, even restricted to the forces of the two great Powers, was not on the cards. The centre of gravity in the Vienna discussions had simply shifted to the problem of verification of a withdrawal and compliance with the ceilings imposed on the forces that remained. No doubt the unfavourable development of the general East-West climate following the failure of the Geneva negotiations on the limitation of "Euromissiles" (INF) - and, in reaction to the deployment of United States Pershing II and cruise missiles, the suspension by the USSR of the Vienna negotiations up to April 1984 - led the NATO Governments and above all that of Bonn, show greater flexibility. On the resumption of the Vienna meetings, NATO removed the obstacle to an agreement on the enumeration of forces by proposing an exchange of information on troops, counting only combat and direct support units. On 5 December 1985, the Western Powers explained this new proposal in greater detail, and it was supplemented on 30 January 1986 by the draft outline of an agreement on the first stage and a list of "associated measures", namely:

- The withdrawal of 5,000 United States and 11,500 Soviet troops (90 per cent in the form of units) within a period of one year;
- At the end of this period, the beginning of exchanges of information on forces remaining in the MBFR zone, down to precise figures at the battalion level;
- The obligation for a period of three years not to increase the size of forces present in the zone, accompanied by verification of the data supplied by both sides;
- Measures for the verification of troop rotation movements by permanent enumeration posts;
- 30 on-site mutual inspections per year;

- The observation of military (other than garrison) activities notified;
- The unrestricted use of national monitoring means.

In addition, NATO called for the notification of movements of ground formations towards the MBFR zone, which amounted to the extension of the associated measures to adjacent regions.

It is noteworthy that NATO's requirements corresponded to a large extent, at least as regards their objectives, to the proposals made at the Stockholm Conference (CDE) at the beginning of 1984. The Western Powers had thus combined the confidence-building measures of the CDF with the associated measures envisaged for the MBFR.

In February 1986 the Soviet delegation rejected these Western demands as exorbitant and as having nothing to do with the real purpose of the negotiations. The Warsaw Pact's position (20 February 1986) concerning exchanges of information on forces remained vague (refusal to specify the structure and deployment of units), and it reduced the number of permanent enumeration posts to three or four by exempting from this obligation the Soviet units rotated every quarter towards the GDR, Czechoslovakia and Poland, as well as reservists participating in military exercises. This position was a far cry from Mr. Gorbachev's statement of 15 January 1986 in which he came out in favour of "reasonable" verification measures.

The Soviet side pointed out that more substantial verification procedure could be adopted only if NATO agreed to include armaments and not only military personnel in the reductions to be made during the first stage. Since NATO wanted to consider the reduction of armaments only in the second stage, a preliminary agreement confined to the withdrawal of United States and Soviet forces proved impossible. On 3 July 1986, TASS stated that progress could be made in the Vienna negotiations only if the Western Powers modified their position. On the Western side it was now felt that the deadlock at Vienna could not be broken in the narrow MBFR framework and that a fresh start had to be made on a broader basis.

The lessons of the MBFR negotiations and the problem of their transformation

It would be incorrect to say that the 13 years of negotiations at Vienna were a total failure since agreement was finally reached on a number of principles, namely:

- Military parity on both sides, i.e. the establishment of equal ceilings for ground and air forces in the zone;
- The need for measures to verify reductions and to monitor forces remaining in the zone;
- The collective nature of reductions, i.e. reductions during the second stage to affect all foreign and national contingents on the basis of their size.

On the other hand, points of disagreement are much more serious and numerous and the positions of the two parties remain incompatible in present circumstances. In general, they may be summed up as follows:

- NATO, aware of the fact that the withdrawals proposed during the first stage are only of

symbolic value and without any real military significance, is emphasizing a broader and specific system of verification with a view to monitoring movements of forces not only within the MBFR zone but also outside it, which above all relates to the USSR's possibilities of reinforcing its forward formations with forces from its own territory.

- The Warsaw Pact has not abandoned its basic idea of restricting as much as possible the operational options and the modernization of the Allied forces, and particularly those of the Bundeswehr, by means of equal arms reductions combined with a freeze, which would obviously act as a major constraint on the introduction of new weapons systems. At the same time, verification procedures would remain flexible and exclude any constraints on the rotation of Soviet forces towards the MBFR zone. They should therefore in no way restrict the operational freedom of action of the Soviets which however, is precisely the primary objective of the NATO countries.

As regards procedure, it was clear throughout the MBFR process that the NATO participants were acting in close concert and on the instructions of the Working Group in the integrated military organization at Brussels. As the European Allies were, generally speaking, only rarely in agreement among themselves when it came to taking initiatives likely to give an impetus to the negotiations (with the exception, however, of the German/United Kingdom proposal to end the "discussion of data" in 1986) the Americans were left to play the role of arbiter and decision-maker. For the Eastern countries, the "division of labour" in the Hofburg was a pure formality, since the USSR remained in charge of operations at all times. It was obvious that the preponderance of the two great Powers - if only because reductions during the first stage would affect their quartered forces - relegated to the background the interests and specific concerns of their allies. The logic of the "bloc-bloc" approach militated in favour of the strongest, but the question is whether any other procedure would have taken better account of the national interests of the European participants.

In this respect the Stockholm Conference offers an interesting example for two main reasons. First, its principle of consensus, which is that of CSCE, forces the two great Powers to seek a compromise, depriving them of the right of veto which, at least *de facto* they possess in the MBFR negotiations. Secondly, the participation of neutral and non-aligned countries constitutes an arbitration and conciliation factor, and thirdly the Stockholm Agreement was reached on a basis that is quite close to the initial position of the neutral and non-aligned countries.

Yet the Stockholm Conference cannot be considered as a model for future negotiations on conventional disarmament in Europe (from the Atlantic to the Urals). NATO (mainly because of the United States attitude which is, however, shared by its "central front" allies) has consistently refused to negotiate on disarmament proper and even on the reduction of forces in the 35-country forum of the CSCE. When in December 1979 the Atlantic Council accepted the "Giscard Plan" on the CDE as an outline of the subjects to be negotiated at the Madrid Conference, it did so on the express condition that discussions would be limited to the first stage of this Plan, relating only to the extension of confidence-building measures.

This position was maintained throughout the Stockholm negotiations and the requests of the USSR to deal also with disarmament measures (establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, etc.)

and even those of the neutral countries (establishment of zones in which armaments and military movements would be reduced) were rejected.

On the Soviet side, the idea of a conference on conventional disarmament from the Atlantic to the Urals was brought up once again in Mr. Gorbachev's speech in East Berlin in April 1986 and was elaborated upon at the Warsaw Pact meeting in Budapest in June. But the "Budapest Appeal" was basically a restatement of the usual Soviet demands formulated at the opening of the MBFR negotiations in Vienna, namely, a 20-25 per cent reduction on a proportional basis applicable, in the first stage, to all forces in Europe. More recently, at the Moscow Peace Forum in February 1987, Mr. Gorbachev said he was prepared to envisage the elimination of specific superiorities in weapons on both sides, which was tantamount to saying - at least theoretically - that the USSR was moving closer to the principle accepted at the MBFR negotiations of reaching common ceilings. But the Soviet side has so far provided no further details concerning the modalities of this method of achieving a balance.

Moscow's attitude also remained ambiguous as regards the framework of and the participants in a conference on conventional disarmament. In broad outline, the following three options were presented:

- 1) Continuation of the Stockholm Conference (CDE II) and the inclusion in its agenda of measures for the reduction of forces and armaments.
- 2) The creation of a "new forum" dealing with the same questions.
- 3) The expansion of the MBFR negotiations to include all the countries members of the two military alliances.

The USSR leaders juggled these three options pending clarification from the Western side, because in this connection the United States-German controversy that emerged at the time of the preparatory talks on the CSCE and the MBFR negotiations arose once again for a time. At the meetings of the "Halifax Group" set up by the Atlantic Alliance to reply to Mr. Gorbachev's proposal on conventional disarmament, the Bonn representatives, bearing in mind the French attitude, argued in favour of the 35-country forum of the CSCE (CDE) with a sub-group of countries members of the two alliances dealing with the reduction forces and armaments. However, this two-sided option was rejected by Washington and the "Brussels Declaration", which was adopted unanimously - in other words by France as well - on 12 December 1986 by the Atlantic Council, proposes that two separate sets of negotiations should be held at the same Conference, i.e. under the auspices of the CSCE: one to continue the work of the Stockholm Conference on confidence-building measures and the other between the members of the Atlantic Alliance and the Warsaw Pact with a view to achieving conventional stability from the Atlantic to the Urals.

Preparations for negotiations on conventional stability from the Atlantic to the Urals

Since February 1987, the representatives of the 23 countries participating in the CSCE have been meeting regularly and in turn in their respective embassies to exchange views on the elaboration of a mandate for the negotiations on conventional stability in Europe. Hope is expressed on both sides that agreement can be reached on a mandate at the conclusion of the CSCE before the end of 1988.

Initial positions were clarified before the summer recess at Vienna by means of the submission of proposed mandates on the part of the USSR for the Warsaw Pact on 22 June 1987 and on the part of the NATO member countries on 27 July 1987.

A summary comparison of the proposed mandates

For the Western Powers, the negotiations would take place within the framework of the CSCE. At the beginning of each series of negotiations, the countries members of the Atlantic Alliance and the Warsaw Pact would exchange views and information with the other signatories of the Helsinki Final Act. Similarly, they would inform all participants in the Conference of CSCE follow-up activities, the progress made in their work and any results arrived at. The provisions of the mandate would be summarized in the final document of the Vienna CSCE Review Conference

The proposal of the Eastern countries states simply that all CSCE countries would be participants (which corresponds to the Polish proposal made in December 1986 at the Vienna Conference). The text contains no further references to the CSCE.

As regards *objectives*, the two texts are virtually identical on the following matters: reinforcement of stability, establishment of a stable and reliable balance of forces at lower levels, reduction of conventional forces and of armaments, and elimination of existing disparities. The text of the Pact countries provides for "substantial reductions" and refers to the "maintenance of the balance of forces". The Western Powers also call for the elimination - as a high priority measure - of the ability to launch a surprise attack and a large-scale offensive.

As regards *substance*, the forces affected would, for the Western Powers, be the conventional forces of the participants, based on land within the territory of the participating States in Europe and, first and foremost, forces of an offensive nature. Nuclear weapons, naval forces or chemical weapons would not be and would not be allowed to become the subject of negotiations. The Pact countries emphasize that the forces affected would be all the ground forces and tactical combat aircraft of the European States and of the United States and Canada stationed in Europe, together with their armaments and combat equipment. Reductions in these forces must be made in conjunction with reductions in tactical nuclear systems.

With regard to methods of achieving stability, the Western countries state that the relevant measures could include, among other things, reductions, limitations, provisions concerning redeployment and related measures, as well as the establishment of equal ceilings applicable to forces and equipment. The Eastern countries envisage mutual reductions in stages, in the light of the advantages offered by specific types of armaments to either side and additional measures aimed at increasing confidence with a view to eliminating the possibility of a surprise attack. Military doctrines should be of an expressly defensive nature.

As for zones of application, the West wishes to include the territory of the participating States from the Atlantic to the Urals (in the case of the USSR, all territory to the west of the Caspian Sea and the Urals, in the case of Turkey and from a geostrategic standpoint, a zone at least equivalent to that subject to the obligations assumed under the Helsinki Final Act). The possibility of regional differentiation, in order to correct regional imbalances, should also be provided for. The Pact countries for their part propose the establishment of zones of reduced concentrations of forces and armaments on both sides of the line of contact between the two military alliances.

Lastly, with respect to the type of verification régime which would be applicable, the West envisages effective verification entailing on-site inspection as a right, whereas the East proposes effective and strict verification to ensure compliance with the measures adopted, using national technical means and international procedures, including on-site inspection.

In addition, the Western Powers propose exchanges of sufficiently accurate information to ensure that the forces in question can be compared in a meaningful and detailed manner; such information should also be used as a basis for verification of compliance with the provisions of any agreement. The East's proposal contains no reference to exchanges of information.

Contentious points and negotiation prospects

As regards procedure, the Warsaw Pact in principle proposes that all the CSCE States should participate in the negotiations; however this proposal appears to be of a purely tactical nature, since NATO refuses to negotiate in a 35-country forum on conventional stability. The neutral and non-aligned countries are divided on the matter. Switzerland and Austria refuse to participate and Yugoslavia, Sweden and Cyprus are leaning towards indirect participation, possibly as observers. It may therefore be anticipated that the Pact will accept the participation arrangements proposed by NATO.

As regards substance, apart from the problem that has not been clarified in either of the two texts of how the reduction by stages is to take place, and particularly the question whether, like the MBFR negotiations, the first stage of reductions should affect only the United States and Soviet forces stationed outside their respective territories, the most important point on which views differ concerns the inclusion of *so-called tactical nuclear weapons* in the negotiations.

The Pact's proposal is rather vague on this subject, and the words "in conjunction" can be interpreted in various ways. It is clear however that the Pact is not calling for their formal inclusion and that it is leaving the door open to parallel negotiations on nuclear weapons not covered by the United States-Soviet treaty of December 1987 on the elimination of INFs.

The NATO proposal is categorical in this respect and it excludes, even for the future, any extension of the negotiations to cover nuclear weapons in Europe.

The North Atlantic Council's communiqué published after the Reykjavik Meeting on 12 June 1987, which approves the total and global elimination of intermediate-range missiles of the two great Powers with a range of over 500 km favours a coherent concept comprising, among other things: "significant and verifiable reductions of shorter-range United States and Soviet nuclear missile systems, resulting in equal ceilings, in conjunction with the establishment of a conventional balance and the elimination, throughout the world, of chemical weapons".

Views again differ on the question of possible negotiations on this point since NATO is prepared to conclude an agreement on the nuclear weapons systems of the two great Powers only if the Warsaw Pact agreed to link the nuclear issue with multilateral negotiations on conventional forces from the Atlantic to the Urals.

In the Budapest Appeal of June 1986, as in the East Berlin Declaration of the end of May 1987, the Eastern Bloc countries propose a substantial reduction of all nuclear systems remaining in Europe with a view to arriving at the complete denuclearization of the continent.

Within NATO this question has become an apple of discord since the INF agreement with the acceptance of the principle of the "double zero" option (INF systems with a range of over 500 km). The United Kingdom and French Governments are of the opinion that a fire-break must be established at the 500 km range threshold, whereas the Government of the FRG, since Chancellor Kohl's statement to the Bundestag on 4 June 1987, wishes to negotiate a substantial reduction and equal ceilings for nuclear weapons systems with ranges of under 500 km, in view of the fact that these shorter-range weapons can, to all intents and purposes, strike only the territory of the two Germanys and Czechoslovakia, which would place these countries in a "singular" or more vulnerable position as compared with the other countries members of the two alliances.

The problem is extremely complex from a technical standpoint since, on the one hand, it concerns delivery vehicles which are equipped (so far, in principle, and pending progress aimed at increasing the accuracy of conventional warheads) only with nuclear warheads and, on the other, so-called dual-mode delivery vehicles (combat aircraft, artillery tubes, etc.), namely, nuclear and conventional (dual capability systems). The question of differentiation will in any event arise when negotiations begin on the reduction of conventional armaments, and extremely accurate and demanding verification will be required to ensure that the weapons systems affected by the reductions possess only conventional capability which, from a military standpoint, does not make much sense since a large proportion of these delivery vehicles are also intended for nuclear use. The situation as regards theatre nuclear weapons is, moreover, quite disadvantageous for the NATO countries (except France). In principle, an agreement on equal ceilings for delivery

vehicles with nuclear capability would therefore be to the advantage of the NATO countries since it would require the USSR and its allies to make considerable asymmetrical reductions in the three categories of weapons and in particular shorter-range missiles.

As regards the differentiation of reduction zones, the NATO proposal fails to specify how regions with different reduction intensities are to be established. The FRG, as indeed most of the members of the integrated military system, are inclined to favour a zone of greater reductions covering the MBFR zone, with smaller reductions on the northern and southern flanks and in areas situated to the west and east of the MBFR zone. France is referring here not to military-technical criteria but to a political criterion, namely, the territory of the countries members of the WEU. Without saying so explicitly, the Warsaw Pact proposal reflects the draft SPD-SED agreement of 1986, which envisages a corridor of 150 km on either side of the demarcation line free from nuclear weapons (as well as dual capability nuclear and conventional delivery vehicles), and also the "Jaruzelski Plan" whose objective is to reduce, as a matter of priority, forces and armaments in the Central European region corresponding to the MBFR zone plus Denmark and Hungary. Indeed, the Pact's text refers to "reduced concentration on either side of the line of contact between the two alliances".

The question of military doctrines

The NATO text does not mention this subject and the Warsaw Pact text simply states that military doctrines (i.e. operational concepts governing the use of forces) must be rendered "expressly defensive". In November 1986 the Pact proposed that consultations on this subject should take place between the commanders-in-chief of the two alliances, but the NATO countries failed to take up this proposal. Bonn, as well as the capitals of most of the countries members of the integrated military organization do not *a priori* exclude the possibility of contacts at a rather informal level for the purpose of comparing doctrines, including procedures governing the use of forces. Paris prefers contacts of a scientific nature dealing mainly with instruction in military doctrines (revision of manuals, etc.). It may be noted, however, that the United States Minister of Defense met his Soviet counterpart, General Yasov, at the end of 1987 for consultations on disarmament and other related subjects.

Questions connected with verification

Differences of views on this subject have been considerably narrowed since the USSR, as a result of the impetus provided by Mr. Gorbachev, accepted the principle of on-site inspection and, more recently, "transparency", i.e. the factual presentation of military budgets in order to arrive at a genuine comparison of defence efforts on both sides.

In regard to inspection, the remarkable progress made by the Soviet side includes the joint inspection applicable to the implementation of the INF Treaty by United States and Soviet experts and their respective nuclear testing sites, the fact that a group of American observers was able to visit the site of the large Krasnoyarsk radar and was able quite easily to seek information about the technical characteristics of the installation and, more recently, the visit of American experts to a chemical weapons production plant in the USSR. Similarly, in September the United States request to inspect, in accordance with the Stockholm CDE document, Soviet manoeuvres in Byelorussia (Minsk region) was accepted at two days' notice by the Soviets. According to United States sources, 90 per cent of specific requests for on-site inspection have been granted by the Soviet military. At the same time, Great Britain's request to observe GDR army manoeuvres was granted in the same conditions.

Without prejudging the implications of this new transparency on the part of the East, the problem of effective verification of measures for the reduction of forces and related measures will give rise to difficult negotiations, although it may be noted that this problem no longer, as during the MBFR negotiations, constitutes one of the main obstacles to a narrowing of viewpoints.

Problems of definition

This question concerns only NATO countries for the moment, since the Warsaw Pact mentions only talks in its proposal, whereas the term officially adopted by NATO is "negotiations".

The Government of the FRG (see the declaration of Chancellor Kohl to the Bundestag of 4 June 1987) uses the term independent conference of the CDE to describe the 23-country negotiations. The official acronym adopted by the Federal Authorities is "KRK" (*Konventionelle Rüstungskontroll-Konferenz*) (Conference on conventional arms control). It is to be noted that the NATO countries consider that two distinct sets of negotiations will take place (this corresponds to the Warsaw Pact proposals) and that the objective is to arrive at agreements and not, as at Stockholm, a document without binding force in international law. For this reason, the continuation of the Stockholm CDE for which a mandate is also to be drawn up by the Vienna Review Conference is of a different nature from that of negotiations on conventional stability in Europe.

The venue of negotiations on conventional stability

Pending agreement between the 23 countries on the official title, the question of venue remains in abeyance, although for NATO at least the principle of the identity of the time and place of the two-level 35- and 23-country negotiations has been recognized. The choice is apparently

one between Vienna and Geneva, with a goodly proportion of the countries belonging to the integrated NATO system, and particularly the FRG, favouring Vienna, with France opting for Geneva.

It is still too early to be able to anticipate the specific basis on which the conference on conventional stability in Europe will take place, but it may already be said that, in comparison with the MBFR exercise, differences of views have been considerably narrowed both as regards procedure and objectives, as well as the substance of the forthcoming negotiations. One of the major problems to be resolved for which there is no precedent undoubtedly concerns the objective evaluation of the combat capabilities of the opposing forces. In this respect account will have to be taken of qualitative and not only quantitative (the number of weapons systems deployed in a given region) elements and possibly also subjective factors that are difficult to evaluate. The new approach to comparisons and even bringing military doctrines closer together with a view to making weapons structures and arsenals more defensive (in respect of the Warsaw Pact and especially frontline Soviet forces) may facilitate the task, but this is an area which has not yet been explored and which involves not only the strategic "posture" of the two systems of alliances and of France but above all their philosophies and political concepts. Before evaluating the possibilities offered by the future negotiations on conventional stability and their impact on the future of security in Europe, the place of conventional forces in the military postures of the Atlantic Alliance in Europe on the one hand and the Warsaw Pact on the other must be analyzed as fully as possible.

CHAPTER II

CONVENTIONAL FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE
THE MILITARY CONTEXT*Yves BOYER*

Consideration of the question of conventional arms control implies a prior methodological choice. In the MBFR negotiations the approach adopted was of a book-keeping nature. Enumeration of the opposing forces in the geographical reference zone should have resulted in an unquestionable and unquestioned evaluation. This is far from what happened, however, and the exercise bogged down in interminable discussions which failed to offer the political decision-makers concerned satisfactory opportunities of getting the negotiations moving again. More important yet, this approach fell far short of evaluating the global strategic context between East and West in which doctrines of use are just as important as forces or equipment.

It will be difficult to dispense with qualitative factors in the framework of the forthcoming negotiations on conventional forces in Europe, since they are of basic importance for evaluating the real military strength of the opposing forces. Historical examples clearly show that an enemy who is inferior in numbers but more manoeuvrable and backed up by perfect co-ordination between command structures, the movement of forces in the field and the definition of his political-strategic objectives often gains the upper hand over an enemy who is numerically superior. The Soviets know this from bitter experience, for during the first six months following the Third Reich's aggression against the USSR in June 1941, 6,000 Wehrmacht tanks destroyed 17,000 of their 20,000 armoured vehicles.

Before determining what advantages can be derived from negotiations on conventional arms control, it is important to have as clear a picture as possible of both the military intentions of the Soviets on the basis of the structure of their forces and that of their allies in Central Europe, as well as of Western arrangements to cope with aggression. This overall picture is necessary in order to identify the trump cards which are held by the opposing camp which must be neutralized through negotiations.

The Warsaw Pact and the strategic military action theatre concept

Soviet military planning has for a number of years been centred on the concept of the strategic military action theatre (TVD), which may be defined as a theatre of operations within which military actions of a strategic nature take place to achieve clearly-defined political objectives.

In the framework of the Western TVD, which in essence covers the Central European region, the Soviets regard the Atlantic Alliance as an adversary which is powerful militarily but weak politically. They might find it tempting to exploit the political difficulties that NATO would probably encounter if the partial or total mobilization of its forces became necessary, particularly if the crisis were to last for several months. Should hostilities break out, the Soviets would seek to exacerbate, by judicious movements of their forces, the political tensions in the Alliance to the point of undermining Atlantic unity and preventing recourse to nuclear weapons. For them the keys to victory would be surprise, speed and a rapid pace of operations, the disorganization of the enemy rear and the preparation of combined aerial and ground operations.

- Surprise and camouflage ("maskirovka") from part of planning for war. When military operations have begun, the surprise factor also favours chance encounters in which the Soviets hope to get the better of NATO more easily. The experience of the Second World War taught them that such engagements reduce the amount of logistical support required. In this context, the relatively small number of divisions in the Warsaw Pact's armies assumes special meaning. The element of surprise during an engagement may also be achieved by sending units in misleading operational directions (fourth and fifth armies during the battle of Iasi-Kishinev in August 1944).
- Speed and a rapid pace of operations are necessary to retain the initiative but also to get quickly beyond what the Soviets call NATO's "tactical defence zone" in order to encircle various allied army corps (NATO would deploy the bulk of its ground forces and about 50 per cent of its firepower in a strip of about 50 km along the frontier between the two Germanys). Here again the lessons drawn from the Second World War are invaluable for Moscow, since they demonstrate that an advance of 40 km/day is possible (during the Vistula-Oder operation that began in January 1945 the Soviets advanced 500 km in 17 days along a front of 500 km). Speed might well be the key to success but it is also a way of husbanding men and material.
- The disorganization of the enemy's rear is an integral part of the general plan of attack designed to prevent the adversary from catching his breath, organizing a second line of defence, preparing a nuclear strike or bringing up reinforcements.
- Lastly, air operations would be decisive. Preceding the ground units that are to disorganize the enemy's rear (*Speznatz*, special operational groups), the use of air power for offensive missions would be designed above all to achieve local superiority in the air but also considerably to reduce NATO's aerial capability, which alone represents 50 per cent of the West's firepower, by preventive strikes against NATO's limited number of airfields.

The implementation of these principles required an enormous effort to increase the strength of the Warsaw Pact's forces between 1976 and 1986. During this period, the number of tanks, artillery pieces and attack helicopters of the Soviet Forces Group in Germany (GFSA) were increased by 10 per cent, 35 per cent and 50 per cent respectively. According to General Gareyev, the Soviet Union now possesses "everything necessary for effective defence of the country and of its allies in the socialist community".

The Eastern European allies also contributed to this buildup (see the following table). Two countries, namely, the GDR and Czechoslovakia, distinguished themselves in this respect. The GDR's army is extremely well equipped and trained, and its forces are controlled to the greatest extent by the Soviets. Its six divisions could be easily deployed on one or more fronts in the framework of a Pact

**WARSAW PACT FORCES IN
THE GDR, CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND POLAND**

	Armoured divisions			Motorized divisions		
	Cat I	Cat II	Cat III	Cat I	Cat II	Cat III
GDR	2			4		
Poland	5			3		5
Czechoslovakia	1	2	2	1		4
USSR:						
GFSA (GDR)	11			8		
GFS Centre (Czech)	2			3		
GFS North (Pol)	1			1		
TOTAL	22	2	2	20		9
	Number of tanks	Interceptors		Fighters		Armed Forces
GDR	1,734	270		98		179,000
Poland	3,793	400		240		402,000
Czechoslovakia	3,020	275		230		210,000
USSR:						
GFSA (GDR)		180		440		
GFS Centre (Czech)	9,100	45		45		545,000
GFS North (Pol)						
TOTAL	17,500					1,360,000

Source: IISS *Military Balance* 1988-1989

offensive against NATO while its paramilitary forces, which are particularly large, would be assigned a defensive function in view of their sound defensive capability. The Czechoslovak army, for its part, is relatively large, highly mechanized, well trained and equipped in part with good-quality domestically-produced equipment. Poland has the largest army of the East European countries. It is also the one which could create the most problems for the Soviets. Despite the impact that the political agitation in the country since the beginning of the 1980s may have had on some of its officers, the persistence of reservations as between the Poles and the Soviets - some of which go back to the Second World War (memories of the Katyn massacres) - make it difficult for the Soviets to count on the participation of Polish forces in the initial stages of an offensive against NATO.

This impressive and large military machine, largely built up during the 1970s, nevertheless requires considerable modernization with a view to the incorporation of the new technology that has been developed for conventional forces. Conventional disarmament should play a principal role in this transformation process.

Allied weaknesses in Central Europe

On the Western side, the legacy of history combined with principles of forward defence and risk-sharing explains a deployment of units which owes very little to operational factors. Indeed, each of the eight Allied army corps occupies a place "at the front" in the zone of responsibility of the Allied Forces Command in Central Europe (AFCENT). This arrangement by no means corresponds to homogeneous deployment of Western potential.

Using the number of tanks as a criterion, each of the two AFCENT army groups has approximately the same number, although the Northern Army Group (NORTHAG) has slightly more than the Central Army Group (CENTAG) (3,400 tanks immediately available as against 3,100). Yet these figures by themselves are misleading.

Geography favours CENTAG from the standpoint of defence since the central area consists of a series of wooded and slightly mountainous areas. NORTHAG's sector is much flatter. Apart from the Harz mountains, situated partly in the GDR, and a few marshy areas, there are no major natural obstacles - with the exception of a few waterways that are easily crossed - to stop an aggressor who, once he has crossed the Minden gap, could drive directly to the Ruhr.

NORTHAG is disadvantaged not only by the nature of the terrain but also by the immediate proximity of the three GFSM Soviet armies at a high level of availability and preparedness (the second, third and eighth). Moreover, some of the NORTHAG units, namely, the Netherlands forces and to a lesser extent the Belgian forces, are far from their wartime positions.

The characteristics of the terrain, the poor deployment of Allied units, in fact everything combines to increase the attractiveness for the Soviets of a scenario consisting of a lightning attack with as few preparations as possible against the Northern Army Group in order to penetrate NATO defences and encircle the Central Army Group.

**AIR POTENTIAL
(Central Europe)
(other than ship-based aircraft)**

	Warsaw Pact	NATO
Combat aircraft deployed in Central Europe	3,450	2,150
Interceptors	860	315
Fighter bombers	1,000	924
Bombers	760	357
Tactical support aircraft	170	190
Reconnaissance aircraft	210	240
Other (older aircraft)	410	105

**NUMBER OF TANKS ON THE CENTRAL FRONT
(Warsaw Pact/NATO)**

	Warsaw Pact	NATO	
GFSA	7,000	2,000	USA
GFS Czech	1,460	9,100	FRG
GFS Pol	620	320	Bel
		900	Hol
		660	GB
GDR	1,730	570	FFA
Pol	3,800	680	Ist, IIIrd CAF
Czech	3,020		
<hr/>			
Subtotal	17,500	9,300	Ratio 1.88/1
<hr/>			
Western military districts of the USSR	9,800		
<hr/>			
TOTAL	27,300	9,300	Ratio 2.93/1

Source: IISS *Military Balance* 1988-1989.

In this scenario, NORTHAG is underequipped in two important areas which could enable it to check a Soviet breakthrough. For example, NORTHAG has only about 150 anti-tank helicopters (72 British Lynxes and 72 German PAH-1s) as against 390 immediately available for CENTAG (250 United States AH-1s and Apaches and 140 German PAH-1s). Similarly the distribution of tactical nuclear weapon stockpiles indicates that CENTAG has considerably more delivery vehicles and tactical nuclear warheads than NORTHAG.

In other words, for the Western side to accept reductions in the units assigned to NORTHAG would result basically in aggravating an already extremely precarious situation. Cuts in the units assigned to CENTAG is militarily less dangerous in the immediate future. From a strategic standpoint, it would open the way to a considerable withdrawal of United States troops from Europe. It would trigger a process in which many of the parameters would become uncontrollable and therefore destabilizing in the dynamic context created in Europe by the resumption of the disarmament process.

On the other hand, the only solution that would really stabilize the balance of forces in Central Europe without calling in question NATO's forward defence posture would be a highly asymmetrical reduction on both sides. The minimum asymmetrical cut would consist in exchanging one Allied division against five Pact divisions (1:5) and would have to apply to at least 25 of the East's divisions. This cut, achieved by negotiated reductions, would therefore result in the asymmetrical disarmament of five Allied divisions against 25 Warsaw Pact divisions! In view of the obvious difficulty of reaching an agreement on this basis, the Alliance should seek other ways of stabilizing the ratio of conventional forces from the Atlantic to the Urals.

What are to be the military objectives of the negotiations?

The Western Powers, following the example of the Soviets, should make negotiations on conventional forces an integral part of a global strategy with implications much greater than those of measures to reduce conventional forces in themselves.

Strategic implications

The Soviets will have to improve their forces very considerably if they wish to preserve their military advantage over the Western Powers. These improvements would entail a costly and lengthy process, and conventional arms control offers them a means of gaining the time to make the changes required. The Minsk meeting of 1985 between political leaders and the military as well as discussions on the concept of "reasonable sufficiency" at the Twenty-Seventh Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union enabled Mr. Gorbachev to elaborate an "aggressive" arms control policy which, for the Kremlin, was to accompany the modification of the structure of the Soviet forces. The Kremlin leaders have redefined their long-term military objectives. They intend to restructure the Soviet army with a

view to its improvement so as to be able to meet NATO's challenge in developing high-tech weapons systems and the new military doctrines associated with them. The Kremlin's strategy is based on a domestic policy of reducing and, at the same time, improving the armed forces. Moreover - and this is one of the primary objectives of the USSR - the Soviets will try and arrange things so that their adversaries co-operate willy-nilly in the transformation of their defence posture through arms control negotiations.

Radical proposals from the Kremlin cannot therefore be discounted. They may, for example, concern a significant reduction in the number of the Pact's divisions deployed in Eastern Europe against a limitation of NATO's air potential and the combat capability of German and United States army corps. *In the circumstances, the strategic objective of the Western Powers in the negotiations should be not to yield to the temptation of reductions which are not spread over a long period.*

Operational concepts

In view of the USSR's strategic objectives, the Western Powers should refuse to go along with the pause that Moscow needs if substantial concessions and reliable guarantees as regards verification are not obtained in exchange. From a strictly military point of view, a number of advantages can in principle be derived from the negotiations. The objective should be if not to curb then at least to complicate the execution of Soviet offensive operations organized against the Western TVD without upsetting the fragile balance on which Allied defence in Central Europe is based.

The Western effort should be concentrated as a matter of priority on the "spearhead" of the advance units of the Western TVD, namely, the GFSA.

This for a number of reasons. First, 60 per cent of Category I Soviet divisions in Central Europe or in the three Western military districts of the USSR are deployed in the GDR. From a stability standpoint, these divisions are the most dangerous for NORTHAG because their use would require only extremely brief preparations. Moreover, they have more than enough equipment of the most advanced type.

The GFSA thus plays an extremely important political/military role for the Kremlin. It constitutes its first line of defence and it is also an instrument of surprise attack. From the Soviet standpoint it also guarantees the "security" of Poland against an attack from the West. Lastly, it is the tangible sign of the partition of Germany.

The task of trimming the capability of the GFSA is a particularly complex undertaking in the context of conventional arms control negotiations. For example, a series of proposals could embody measures aimed at increasing stability on the central front. They would be above all qualitative in nature and intended to diminish the ability to mount a surprise attack (*Standing Start Attack*) by significantly reducing the state of readiness of the GFSA divisions. This objective could be achieved by means of the following three major measures:

- Reduce the Pact's degree of readiness. For example, the eight divisions of the Third Assault Army and the Eighth Garrison Army which are stationed mainly to the west of the Elbe could be reduced from Category I to Category III. The Western Powers would have everything to gain from this. In this respect, the comparison between the BAOR and the Third Soviet Assault Army facing it is quite explicit: the Third Army has 2.5 times more tanks and 6 times more artillery tubes than the BAOR.
- Reduce the mobility of the Warsaw Pact forces by considerably restricting its facilities for overcoming obstacles (forces moving from east to west would, on the average, encounter a waterway every 3 km; 80 per cent of these waterways are impassable without bridges). Similarly, engineer units should be withdrawn well beyond a line to be specified.
- Reduce the Pact's firepower by limiting the number of artillery tubes per division and eliminating artillery units assigned to the front in the framework of the GFSA.

All these various proposals are designed by buy time in the event of a crisis and to provide insurance against the most destabilizing aspect of the Soviet military posture in Central Europe, namely, a surprise attack without forewarning in the form of mobilization. In exchange for these concessions which should be obtained from the Soviets, the Atlantic Alliance could propose measures designed to limit its ability to bring up reinforcements rapidly. In both cases, the purpose of negotiations would be to buy time: for the Soviets the time necessary to upgrade the strength of their units in Central Europe and for NATO the time required to bring in United States reinforcements.

A qualitative approach of this kind would obviously be valid only if accompanied by extremely specific and detailed measures for the implementation of the agreement and particularly its verification aspects. The most important of these measures would concern the lifting of restrictions on the movement of Allied monitoring missions in the GDR. Similarly, various transit points for ground, air and sea connections between the USSR and the GDR and Czechoslovakia should be subject to inspection by neutral or Allied observers.

However, quite apart from the question of the ratio of forces in the strict sense, the problem of conventional forces - for the Western Powers just as for the Soviets - is an integral part of their disarmament policies having different - but at times complementary - objectives.

WARSAW PACT FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE (NGA)

German Democratic Republic

17 million inhabitants; area 108,333 km².

Armed forces:

179,000 men of whom 123,000 in the army (69 per cent of the total).

Structure:

Military District III HQ Leipzig

7th Armd. Div. (Dresden)

4th Mot. Div. (Halle)

11th Mot. Div. (Erfurt)

Military district IV HQ Neubrandenburg

9th Armd. Div. (Eggesin)

1st Mot. Div. (Schwerin)

8th Mot. Div. (Postdam)

Potential:

Land: 1,734 tanks (T54-55-62-72) + 1,000 in reserve

Air : 98 fighter bombers (Mig - 23 MF; SU 22);

270 fighter-interceptors (Mig21 - Mig 23);

18 reconnaissance aircraft (Mig21).

Poland

38 million inhabitants; area 312,683 km².

Armed Forces:

402,000 men of whom 295,000 in the army (73 per cent of the total).

Structure:

Pomeranian Military District HQ Bydgoszcz

16th Armd. Div. (Elbag)

20th Armd. Div. (Stetinek)

8th Mot. Div. (Koszalin)

12th Mot. Div. (Stettin)

15th Mot. Div. (Olsztyn)

7th Marine Div. (Categ II) (Gdansk)

6th Artillery Brigade (Torun)

Silesian Military District HQ Wroclaw

5th Armd. Div. (Gubin)

10th Armd. Div. (Opote)

11th Armd. Div. (Zagan)

2nd Mot. Div. (Cat II) (Nysa)

4th Mot. Div. (Cat IV) (Krosno-Odryanskie)

5th Artillery Brigade (Glogow)

Warsaw Military District HQ Warsaw

- 1st Mot. Div. (Cat III) (Lebignovo)
- 3rd Mot. Div. (Cat III) (Lublin)
- 4th Mot. Div. (Cat III) (Rzeszow)
- 6th Para. Div. (Kracow)
- 1st Artillery Brigade (Wegorzowo)

Potential:

- Land: 3,793 tanks, of which 2,438 in Category I divisions and 1,355 in Cat II and III divisions
- Air : 240 fighter bombers (SU-7, SU-20, SU-22, Mig 17)
- 400 fighter-interceptors (Mig 21, Mig 23)
- 31 reconnaissance aircraft (Mig 21)

Czechoslovakia

15.6 million inhabitants; area 127,889 km².

Armed forces:

210,000 men of whom 145,000 in the army (69 per cent of the total)

Structure:

Two armies (1st HQ Tador and 4th HQ Trencin) cover the western and eastern military districts of Czechoslovakia respectively.

- 1st Armd. Div. (Plzen)
- 4th Armd. Div. (Cat II) (Bratislava)
- 9th Armd. Div. (Cat II) (Plzen)
- 13th Armd. Div. (Cat III) (Trencin)
- 14th Armd. Div. (Cat III) (Peesor)
- 2nd Mot. Div. (Karlovy Vary)
- 3rd Mot. Div. (Cat II) (Plzen)
- 15th Mot. Div. (Cat III) (Bratislava)
- 19th Mot. Div. (Cat III) (Jilava)
- 20th Mot. Div. (Cat III) (Brno)

Potential:

- Land: 3,020 tanks (of which 586 in Cat. I divisions; 650 in Cat. II divisions; 1,784 in Cat. III divisions).
- Air : 132 fighter bombers (SU-7; Mig 23; SU-25)
- 275 fighter-interceptors (Mig 21; Mig 23)

Soviet forces

GFSA (Soviet Forces Group in Germany), (HQ Zossen-Wundsdorff)

- 1st Armd. Garrison Army (HQ Dresden): 2 armd. div.; 1 mot. div.
- 2nd Garrison Army (HQ Furstenberg): 1 armd. div.; 3 mot. div.
- 3rd Assault Army (HQ Magdeburg): 4 armd. div.
- 8th Garrison Army (HQ Nohra): 1 armd. div.; 3 mot. div.
- 20th Garrison Army (HQ Ebersvald): 3 armd. div.; 1 mot. div.

State of readiness: 24 hours' notice.

Air potential: 1,530 aircraft; about 7,000 tanks.

GFS in Czechoslovakia (HQ Milovice)

2 armd. div.; 3 mot. div.; 1,460 tanks; 300 combat aircraft

GFS in Poland (HQ Schweidnitz)

1 armd. div.; 1 mot. div. (600 tanks)

Baltic Military District (HQ Kaliningrad)

11th Garrison Army; 3 armd. div.; 6 mot. div. (Cat III); 1 para div.; 2 artillery div.; 2,800 tanks

Byelorussian Military District (HQ Minsk)

5th and 7th Armd. Armies (HQ Bobruisk and Borisov); 28th Army (Grodno); 2 armd. div. (Cat II and III); 3 mot. div. (Cat III); 1 para div.; 1 artillery div.; 3,800 tanks

Carpathian Military District (HQ Lvov)

8th Armd. Garrison Army (Zhitomir); 13th and 38th Armies (Rovno and Ivano)
3 armd. div.; 2 artillery div.; 3,200 tanks

NATO FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE

Netherlands

15 million inhabitants; area 33,938 km²

Armed forces:

105,000 men of whom 66,000 in the army (62 per cent of total).

*Deployment:**Netherlands - HQ 1st Corps (Apeldoorn)*

1st Mech. Div. (Schaarsbergen): 11th and 12th Mech. Brigades, 13th Armed Brigade

4th Mech. Div. (Harderwijk): 42nd and 43rd Mech. Brigades

5th Mech. Div. (Stroe): available after mobilization: 52nd and 53rd Mech. Brigades,

51st Armd. Brigades.

FRG - 41st Armd. Brigade (Seedorf).

Potential:

Land: 913 tanks (Léo I and II)

Air: fighter bombers: 110 F16

support: 89 NF-5

Belgium

10 million inhabitants; area: 30,519 km²

Armed forces:

91,500 men of whom 67,500 in the army (73 per cent of the total).

Deployment:

Belgium: 1st Mech. Div. (Verviers): 1st and 7th Mech. Brigades
(reserve: 10th Mech. Brigade and 12th Mot. Inf. Brigade)

FRG: HQ 1st Corps (Cologne - Weiden) (about 28,000 men)

16th Mech. Div. (Neheim - Hüssein): 4th Mech. Brigade; 17th Armd. Brigade;

9th and 13th Missile Groups (AA)

Potential:

Land: 334 Léo I (133 Scorpion and 80 JPK-90)

Air: fighter bombers: 144 F16 and Mirages 5BA/BD

Great Britain

56 million inhabitants; area: 244,700 km²

Armed forces:

323,800 men of whom 239,300 in the army (73 per cent of the total).

Deployment:

GB: United Kingdom Land Forces (UKLF): about 42,000 men
(14 basic brigades; UKMF: 1st Infantry Brigade; 1 airborne brigade (5th Airborne Brigade);
forces stationed in Northern Ireland; BAOR supplements: 19th Infantry Brigade (attached to
3rd Armd. Div.); 2nd Infantry Div: 15th, 24th and 49th Infantry Brigades.

FRG: British Army of the Rhine: 55,000 men (HQ Münchengladbach);
1st Corps (HQ Bielefeld):
1st Armd. Div. (Verden): 7th, 12th and 22nd Armd. Brigade; 3rd Armd. Div. (Soest): 4th Armd. Brigade,
6th Airborne Brigade; 4th Armd. Div.; 11th, 20th and 33rd Armd. Brigades; organic elements of army corps.

Potential:

Land: 300 Challenger tanks; 600 Chieftains (300 supplementary, stockpiled); 271 Scorpions;

Air: 635 fighters and fighter bombers, of which about 110 deployed in the FRG.

Federal Republic of Germany

61.4 million inhabitants; area: 248,687 km²

Armed forces:

485,800 men of whom 340,800 in the army (70 per cent of the total)

Deployment:

1st Corps (Münster): 1st Armd. Div. (Hannover); 3rd Armd. Div. (Buxtehude); 6th Mech. Div. (Neumünster);
7th Armd. Div. (Unna); 11th Mech. Div. (Oldenburg); 51st Territorial Brigade.

2nd Corps (Ulm): 4th Mech. Div.; 10th Armd. Div.; 1st Mountain Div.; 1st Airborne Div.;
51st Territorial Brigade.

3rd Corps (Koblenz): 2nd Mech. Div.; 5th Armd. Div.; 12th Armd. Div.

Territorial Brigades: 12 of which 6 in the reserve.

Potential:

Land : 4,895 tanks (2,437 Léo I; 1,513 Léo II; 650 M48 A2G; 295 M48 A2).

Air : 525 combat aircraft.

United States

Forces deployed in the FRG (245,000 men):

- US European Command (Stuttgart).
- US Army Europe and 7th Army (Heidelberg).
- 32nd US Army Air Defence Command: 4 anti-aircraft brigades (3 equipped with Hawk missiles; 1 equipped with Vulcan and Chaparral missiles).
- Vth Corps (Frankfurt): 3rd Armd. Div. (Frankfurt); 8th Mech. Div. (Bad Kreuznach); 11th Cavalry Regiment (Fulda); 130th Engineering Brigade (Schwäbisch Hall); 22nd Road Traffic Brigade (Frankfurt); 12th Army Aviation Group (Wiesbaden); 41st and 42nd Artillery Brigades (Frankfurt).
- VIIth Corps (Stuttgart): 1st Armd. Div. (Ansbach); 3rd Mech. Div. (Würzburg); 3rd Mech. Brigade of the 1st Infantry Div. (Göppingen); 2nd Cavalry Regiment (Nuremberg); 17th, 72nd and 210th Artillery Brigades (Augsburg); 7th Engineering Brigade (Kornwestheim); 93rd Road Traffic Brigade; 11th Army Aviation Group (Schwäbisch Hall).
- IIIrd Corps (deployed in the United States): 3rd Armd. Brigade (Carlstedt).
- US Air Force: 17th Air Force (Sembach).

Potential (US forces in the FRG):

Tanks: 2,000 (not including Pomcus); 328 combat aircraft.

Canada

25 millions inhabitants.

Canadian forces in Europe (HQ Lahr): 4th Brigade; 1st Air Group.

Potential:

Tanks: 59 Léo E; 54 CF 18.

France

55 million inhabitants; area: 543,965 km².

Armed forces:

557,493 men of whom 296,000 in the army (53 per cent of the total).

Deployment:

1st Army (Strasbourg)

1st Corps (Metz): 1st and 7th Armd. Div. (Trèves and Besançon); 12th and 14th Military School Light Armd. Div. (Saumur and Montpellier).

2nd Corps (Baden-Baden): 3rd and 5th Armd. Div. Fribourg and Landau); 15th Inf. Div. (Limoges).

3rd Corps (Lille): 2nd and 10th Armd. Div. (Versailles and Châlons-sur-Marne); 8th Inf. Div. (Amiens).

Rapid Reaction Force (FAR) (Maisons-Lafitte)

4th Airborne Div. (Nancy); 6th Light Armd. Div. (Nîmes); 3rd Marine Inf. Div. (Nantes); 11th Para. Div. (Toulouse); 27th Apline Div. (Grenoble).

Potential:

Tanks: 1,300 Amx 30 (of which 540 in the FRG); 327 Amx 13-90.

Air: 450 aircraft.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This ensures transparency and allows for easy verification of the data.

In the second section, the author details the process of reconciling bank statements with the company's internal records. This involves comparing the ending balance of the bank statement with the ending balance of the cash account in the general ledger. Any discrepancies are investigated and resolved.

The third section covers the preparation of financial statements. It outlines the steps for calculating net income, preparing the balance sheet, and generating the cash flow statement. Each statement provides a different perspective on the company's financial health.

Finally, the document concludes with a summary of the key findings and recommendations. It suggests that regular audits and reviews can help identify potential areas of improvement and ensure compliance with relevant regulations.

The following table provides a summary of the financial data for the period under review. The figures are presented in thousands of dollars unless otherwise specified.

Item	Q1 2014	Q2 2014	Q3 2014	Q4 2014
Revenue	120	135	140	150
Expenses	80	90	95	100
Net Income	40	45	45	50
Assets	200	210	220	230
Liabilities	150	160	170	180
Equity	50	50	50	50

The data indicates a steady increase in revenue over the four quarters, which is a positive sign for the company's growth. However, the increase in expenses is also notable, particularly in the latter half of the period. This suggests that while sales are growing, the cost of operations is also rising.

The balance sheet shows that the company's assets are increasing, which is consistent with the higher net income reported. The equity section remains stable, indicating that the company is not distributing dividends or other forms of capital to its owners.

Overall, the financial performance appears to be solid, but there is a need to monitor and manage expenses more closely to maintain the current level of profitability.

The author concludes by reiterating the importance of accurate financial reporting and the role of the accounting department in providing reliable information to management and stakeholders.

This document is intended for internal use only and should be handled with care.

CHAPTER III

WESTERN PROBLEMS

The Atlantic Alliance and conventional disarmament

Jérôme PAOLINI

Since the ministerial meetings at Lisbon in February 1952, the role of conventional armaments in the Alliance's strategy has evolved in close step with the place occupied by nuclear weapons in its defensive posture. In order to meet the threat posed by the maintenance on a war footing of the Soviet forces stationed in Eastern Europe after the war (in 1952 12 Allied divisions faced about 100 Soviet divisions), the NATO Council at its Lisbon meeting had adopted as its goal the peacetime deployment of 50 divisions and about 4,000 aircraft and a considerable strengthening of naval forces by the end of 1952, together with additional increases in the subsequent two years.

Although Greece and Turkey joined NATO in that year, followed by the FRG in 1954, it very soon became obvious that the Alliance would never be able to maintain a potential of that size in time of peace owing to economic as well as political and military constraints. In the view of the European members of the Alliance, the twofold disadvantage of conventional forces was that they were considerably more costly than nuclear weapons and raised the question of the United States contribution to the defence of post-war Europe.

This realization was to have two main consequences which make it possible to trace the development of the place and role of conventional forces in the security of Europe since the end of the 1950s.

The conventional forces/nuclear forces interface

On the one hand, awareness of the illusory nature of a defensive strategy based only on the Alliance's conventional capability was gradually to acquire decisive influence and nuclear weapons were irretrievably to become the central element of its deterrent posture. The United States nuclear presence in the European theatre could now be justified in part by NATO's difficulties in matching the Warsaw Pact's superiority in conventional forces. The deployment of the first United States nuclear weapons on European territory began in Autumn 1953 and it was to result in the presence of some 6,000 warheads by the end of the 1960s. This counterpoise in the form of nuclear weapons very soon made it possible to reduce the objectives fixed at Lisbon: in 1955 the target had been scaled down to 30 divisions by the end of the following year.

NATO's strategy reflected the deterrent role of nuclear weapons in that they suggested a threat of tactical first use in the European theatre as well as massive retaliation by the United States strategic arsenal. The United States intention to adopt a strategy based on massive nuclear retaliation for any kind of aggression, announced by J. Foster Dulles in January 1954, was to result in a corresponding alignment of NATO's strategy with the formal adoption of the doctrine of massive retaliation by the Atlantic Council in Document MC-14/2 of the Military Committee in December 1956.

On the other hand, although the Lisbon decision gave nuclear weapons pride of place in the system of European security it nevertheless paradoxically marked the emergence of a trend which has remained unchanged for a quarter of a century, both in NATO's strategy as well as in its strategic thinking, namely, the increasing importance of the role of conventional armaments.

Since the end of the 1950s, the historical evolution of the Atlantic Alliance in point of fact reflects a switch from a strategy of purely nuclear deterrence to recognition of the need for a sound conventional capability which had too long been ignored. The Alliance's history is therefore not simply that of the role of nuclear weapons in the defence of Europe; it is also that of the growing role played by NATO's conventional forces as the importance of nuclear deterrence was gradually relativized in the context of Western security.

Practically from the time it was adopted by NATO, doubts were to arise concerning the strategic rationale of a massive retaliation doctrine and of the undue importance it attached to nuclear weapons as compared with conventional forces, despite the fact that peace had been maintained in Europe even during the darkest moments of the Cold War. Following the Cuban crisis of October 1962, the expansion of Soviet strategic nuclear forces did away with whatever was left of the idea that the territory of the United States constituted a sanctuary and, more specifically, the massive deployment of nuclear theatre weapons (SS 4 and 5) in Europe by the Soviets began to raise serious doubts about the fact that NATO was relying too much on the first use of nuclear weapons for its defence.

The Athens guidelines and the adoption of the flexible response strategy

A series of studies carried out during the first few months of the Kennedy Administration following the Gaither Report of 1956 confirmed the idea that NATO's planning had considerably overestimated the threat posed by the Warsaw Pact in Central Europe and at the same time had underestimated the Alliance's conventional military capabilities. Even more important, these studies revealed the tremendous operational uncertainty surrounding the use of tactical nuclear weapons for military purposes to offset conventional weaknesses.

From 1961, discussions centred once again on the need for more and better conventional forces, capable of putting up a real defence on the eastern frontier of the FRG for a given period, as well as a more flexible response strategy by virtue of which, assuming that conventional forces reinforced in this way would be incapable of repelling aggression by themselves, NATO could have recourse to tactical and theatre nuclear weapons and possibly the central strategic arsenal of the United States.

It was on the basis of this analysis that the Kennedy Administration submitted to the NATO Allies, through Robert McNamara, the United States Secretary for Defence, the new "flexible response" strategy, namely, to the Atlantic Alliance at its ministerial meetings at Athens in May 1962.

In the view of its American advocates, this change of course was to raise to a considerable extent the threshold at which it would be necessary to use nuclear weapons, as a result of the strengthening of NATO's conventional forces, thereby giving them the capability of retaliating immediately, using the means initially chosen by the aggressor. At Athens McNamara even went so far as to maintain that the proposed flexible response concept would permit the development of NATO's conventional potential to the point where the actual use of nuclear weapons would become unnecessary, or at most would be very limited and take place well after the beginning of hostilities. Less than five years after NATO's adoption of the massive retaliation doctrine in 1956, the logic of the nuclear/conventional relationship in the Alliance's strategy had been transformed. Yet this transformation was to be short-lived.

The period between Athens in May 1962 and the Ministerial Council in December 1967 was to be marked by a difficult series of discussions within the Alliance that eventually resulted in the adoption of the flexible response as the official strategy. Most of the European partners read into McNamara's "conventionalization" intentions a United States attempt to separate European security from that of the United States.

This was possibly the first sign of the controversy about what very quickly came to be called "transatlantic linkage": whereas Washington maintained that it was seeking rationalization and greater operational flexibility in an eventual United States engagement in Europe, the European argued that it was precisely the risk of escalation, from tactical nuclear weapons in Europe to strategic intercontinental nuclear weapons, that was the main deterrent for the Soviet Union.

Lastly, McNamara maintained that the strengthening of the conventional forces required for the implementation of his interpretation of the flexible response in no way implied unacceptable sacrifices of a political or socio-economic nature - a point on which the European Allies were in profound disagreement.

Five years were to elapse before the NATO Council accepted the new "forward defence and flexible response" strategy formulated in Document MC-14/3 of December 1967. This document directly reflects the difficulties of reaching agreement within the Alliance and therefore presents only a relatively vague statement of the new strategy.

This ambiguity, although it was unquestionably a factor that strengthened deterrence by complicating the planning of a potential aggressor, nevertheless had its origins in the divergent intentions of Americans and Europeans within one and the same Alliance. The ambiguous nature of MC-14/3 enabled each country to interpret the flexible response concept according to its own views in the matter. For the European members of NATO, the document outlined a doctrine in which there would be a short period of conventional warfare before nuclear weapons were used, the intention being escalation in order to maximize the deterrent nature of the latter. The obvious result was a modest strengthening of conventional forces in Europe pending the initiation - admittedly a little later - of nuclear warfare.

For the Americans, on the other hand, although MC-14/3 did not give the green light for the development of a relatively strong conventional capability for purposes of a genuine classical defence, at least it avoided automatic and immediate recourse to intercontinental strategic arsenals through a process of controlled nuclear escalation in the European theatre.

In the final analysis, it was the European interpretation of the flexible response which eventually won out as regards conventional forces. The European members of the Alliance had admittedly maintained substantial conventional forces since 1967, and military budgets, directed mainly towards the modernization and improvement of these forces, grew steadily during the 1970s. An understanding of this trend and of the initial divergence of views on either side of the Atlantic concerning the role of conventional forces in the context of the flexible response are essential elements in any evaluation of the present enhancement of the role of conventional forces in the security of Europe during the 1980s.

The long-term programme to strengthen conventional forces

The United States desire to strengthen the conventional forces of the Alliance was to surface once again at the beginning of 1977 during the months following the inauguration of the Carter Administration. The latter felt that it was imperative, having regard to the first signs of Soviet military expansion following SALT-I in 1972, for the European partners of NATO to make greater efforts in the conventional sphere with a view to a more equitable sharing of responsibilities within the Alliance. Initially, the United States desire resulted in 1978 in the adoption by the NATO Ministers of Defence of a long-term defence programme which identified the conventional sectors that had to be improved as a matter of priority, but above all under which the Allies undertook to increase their defence budgets by 3 per cent in real terms in order to attain the targets fixed in respect of conventional forces.

Looking back, it is clear that, owing to prevailing context of chronic economic stagnation, the Alliance's European partners were unable to fulfil the obligations they had assumed in 1978. And in point of fact very few of them would in 1986, at the end of the long-term programme, achieve the 3 per cent real growth rate target set for their defence budgets. At the turn of the decade, the factors that had shaped the decisions taken in Lisbon in 1952 were all still fully valid: in response to the twofold desire of the United States to reduce its budgetary burden and to revoke the automatic nature of its nuclear commitment to Europe, the Europeans continued to present social and economic arguments and especially - in a more subtle manner - political and military arguments to justify nuclear weapons as the primary deterrent in the face of Soviet conventional as well as strategic superiority, in view of the major role played by nuclear weapons in the transatlantic security link. Even the threat of a partial withdrawal of American troops stationed on the Old Continent since the war, as suggested by the Nunn Amendment, introduced for the first time in the Senate during the summer of 1984, changed nothing except that it caused additional controversy between the partners in the Alliance concerning the possible return of American troops to the United States; this controversy was to resurface regularly.

The particularization of the European balance and the resurgence of the problem of conventional forces

The beginning of the 1980s was characterized by a resurgence of the problem of conventional forces in Europe and by the increasing importance of conventional forces in the development of the Atlantic Alliance's strategy. Yet this time the problem arose in quite a different way, in that it was an integral part of a new stage in the confrontation between the two Great Powers and accompanied by a pronounced tendency to question the reliance that could be placed in the concept of nuclear deterrence from a political, military and even ethical standpoint.

This situation was the result just as much of the achievement of strategic parity between the United States and the Soviet Union as of the persistent efforts made by the Soviets to modernize their nuclear theatre potential while maintaining their conventional superiority, as well as of current discussions on the technical feasibility and politico-military justification of alternatives to nuclear weapons for the defence of Europe.

The combination of these three factors had the effect of undermining the logic behind the conventional/nuclear relationship which had gradually gained the upper hand since Lisbon in 1952 as a result of an increasing tendency no longer to justify the need for nuclear weapons to offset inevitable inferiority in conventional forces but on the contrary to emphasize the development of the conventional aspect of the flexible response to offset the decline of the nuclear deterrence factor which had already begun.

The implications of Soviet-United States parity

The impressive expansion of Soviet strategic nuclear forces which began in 1967 was the result - even at a time when the two SALT agreements confirmed East-West détente - in approximate parity with the intercontinental arsenal of the United States. It was therefore apparent from the second half of the 1970s that the nature of the Soviet-United States strategic relationship had changed: henceforth the mutual nuclear neutralization of the central systems of the two Great Powers had to be reckoned with.

This obvious fact was to sap the credibility of the main article of faith of the flexible response strategy by undermining the expanded United States deterrent in the defence of Europe. The Soviet Union for its part in no way renounced its expansionist policy in this new context; it had never really regarded equilibrium as an end in itself but rather as a stage on the way to its political recognition as a dominant Power in the world and especially in Europe. This new strategic situation was to have two consequences of the greatest importance for the evolution of thinking about the role of the Alliance's conventional forces.

First of all, the gradual neutralization of their respective strategic potentials in a context of nuclear parity between the United States and the Soviet Union was inevitably to have the effect of exposing the

vulnerability of the Atlantic Alliance in the context of the political and military situation in Europe.

In view of the prospect of a gradual whittling-away of the expanded United States deterrent, military disparities between East and West in Europe were of particular importance in the sphere of tactical nuclear weapons and particularly in that of conventional forces. Contrary to one of the original basic tenets of the flexible response doctrine that held sway for over 20 years, this meant that the balance of forces in the European theatre would now have to be evaluated in itself, independently of global East/West parity. In other words it implied a particularization of the problem of security in Europe as compared to the strategic Soviet/United States relationship.

Apart from the fact that it revived former difficulties about the traditional imbalance of conventional forces in Europe, this strategic particularization was initially to assume major proportions owing to the neutron bomb affair of 1977-1978, and particularly during the controversy concerning intermediate nuclear forces in Europe as a result of the double decision of modernization and negotiation taken by NATO in December 1979. The crisis, certainly the most serious in the history of the Alliance, which continued up to the deployment of the Pershing-II and GLCM in 1983, stimulated a renewal of interest in the conventional aspect of the flexible response.

As a result of the emergence of powerful anti-nuclear movements militating in favour of a reduced role for nuclear weapons and the re-examination of the deterrence doctrine and supported by a segment of European public opinion and encouraged by the Soviet Union, the most respected critics of NATO's strategic options once again took up the idea of reinforcing the Alliance's conventional forces as a means of overcoming the difficulties inherent in the continuing modernization of nuclear weapons and operational control of escalation implied by a genuinely credible flexible response strategy. Being at the same time the consequence of the particularization of the defence of Europe as well as the origin of a powerful current of opinion that questioned the pride of place accorded to nuclear weapons, the INF affair thus helped to give greater weight to the idea of using conventional forces to offset the relative decline of deterrence.

Apart from this process of particularization, the final consequence of the new Soviet/United States strategic equilibrium was inherent in the very nature of the new nuclear dialogue between the two Great Powers. The Soviet Union's achievement of strategic parity made it even more necessary than ever for the United States to reduce and control the danger of the escalation of a European conflict by exploring a large number of limited intermediate options. The greater flexibility of United States nuclear forces was a corollary of this improved selectivity of Washington's options and led in turn to an increasingly overt rejection of the automatic nature of the United States nuclear commitment in Europe.

The only possible result of this trend was to prompt the United States to increase the importance already attached to NATO's conventional forces. The maximum "conventionalization" of a conflict in Europe is thus aimed at raising the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons on the Old Continent and therefore delaying or even precluding any risk of escalation on the strategic level.

Lastly, the announcement of the SDI in March 1983 was in line with pacifist and anti-nuclear trends, in that it was to replace deterrence by security shared between the two Great Powers on the basis of anti-ballistic defensive systems. Quite apart from this overt criticism of the nuclear doctrine, the

Reagan vision of the SDI appeared to call in question the very concept underlying the system of Western security, namely, the sharing and common nature of the risks on both sides of the Atlantic. By suggesting the possibility of transforming the territory of the United States into a sanctuary by means of the deployment of systems offering effective protection against ballistic missiles, President Reagan revived the spectre of strategic dichotomy within the Alliance. However that may be, the possibility of a more rapid downgrading of the nuclear aspect of the flexible response inevitably exposed the usual difficulties encountered by the Alliance concerning the role of conventional forces in its strategy.

The strengthening of Soviet theatre forces

The quantitative as well as qualitative evolution of the threat is obviously one of the main factors behind the renewed interest in conventional forces in the context of European security. Convinced that negotiations on the balance of strategic forces with the United States in the framework of the SALT process would result in the stabilization of their nuclear component, the Soviet Union took advantage of the achievement of parity during the détente years to embark the extensive modification of its military posture in the European theatre. Owing to the increasing difficulties encountered by the Alliance with the implementation of a wide variety of nuclear options that are indispensable in connection with the flexible response, the Soviets were able not only to benefit from the greater importance being attached to conventional options but also to give further impetus to the emerging strategic particularization trend in Europe.

In the circumstances, the Soviets decided as early as the middle of the 1970s to accord priority to the modernization and improvement of their theatre forces in Europe particularly as regards their organization and command, the introduction of new technology and the conduct of operations. This choice coincided, moreover, with a radical change in Soviet military doctrine as a result of which the preventive destruction of NATO's theatre nuclear capability was to become the main objective of conventional forces as soon as hostilities commenced. The rapid destruction of United States nuclear weapons in Europe would thus enable the Soviets to make the Alliance shoulder the responsibility for an escalation that it would have little chance of holding in check before recourse to strategic nuclear weapons, in view of pre-emptive elimination of its most flexible and most credible options.

From the qualitative as well as quantitative standpoint this strategy implies the existence of conventional forces capable of launching rapid attacks. As regards the organization, command and conduct of operations, these developments have been associated with Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, who appears to have carried out, from the time of his appointment as Chief of the General Staff up to his replacement in 1985, the most effective modernization programme ever conceived for the Soviet armed forces since the end of the Second World War. Major changes were accordingly planned and introduced in the organization of tactical air force units by placing large elements of such forces directly under the orders of the commander at the front, in the field. A considerable number of aircraft whose performance is increasingly comparable with the most advanced Western models are, moreover, continuing to transform front-line Soviet aviation into a formidable offensive weapon.

Unremitting attention was paid to the training and equipment of highly mobile troops intended to operate behind NATO lines, namely, to sabotage stockpiles of nuclear weapons and disrupt their deployment. For this purpose, Ogarkov reintroduced into Soviet military practice the concept of the mobile operations group (MOG) for the rapid penetration of the adversary's front lines so as to reach nuclear weapon launching sites situated in the rear before they could be used. Lastly, particular attention was also paid to the special forces, the SPETSNAZ, which had been tested on a large scale in December 1979 during the initial stages of the Afghan campaign. Post-war Soviet numerical superiority was maintained and even increased: between 1968 and 1978 over 8,000 tanks were added to the Warsaw Pact forces and the number of combat-ready battalions was increased by 50 per cent between 1965 and 1985, whereas those of NATO declined by 1 per cent.

These changes and modifications affecting theatre forces, which had the effect of emphasizing the increased importance of conventional options, were accompanied by nuclear modernization programmes. Starting in 1976-77, aging fixed SS-4 and SS-5 missiles were replaced by the triple-warhead mobile SS-20, and a programme for the improvement of tactical nuclear and tactical operational forces was launched at the end of the 1970s with the introduction of the SS-21, SS-23 and SS-12/22. This panoply of modernized weapons (solid propulsion, greater accuracy and excellent operational manoeuvrability) is intended for the preventive destruction of NATO's nuclear capability in the event that the nuclear threshold is crossed early on, and provides the Soviets with effective control over any escalation in their favour, as a direct result of the upgrading of their conventional capability.

These developments carried considerable weight in the discussions on the upgrading of conventional forces in the West. From 1980 a general but as yet fragile consensus gradually began to emerge concerning the need for a substantial strengthening of the conventional component of the Alliance's deterrent posture.

The idea, generally speaking, was to fill the gap that would inevitably be created by the persistent questioning of the nuclear option and at the same time to counter Soviet doctrinal and operational developments connected with conventional options. This consensus nevertheless left differences of view between the Allies, not only as regards the way this conventional strengthening should be carried out but also concerning the tactical and strategic changes which had to accompany it.

In essence, however, it stemmed from an inversion of the problem of the role of NATO's conventional forces. The difference between the present period and that extending from just after the war to the achievement of strategic parity between the two Great Powers during the 1970s is that European reluctance to countenance a considerable enhancement of the role of the Alliance's conventional forces is steadily being overcome.

The convergence of doubts concerning nuclear weapons

No doubt the most important factor in the resurgence of the question of conventional forces in Europe is the radical transformation of the politico-strategic context in the 1980s, in the sense that certain

political groups or bodies of opinion, often for very different but nevertheless convergent reasons, began to question the very concept of nuclear deterrence. This trend was all the more important as it coincided with the desire constantly expressed by NATO officials to raise the nuclear threshold in the European theatre by the adoption of new conventional concepts on the operational level. This convergence therefore confirmed the whittling-down of the leading role played by recourse to nuclear weapons in the strategy of the Alliance.

The wave of pacificism which between 1981 and 1983 accompanied the prospect of Pershing II and GLCM deployment in accordance with the double decision of 1979 constitutes a stage in this process, and led increasingly to the rejection of the nuclear weapon by public opinion as strategic thinking evolved in the direction of limited nuclear options that made war increasingly "thinkable" in the context of a limited conflict in the European theatre. The basic question from the debate on the neutron bomb in 1977-78 to opposition to the deployment of Pershing missiles is that of the nuclear threshold, which it is now perceived should be as high as possible, and this has the direct effect of increasing the importance of the discussion about the Alliance's conventional forces.

In 1985 opinion in most of the Alliance countries was increasingly in favour of the non-use of nuclear weapons by NATO "regardless of the circumstances" unless they were first used by the Soviet Union; the relevant figures were 66 per cent in the FRG, 71 per cent in Great Britain and 81 per cent in Italy. In France, despite a genuine national consensus concerning its deterrence doctrine, polls revealed a similar trend with majorities of the order of 76 per cent. Apart from the question of the real significance of these figures, the growing aversion of European public opinion to the prospect of a nuclear response to a conventional attack may be regarded as very real indeed.

The logical conclusion to be drawn from these trends reflecting a steady degradation of the nuclear deterrent in the event of an attack by conventional forces is obviously that new conventional alternatives are needed. This reasoning gradually prevailed within NATO as well as outside, both in the United States as well as in Europe. Even more surprising, this consensus appears to reflect the desires of a broad range of political opinion, from the most conservative American opinion to the European left, including movements advocating the adoption of a non-first-use policy as well as those favouring new alternative strategies to the flexible response.

It is in Germany that this calling into question of deterrence took the most radical turn. In the most extreme case, it takes the form of movements simply favouring alternatives to nuclear weapons and proposing the maintenance of an exclusively conventional and "non-provocative" posture.

Intended to make the country physically impossible to occupy through resistance to the occupying forces, these alternatives emphasize the deterrent nature of a "really defensive defence". Without going that far, others have proposed less radical alternatives designed to attenuate the importance of the central front forward defence concept in favour of a strategy geared to an extended territorial defence. The best-known advocates of this option, namely, Horst Afheldt or Jochem Löser, the former Chief of Staff of the Bundeswehr, base their arguments on the possibility of using a highly mobile group of light brigades equipped with modern anti-tank weapons and capable of actually stopping and counter-attacking a mass armoured offensive by the Warsaw Pact.

However, the notion of greater mobility on the battlefield suggests the idea - which is difficult to accept - of "sacrificing" portions of FRG territory for the purpose of gaining time so as to permit the reinforcement of NATO forces while counter-offensives are mounted against GDR.

Leaving aside these various alternatives, the resurgence of the discussion on the Alliance's conventional forces is of special political importance to the Federal Republic. For almost half a century, the stationing of foreign conventional forces in a divided Germany has constituted both the reality and symbol of the failure to settle the German question following the Second World War. As a result, any discussion on the nature, role and above all the presence of conventional United States or Soviet forces in Europe will inevitably raise the question of the status of the two Germanys, their unification and the position of Central Europe in a security system which is changing rapidly.

Yet the resurgence of the discussion is not confined to public opinion, for it has had an increasing impact within the Alliance's integrated organization itself. A number of studies over the past four or five years have reached the conclusion that NATO's conventional capability could be strengthened realistically by combining new tactical concepts and so-called "emergent" modern technology.

Analyses carried out under General Bernard Rogers, a former SACEUR, as well as by the independent European Security Study Group (ESECS) are in agreement that these objectives could be achieved by real growth of the order of 4 per cent in the defence budgets of the Alliance countries over a period of 10 years. The ESECS study proposes in this connection the acquisition of 1,000 multiple rocket launchers (MLRS) to deal with frontal attacks, 1,000 cruise missiles equipped with "smart" conventional warheads for second-echelon forces and 900 conventional ballistic missiles for operations aimed at immobilizing the enemy's aerial capability.

These evaluations, based largely on the development of technologies whose potential - as yet highly uncertain at their present stage of development - may have been considerably overestimated, have generally underestimated the cost of adapting a "conventionalized" posture to the strategy of the Alliance. However that may be, they will have helped to orient the discussion within NATO in the direction to be followed in the modernization of its conventional forces. In November 1984, the Committee on Defence Planning approved the adoption of a new operational sub-concept of the flexible response strategy for in-depth attacks against enemy operational reserves and replacements (FoFA).

Developed by SHAPE at the request of General Rogers, the FoFA sub-concept is now applicable to the entire Allied Command in Europe and is based on the idea of conventional in-depth strikes up to 300 km behind the front line in order to slow down the reinforcement process which would be of vital importance in any major attack envisaged by the Warsaw Pact forces. These developments correspond implicitly to the ideas behind the questioning of the forward defence strategy in that they focus attention on increased mobility of forces and on the possibility - in contrast with NATO's defensive tradition - of an in-depth conflict in the aggressor's territory. However, at the very time that the Alliance was trying to update the doctrine governing the use of its conventional forces and to acquire the new means necessary for its implementation, the Soviet Union was considerably modifying its approach to conventional disarmament in Europe.

CHAPTER IV

THE SOVIET APPROACH

Political, military and strategic objectives of negotiations

Jérôme PAOLINI

The West is currently witnessing a Soviet disarmament campaign which is the most far-reaching and most coherent of the entire post-war period. For a number of observers the question raised by this “peace offensive”, which is of a radically new kind in view of the methods being used, is whether the military confrontation in Europe is really entering a de-escalation stage or whether, on the contrary, this peace offensive is simply a tactical manoeuvre of the USSR in pursuit of traditional goals.

Through their diplomatic offensive, the Soviets have brought about a real renaissance of conventional disarmament in Europe which in many respects seems to be cornerstone of the USSR’s new approach to European security policy since the arrival of Mr. Gorbachev. Since 1973, the barren MBFR negotiations on the balanced reduction of conventional forces in Central Europe had accustomed the West to considerable inflexibility on the part of the Soviets.

In June 1986 the Warsaw Pact countries at their Budapest meeting proposed a “global approach” to the reduction of conventional and nuclear armaments in Europe, based on Gorbachev’s previous initiatives in East Berlin in April. The Budapest Appeal called for substantial reductions in military forces from the Atlantic to the Urals, accompanied by reductions in nuclear “operational-tactical” systems, air forces and other categories of weapons.

In December 1986 the Atlantic Alliance in turn opened the door to further negotiations on conventional forces in Europe by agreeing to exploratory discussions with the East on the elaboration of a double mandate on military stability and new confidence-building measures from the Atlantic to the Urals. Talks were to have begun in Vienna on the elaboration of a mandate for new negotiations on conventional stability intended to replace the moribund MBFR talks.

Without losing sight of the strictly military questions connected with balance of conventional forces on the Continent and the development of the role of conventional forces in the Alliance’s strategy, it is essential to explore the political and military objectives of the Soviet approach to conventional disarmament and to determine, on this basis and in broad outline, the negotiating strategy that may be adopted by the USSR in future negotiations on stability. In attempting to hazard a reply to the question of the real reasons behind the new Soviet policy, three basic factors have to be compared with the traditional USSR attitude, especially in the context of the MBFR talks. The first is the evolution of the role played by conventional disarmament in the USSR’s European security policy, as viewed through

the interrelationship between the CSCE process and the control of conventional forces. The second is the evolution of the conventional/nuclear relationship in Soviet disarmament policy, and the third is the role of military factors in the evolution of the balance of conventional forces in Europe.

The evolution of conventional disarmament in the USSR's European security policy

Virtually up to Mr. Gorbachev's accession to power in March 1985, Soviet disarmament policy since the beginning of the 1950s was based on the idea of giving absolute priority to the objective of nuclear strategic parity with the United States, with the gradual consolidation of this parity indirectly constituting the USSR's main diplomatic instrument in Europe. For the Soviets, the golden age of arms control during the 1970s was intended to establish, mainly through the SALT negotiations, a régime of equal security for the two Great Powers which, in turn, were to set up an essentially unequal security system in Europe between the continental Power, namely, the USSR and the European Allies of the United States.

This policy amounted both to a rejection by the USSR of the idea of being reckoned a full partner in the European system in exchange for the status of a global Power equal to the United States and to according priority to the nuclear aspect in any approach to disarmament questions.

With the success of the SALT negotiations, which constituted a recognition of the achievement of strategic parity but at the same time exacerbated uneasiness concerning the expanded United States deterrent in the defence of Europe, the strictly European aspect of Soviet disarmament policy was concentrated essentially on the preservation of the USSR's traditional advantages on the Continent. The objectives of this policy were recognition of the territorial régime that took shape immediately after the war, acceptance by the West of a ratio of conventional forces in Europe in which the USSR enjoyed impressive superiority, and confirmation of the existence of two sovereign German States. In order to attain these objectives, the Soviets sought a pan-European diplomatic forum on military security that would rapidly confirm the established political and military order without tackling either the question of the reduction of conventional armaments or the idea - new in the West - of confidence-building measures that would stabilize the balance of forces in the European theatre.

The MBFR-CSCE duo and the status quo policy

For the USSR, political "normalization" was therefore a prior condition for any real negotiations on the elimination of conventional imbalances in Europe. When the Soviets realized that the West would not agree to global discussions on European security without talks on a genuine reduction of conventional forces, they modified their approach by subordinating the content and the holding of future negotiations on conventional forces to their primary objective of political normalization. This meant that the meeting on European security - the future CSCE - should in their view take place before the

MBFR negotiations on conventional arms control in Central Europe, and that any progress made on substance at this latter forum would be linked by the Soviets to the favourable development of the Helsinki process.

Once the MBFR talks began in January 1973, the USSR was, logically enough, to show little interest in reaching an agreement rapidly, since it was concentrating its efforts on achieving a speedy and advantageous conclusion of the CSCE. The fact that the Soviets subordinated the correction of conventional imbalances to their objective of political normalization was completely in accordance with a status quo diplomacy in Europe which was, in fact, to remain a permanent feature of Soviet diplomacy until the autumn of 1986.

The MBFR talks themselves were held hostage to a negotiating tactic designed above all not to hamper the priority political process of normalization at Helsinki. For this reason, the USSR was unable to accept the Western proposals made during the MBFR talks for the reduction of conventional armaments that would call in question the military status quo and balance of conventional forces in Europe which, in the Soviet view, was perfectly legitimate.

Rejecting the idea of asymmetrical reductions by the East that was proposed by NATO, the first Soviet proposal at the MBFR talks in November 1973 did not admit of any imbalance in conventional forces in Central Europe and suggested the establishment of national ceilings for all participating States. Such ceilings were tantamount to a freeze of the existing military imbalance without affecting Soviet territory which was not covered by the zone to which the mandate of the negotiations applied, and the refusal to countenance any asymmetrical reductions was, according to the USSR, based on the existence of an approximate balance of military forces in Europe.

As a continental power seeking recognition of its status as a global Power equal to the United States, the USSR was unable to regard itself as a protagonist more illegitimate than the latter in Europe, and its military presence was accordingly not to be interpreted as a greater threat on the continent than that of the other Great Power. Beyond its status quo policy, it was essentially for political reasons therefore that the USSR rejected any asymmetrical reduction at the MBFR talks since it would have amounted to acceptance of a régime that differentiated between the USSR and the United States in the establishment of the European security system. This political principle of non-discrimination was to remain unchanged up to the present time and result in an insurmountable deadlock in the MBFR talks.

This principle was also to be of decisive importance for the Soviet position on confidence-building measures in the negotiations on security aspects at the Helsinki Conference. Here the USSR very early on adopted a hostile attitude to the transparency of military activities, mainly because they would be applicable only to European territory and not to that of the United States. In practice, application of the principle of political non-discrimination in Europe meant that the Soviets would, by virtue of the "political" parity between the two Great Powers, reject the application to the European part of their territory of any confidence-building measure agreed upon at the CSCE which did not equally apply to the other Great Power present in Europe. Eventually they accepted the idea of having a symbolic strip of 250 km on the European frontier of the USSR taken into account - a compromise that was to permit progress on security aspects at Helsinki and the conclusion of the Final Act of the first phase of the CSCE.

For the USSR, the signature in August 1975 of the Helsinki Agreements marks the end of the territorial and political normalization process in Europe and therefore the beginning of a new military “détente” phase on the Continent. From the autumn of 1975, Soviet diplomacy embarked upon the promotion of the “spirit of Helsinki”, and the Final Act of the CSCE is interpreted as a “mandate” for the continuation and strengthening of a permanent East-West dialogue in line with the traditional Soviet objective of a pan-European institution on security which would supersede confrontation between military alliances. This machinery that the USSR hoped to dominate was to be the epitome of European détente, minimize the importance of defence efforts and intra-Western military co-operation, and “delegitimize” nuclear weapons on the Continent, thereby establishing *ipso facto* Soviet control over a group of States with weakened intra-European and transatlantic connections. After the Helsinki Conference it therefore became essential for Soviet diplomacy to maintain the continuity of the process initiated by the CSCE.

Up to middle of the 1980s, the USSR had to make do with the system of irregular review conferences on the CSCE process during which questions of security were of secondary importance. The Soviets tried in vain to “militarize” the Belgrade Review Conference by submitting proposals on the non-first-use of nuclear weapons and others designed to block any increase in the membership of military alliances - this in view of Spain’s imminent membership in NATO. But discussions concentrated on respect for human rights in the East and a rather inconclusive final document was drawn up. Nor can the following Review Conference at Madrid be regarded as a diplomatic success for the USSR. From the autumn of 1980 up to its conclusion in September 1983, this second CSCE session, which almost ended in deadlock on several occasions because of human rights, the Polish question and the conflict in Afghanistan, nevertheless managed to draw up a mandate for a new 35-country forum on “confidence-building and security measures and disarmament in Europe” - the future Stockholm CDE. Throughout this entire period the Soviets tried in vain to have greater importance attached to the security aspects of the CSCE, but remained consistently on the defensive as regards humanitarian questions, in pursuit of their traditional objective of a continuing process of military détente in Europe.

When in May 1978 France suggested for the first time the idea of a conference on disarmament in Europe to be attended by the 35 CSCE States, the USSR regarded it essentially as an alternative to its unsuccessful policy aimed at the militarization of the CSCE. For the Soviets, the French initiative offered the possibility of setting up a new forum devoted exclusively to questions of security in Europe that they could eventually hope to separate from the CSCE. Yet although the French proposal corresponded in procedural terms to a long-standing priority political objective of the USSR, its substance was to prove much less attractive from the Soviet standpoint.

For France was thinking of terms of a CDE in two successive stages, namely, the adoption of a complete body of security and confidence-building measures in Europe followed by the reduction of conventional forces in an expanded zone from the Atlantic to the Urals in order to overcome the major shortcoming of the MBFR talks, which were limited to Central Europe and excluded the European military districts of the USSR. The French proposal was therefore in direct contradiction with the cardinal principle of the USSR’s European security policy of the time, according to which any discrimination as compared with the United States was unacceptable.

The idea of a zone from the Atlantic to the Urals would have in point of fact put an end to the

preferential treatment obtained by the Soviets in the Helsinki Final Act, whose confidence-building measures applied only to an insignificant proportion of the European part of the USSR. Indeed, what was at stake went well beyond the military advantages for the West of being notified in advance and possibly being able to verify Red Army manoeuvres in the Western districts of the USSR, since the French proposal raised a political question that was of basic importance for the future of the European security system, namely, should the USSR continue to enjoy special status on the Continent by virtue of its role as a Great Power equal to the United States or should it now be regarded as a European State, just like the others, by agreeing to have its territory up to the Urals taken into account by the future forum on disarmament in Europe?

The Stockholm Conference: the first signs of movement

When the mandate of the CDE was being drawn up at the Madrid Review Conference in the autumn of 1983, the USSR immediately adopted the position that the zone of application of any confidence-building measures that might be adopted should include the Atlantic area in the broadest sense of the term, including *in extremis* United States territory. The East could have wrecked the future conference by maintaining this demand at all costs. In the final analysis, however, the adoption of the Madrid mandate was to reveal the keen interest showed by the USSR in a new forum on security when the Soviets accepted ambiguous wording which did not explicitly exclude extension of the zone to cover the Atlantic area but did include Soviet territory up to the Urals within the competence of the CDE.

Yet the USSR did not abandon its principle of rejecting political discrimination *vis-à-vis* the United States in Europe. From the very beginning of the CDE at Stockholm in January 1984, the Soviets exploited the ambiguous nature of its mandate to maintain their broad interpretation of its application. When the Conference eventually embarked upon discussions of specific measures, the Soviets called for the inclusion of naval and aerial military activities outside the Continent. Confronted by a Western refusal, they finally agreed to defer consideration of naval and air forces to a later stage of the Conference, but this compromise was unable to prevent complete deadlock at the CDE at the end of 1984. The USSR had, in procedural terms, obtained a new forum on security in Europe but, as in the past, refused to draw the necessary conclusions as to the substance by virtue of its status as a global Power which was essentially extra-European according to the Soviets.

Mr. Gorbachev's arrival on the scene at the beginning of the following year was to completely alter this reasoning, which had remained virtually unchanged since the beginning of Brezhnevian détente diplomacy at the end of the 1960s. The CDE affair was in fact to offer the opportunity for a complete review of the principles underlying the USSR's European security policy.

This alteration of course was originally reflected in two initiatives of capital importance. On the one hand, the new Kremlin team in the spring of 1985 adopted an attitude of compromise on the question of confidence-building measures, revitalizing the CDE and enabling it to complete its work with the Stockholm Agreement of September 1986.

This first East/West success on security matters since the signature of SALT-II in 1979 marks the beginning of a radically new approach in Soviet security policy in Europe, characterized above all by the adoption of genuinely European disarmament diplomacy not shaped exclusively by global relationships with its United States partner/adversary. On the other hand, realizing the limitations of its conventional forces control policy during the previous 15 years, the USSR was to leapfrog the MBFR negotiations, thereby opening up the way for a many-sided and truly offensive conventional disarmament policy which supplanted the traditional role played by its military status quo policy as a diplomatic instrument in Europe.

At Stockholm the Soviets in point of fact agreed for the first time to a series of provisions whose application constituted a legal situation embodying discrimination against the USSR in comparison with the United States in Europe. The extent to which Soviet positions had evolved since the beginning of the 1970s was revealed by the fact that a complete set of military transparency measures - including prior notification of activities and providing for on-site inspection with a view to verification - could be applied to the territory of the USSR itself up to the Urals, without in any way affecting the United States apart from its military presence in Europe.

By accepting a major concession of substance in order to maintain the continuity of the détente process which in the Soviet view the CSCE-CDE had always represented, Gorbachev was in point of fact pursuing the traditional Soviet political objective of promoting pan-Europeanism in security matters. The concession on substance in order to gain a political procedural advantage was more important than in the past, but it was nevertheless in line with Soviet policy since the signature of the Helsinki Final Act. As in the past, the decision seems to have been based on the principle that the political benefits derived from the military détente process outweighed the short-term sacrifices necessary to maintain its institutional momentum. The same reasoning is to be found behind other recent Soviet initiatives, such as the proposal, made at the time of the Budapest Appeal, for a permanent consultative commission for the inspection and control of conventional disarmament in Europe - which was incidentally included in the SPD-SED agreement of October 1986 on the creation of a denuclearized zone in Central Europe. They are indicative of a new USSR attitude to its European security policy in verification matters but are nevertheless in line with its traditional policy of going beyond alliances through "military" détente over and above "political" détente.

The "new political thinking" on conventional disarmament

The real novelty of Soviet "new thinking" on conventional disarmament is to be found in the role now being played by the USSR's European security policy as compared with its strategic relationship with the United States. It constitutes a complete reversal of policy. Gorbachev's USSR is no longer exclusively seeking recognition of its status as a global Power equal to the United States by means of its military status quo policy in Europe, for it now feels that strategic parity, both political and military, has been achieved. As a result, Soviet diplomacy is no longer obliged to evaluate the European security system from the standpoint of bilateral relations with the other Great Power. The Gorbachev team seems to have understood that, freed from this constraint, Soviet disarmament policy in Europe

could now transcend its traditional function of maintaining the military status quo and become a valuable diplomatic instrument for the achievement of unchanged objectives.

The genius of a Gorbachev lies in the recognition of the fact that a less inflexible diplomacy, suggesting the possibility of major reductions in the USSR's conventional potential in Europe as a short-term concession, could serve a longer-term strategy aimed at excluding the United States from European affairs, by presenting the USSR no longer as an occupying super-Power equal to the United States but as a European State just like the others. And a European State which is much more credible, since it proposes the replacement of the established order by equal security for all through denuclearization and the elimination of conventional disparities in a new context in which an effective collective security system includes only the Europeans, "rid" of permanent confrontation between the military alliances and the spectre of a nuclear conflict. Such is the meaning of the "common European house" presented by Kremlin propaganda.

This new and truly "European" Soviet approach to disarmament in Europe by means of which spectacular concessions are intended to promote the traditional goals of the USSR - weakening transatlantic links, eroding the credibility of the United States conventional and nuclear presence in Europe and promoting East-West co-operation in security matters and regional agreements to the detriment of Western solidarity - in no way implies any reduction in the importance of the privileged strategic relationship with the other Great Power. From the Gorbachev plan of January 1985 for the elimination of nuclear weapons throughout the world by the year 2000 to the continuity of the process of neutralizing the strategic United States arsenal by means of START, and including the Reykjavik Summit in October 1986 and the Washington Treaty of December 1987, the USSR has clearly shown that bilateral arms control was more than ever a destabilizing force for the European security system in a context of latent crisis concerning the expanded United States deterrent. A legacy of the SALT agreements, this Soviet tactic is at the present time supplemented by a dynamic European policy in which conventional disarmament plays a principal role as the continuity of the bilateral dialogue, through the elimination of the INFs and the prospect of a 50 per cent cut in strategic arsenals, continues to point up the extent of the imbalance of conventional forces in Europe.

The new Soviet disarmament policy in Europe can find a particularly favourable context for the pursuit of its traditional goals in this renewal of interest in conventional forces control owing to the central place occupied by conventional aspects in the current European security problem. In point of fact the question of conventional forces is almost less important as such than the crucial role it plays in NATO's flexible response strategy, and in the development of intra-European military co-operation and the future of general East-West relations. In the extreme case, it is more important by virtue of what it suggests in Western thinking than its immediate interest in connection with the question of the ratio of conventional forces on the Continent.

This situation is due to the fact that the present renewal of interest in conventional disarmament can be interpreted as a direct political consequence of the new situation created by the elimination of INFs in Europe.

In the second half of the 1970s, when it became increasingly evident that the control of strategic armaments went hand in hand with and confirmed the erosion of the credibility of the United States

nuclear commitment in Europe, regional imbalances had already increased significantly. The MBFR negotiations nevertheless provided the Atlantic Alliance with a political outlet for the pressure created by the increasingly obvious need to correct conventional imbalances in Central Europe at a time when the United States nuclear shield was, in the view of some, being whittled away. Since rearmament was not a viable option for the Alliance economic, social and doctrinal reasons, a policy entailing the negotiated correction of disparities seemed to be indicated. But this policy had the disadvantage of depriving the Western Powers of diplomatic leverage, since it would be difficult to downgrade the conventional aspect of NATO's defensive posture, which was already inadequate, without the risk of hampering the implementation of the flexible response strategy. In this context, the MBFR negotiations could be used to attenuate the political pressure for negotiated reductions, particularly in the United States Congress, and at the same time maintain the level of Western forces in Central Europe.

Any result achieved in the MBFR talks that was acceptable to the East was rejected by the Alliance since it would unduly weaken its conventional capability. Conversely, any Western proposal made at the MBFR talks tantamount to improving NATO's conventional posture was inevitably rejected as not negotiable by the East. The Soviets for their part were perfectly happy with negotiations on conventional forces which produced no real results as regards security, in view of their policy of maintaining the military status quo in Europe. The inevitable deadlock at the MBFR talks has persisted up to the present time.

In the present circumstances, when the theme of nuclear disarmament in Europe is stronger than ever, the new Soviet approach to conventional stability is intended precisely to do away with the political outlet offered by the MBFR talks to the Atlantic Alliance in the 1970s.

Since Mr. Gorbachev's arrival, the Soviets have therefore transcended their traditional status quo policy in Europe and adopted a radically new approach to conventional disarmament, which is now used directly to promote the USSR's traditional goals on the Continent. By suggesting, since the Budapest Appeal, the possibility of "deep" cuts in the territory of the USSR itself up to the Urals, the Soviets have created favourable conditions for the replacement of the MBFR talks by a new forum on stability and, as they hope, on all questions relating to security in Europe. Their tactical sacrifice in agreeing that a significant portion of Soviet territory could be taken into account - which they had previously refused to do except in connection with simple confidence-building measures - is a characteristic feature of the novelty of the new Soviet approach aimed at promoting the traditional objective of a pan-European conference on military détente. Whereas in the past the Soviets had tried without success to "militarize" the CSCE, the new team has adopted exactly the opposite approach, namely, to do away with discussions on security and instead press for new expanded negotiations on conventional armaments which, according to the USSR, should directly or indirectly cover a whole set of problems and specifically what remains of the United States nuclear presence in Europe after the implementation of the agreement on the elimination of the INFs.

If this new approach was to be credible, Soviet diplomacy had to show greater tactical flexibility and turn its back on traditional rigidity which had been adequate in connection with the status quo policy pursued by the USSR for almost 15 years at the MBFR talks. The significance of the concessions proposed by the USSR is above all political and their real value in terms of security is in reality minimal. For example, the USSR's agreement to having its European military districts taken into account in future

negotiations on stability implies, as a *quid pro quo*, the association of France, Spain, Italy and Turkey with the conventional disarmament process, thereby “drowning” by means of this expansion the extent of the imbalance in the Central European region. Similarly, Gorbachev’s “concession” in July 1986 in admitting for the first time the existence of certain imbalances in conventional forces in Europe was not really a concession since the imbalances in question were of a sectoral nature, in other words imbalances in certain types of armaments in the global context of conventional equilibrium from the Atlantic to the Urals, which still implies mutual and therefore symmetrical reductions on both sides.

The evolution of the conventional/nuclear relationship in Soviet disarmament policy

It has been observed that, since the beginning of the 1950s, Soviet disarmament policy has almost consistently neglected the conventional aspect in order to concentrate on the control of nuclear weapons. Two basic and closely interrelated reasons explain the priority accorded to nuclear disarmament by the USSR throughout the post-war period.

On the one hand, the Atlantic alliance has not, since its creation, ever really had the political will or resources to match the Red Army’s massive conventional superiority in Europe. Up to the end of the 1960s, United States superiority in the nuclear field therefore constituted the cornerstone of NATO’s deterrence system and the transatlantic security relationship. Since the adoption of the flexible response strategy between 1962 and 1967, this system has undergone a number of modifications from the standpoint of the conventional/nuclear relationship, the conventional aspect gradually gaining in importance in the following decade, at least in discussions.

Since the nuclear weapons was, throughout this period, both the instrument of United States strategic pre-eminence and, since 1953-1955, the most important component both of the United States presence in Europe and of the European security system itself, it was natural that the USSR should adopt a disarmament policy in which priority was accorded to nuclear weapons while it followed a *status quo* policy on the conventional level where its military advantage was unquestionable.

On the other hand, from the strictly military standpoint, the USSR devoted a considerable proportion of its defence effort throughout the post-war period to the task of matching United States nuclear supremacy. First of all in respect of strategic weapons, so as to achieve parity with the United States - the SALT process paralleling the USSR’s accession to the status of a global nuclear Power. Secondly, as regards the European theatre, so as gradually to wrest from NATO its control over nuclear escalation which was a vital part of the flexible response strategy. In this context, Soviet disarmament policy naturally emphasized the area in which the USSR was lagging militarily in order deliberately to underestimate and consolidate the area in which it enjoyed an unquestionable relative advantage.

During the 1960s, anti-nuclear propaganda and Soviet diplomacy concentrated on nuclear testing, opposition to the MLF and the signature by the FRG of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. In the following decade up to the beginning of the 1980s, emphasis in the Soviet disarmament campaign shifted to the question of United States strategic aircraft deployed in Europe, the neutron weapon and, lastly, the deployment of Pershing II and GLCM intermediate-range nuclear systems.

Even on the conventional side of Soviet disarmament policy at that time priority was given to nuclear weapons: the modification of the USSR's positions at the MBFR talks was in point of fact influenced throughout this period not only by its status quo objective but also its persistent efforts to "nuclearize" the negotiations. In fact the only occasion on which the Soviets appeared to be really interested in making headway at the MBFR talks, after simply biding their time during almost 14 years of discussions, was when NATO had the unfortunate idea of proposing an exchange between nuclear and conventional capability. The famous "Option III" of December 1975 consisted in giving up 90 Western systems with nuclear capability (54 F-4 fighter bombers and 36 Pershing IA missiles as well as 1,000 nuclear warheads) for the withdrawal of a Soviet armoured corps, i.e. 5 divisions, 70,000 men and 1,700 tanks from the Central European zone and its return to the USSR. The East's reply in February 1976 is a perfect reflection of the continuing concerns underlying Soviet disarmament policy at the time. In refusing to give way on the conventional level, the Soviets made a counter-proposal to reduce their tactical nuclear capability: 54 SU 17/20A and C aircraft, 36 short-range SCUD missiles and an unspecified number of ground-air missiles against 90 Western nuclear launch vehicles. In the final analysis it was NATO's reversal of position that prevented the MBFR talks from being transformed into negotiations on nuclear tactical and theatre weapons in Central Europe.

Conventional disarmament as an instrument of denuclearization

As compared with the experience of the MBFR talks, the renewal of emphasis on the conventional aspects of the USSR's European policy since Mr. Gorbachev's arrival is characterized by a radical change in Soviet evaluation of the relationship between conventional and nuclear disarmament. It would appear that the new team realized that the traditional approach - based on the principle of according absolute priority to nuclear matters, conventional status quo and the "nuclearization" of the MBFR talks - could no longer achieve traditional Soviet objectives in view of the gradual evolution of European security conditions since the end of the 1970s. This traditional approach had therefore to be replaced by a really offensive disarmament policy in the context of a revival of détente in which greater emphasis on conventional forces could make a decisive contribution to the denuclearization of the Continent. The novelty consists not in the promotion of conventional disarmament in Europe as such but in the transformation of nuclear disarmament - which remains an absolute priority - into a very special diplomatic instrument.

In espousing the idea of a new forum on conventional forces from the Atlantic to the Urals, the Budapest Appeal of April 1986 established a direct link between conventional and nuclear disarmament by proposing the inclusion of "operational/tactical" weapons in the future negotiations. In itself this initiative was nothing radically new since the Soviets have always tried to exploit the conventional/nuclear relationship, as was demonstrated at the MBFR talks on several occasions when they endeavoured to include discussion of dual capability systems in 1974 and during the "Option III" episode in 1975-1976.

What is truly original under Gorbachev is a greater ability to use the conventional/nuclear relationship for the traditional purpose of "delegitimizing" nuclear weapons by creating diplomatic

conditions favourable for the political exploitation of this relationship, which is to be intensified in two ways in the new Soviet approach.

First, on the nuclear side of the relationship, the Soviets are now fully aware of the achievement of strategic parity and of United States uneasiness about expanded deterrence, an uneasiness stemming from the growing danger of being parties to a global nuclear exchange initiated in Europe.

This trend is admittedly not new, and can be traced back to the adoption, in the second half of the 1960s, by the United States of a strategic doctrine of second strike reprisals and a policy of graduating its commitment in Europe in the event of a conflict.

This traditional factor is now considerably reinforced by the implicit tendency, even in the West, to question nuclear deterrence. In this respect the United States, as a result of the fuss made about the launching of the SDI, the switch from arms control to arms reduction and the materialization of the double zero option by the Washington Treaty, has given the impression that it has taken over the cause of pacifist and anti-nuclear movements on both sides of the Atlantic. Lastly, and above all, the elimination of the TNFs, apart from the current controversy about its implications for the application of the flexible response, can hardly be interpreted by the Soviets as anything but a contribution to the transformation of Europe into a reduced-risk zone for the two Great Powers as part of a continuous historical trend since the end of the 1950s, and therefore a security area more favourable to conventional operations. On the other hand, although the Alliance has never managed to define the exact role to be played by the tactical nuclear weapons that are indispensable to the flexible response, the fact that the bulk of the Alliance's nuclear systems will henceforth be limited to tactical use, posing a threat mainly to the two Germanys, is creating considerable political pressure in the FRG for the negotiated reduction of these systems.

As a result, the attractive nature of Soviet initiatives proposing spectacular reductions of conventional forces from the Atlantic to the Urals is adding considerably to the political pressure on members of the Alliance, which would refuse to go along with new negotiations on stability in Europe that excluded either directly or indirectly the remaining nuclear weapons on the Continent. The Europeans have always attached great importance to NATO's deterrent posture to the detriment of developments aimed at providing it with the capacity to wage a conventional and nuclear war on the Continent. At the present time they are obliged to support the double elimination of intermediate-range nuclear weapons, leaving NATO with an essentially nuclear posture which, owing to the short range of the systems retained, is more credible for use in battle than as a true deterrent. As nuclear disarmament in Europe with the elimination of the INFs increased the importance of the underlying balance of conventional forces, the Soviet position on conventional disarmament therefore gave impetus to the movement for the denuclearization of the Continent.

Secondly, on the conventional side of the relationship, the Soviet trump card in exploiting the nuclear/conventional relationship consists paradoxically of the uncertainties felt by the Atlantic Alliance itself concerning the substance of the problem.

Since its setback at Lisbon in the 1950s, the Atlantic Community has never managed to achieve a clear and complete consensus on the role and importance of the conventional aspect of its deterrent

posture. Traditionally and almost continuously since the adoption of the flexible response strategy between 1962 and 1967, the United States has emphasized the importance of NATO's conventional forces in order to raise the threshold of nuclear escalation, so as to avoid the disadvantage of the premature use of the atomic weapon in the European theatre and, even more recently, to act as an offsetting factor in the context of the gradual erosion of expanded strategic deterrence. The European partners of the Alliance, for their part, having regard to the social and economic constraints hampering their defence efforts and the fact that a limited nuclear or even conventional conflict in Europe would constitute an unprecedented disaster, have constantly highlighted the essentially deterrent role of the threat of nuclear escalation, while at the same time remaining reticent about any effort to offset the United States nuclear guarantee on the conventional side. Apart from a general consensus concerning the forward defence concept and the futility, in a defensive approach, to match the Warsaw Pact's conventional potential force by force, it has never arrived at a generally-accepted view of the Alliance's conventional forces, which are evaluated in various ways on both sides on the basis of one and the same criterion, namely, the threshold level of nuclearization perceived as adequate to maximize deterrence.

In parallel, the Alliance has always made a strict diplomatic distinction between nuclear and conventional disarmament. With the exception of the "Option III" at the MBFR talks, it has constantly and rightly rejected any kind of combined Soviet approach leading to crossed nuclear/conventional reductions. This rigid distinction is justified by the fact that the deterrent effect of the conventional and nuclear aspects play a perfectly complementary role in the flexible response doctrine. These two aspects are not, therefore, in any way substitutable. Even assuming the elimination of the East's conventional superiority and therefore a balance of conventional forces reflecting parity in Europe, the United States nuclear presence would nevertheless be indispensable for strategic reasons, owing to its dual deterrent and escalatory function. Experience proves, moreover, the futility of deterrence based exclusively on conventional forces, regardless of their size and quality. A relative relationship between nuclear and conventional disarmament is therefore obviously unacceptable for the Alliance, since an absolute level of both conventional and nuclear forces has to be maintained to guarantee stability and deterrence in Europe.

It therefore appears that the Atlantic Alliance has never established a clear relationship between disarmament policy and strategy; the former calls for a strict distinction between nuclear and conventional disarmament, even though the required level of NATO's conventional forces is estimated in different ways, depending on the nuclearization threshold - in other words, implicitly through the nuclear/conventional relationship. The position of the Alliance is to reject this relationship, which is nevertheless necessary owing to the absence of a consensus on strategy. Regardless of the validity of this paradox, it would appear that the Soviets have obviously seized the political advantages that they were able to derive from its exploitation. Nor, moreover, does the West have any really well-established criterion as a condition for conventional stability in Europe; it might well be that the main stabilizing factor in the balance of conventional forces is precisely the nuclear weapon!

The conventional/nuclear relationship in the future negotiations on stability

So long as the MBFR talks served to promote the status quo objective that was accepted deliberately by the East, out of necessity by the West, this contradiction remained tolerable. Today, however, the new Soviet diplomatic offensive in the conventional sphere is using the nuclear/conventional relationship to exploit this basic contradiction in the Western position in order to transform stability from the Atlantic to the Urals into a new method for the denuclearization of Europe.

Since the Budapest Appeal the Soviets have centred their position in respect of the future negotiations on stability on four basic factors: acceptance of sectoral imbalances in a global context of conventional parity between East and West, the need to correct such disparities by the elimination of sectoral superiorities on both sides leading to crossed exchanges between categories of different weapons, a demand for deep, substantial and mutual cuts as a priority objective for increasing stability and preventing a surprise attack in Europe and, lastly, the inclusion of conventional armed forces and armaments - including dual capability systems - either directly or indirectly in the definition set out in the mandate. The combination of these four factors, supplemented by spectacular initiatives heralded as major concessions, could effectively enable the East to set the maximum political and military benefit out of the nuclear/conventional relationship.

By calling for the inclusion of nuclear weapons - using the dual capability argument - in the mandate on stability, on the pretext that they had been supplied to conventional units or because they could be used to mount a surprise attack, the Soviets are following a policy aimed at the "direct nuclearization" of conventional disarmament.

They are aware that the Red Army's imposing superiority in numbers in Europe provides them with considerable negotiating flexibility, whereas the present conventional forces of the West are undoubtedly at the lowest level required for manning the entire front in the event of aggression by the Warsaw Pact. This asymmetry explains the objective of deep cuts proposed by the East: in the event of a Soviet initiative - even unilateral - the Western Powers, lacking any trump cards, would be confronted by the difficult problem of deciding what they could offer in return, at the risk of appearing to reject any progress towards disarmament. It would then be extremely tempting to agree to an exchange along the lines of "Option III" of the MBFR talks, considered by the East as a precedent, in the hope of obtaining substantial reductions in the superiority of Soviet conventional forces, but in fact opening the door to a third zero option on tactical nuclear delivery vehicles in Europe. Lastly, the USSR could in this way try to hamper the development of European co-operation, and especially Franco-German co-operation, in defence matters by exploiting the differences of view held by various Western countries concerning fire-breaks and road blocks on the path to nuclear disarmament relating to tactical forces whose legitimacy, particularly in the FRG, was considerably undermined by the Washington Treaty.

On the likely assumption that the Western Powers would demand the express exclusion of dual capability as a *sine qua non* condition for negotiations on stability, the Soviets would undoubtedly be obliged to abandon their "direct nuclearization" objective or risk being deprived of the pan-European forum on military détente that they have constantly been trying to promote since Helsinki. Yet the use by the Soviets of the nuclear/conventional relationship to maintain the momentum of denuclearization

in Europe would not be hampered thereby. In fact, the USSR has already called for the inclusion of tactical nuclear weapons in the definition set out in the mandate on conventional stability, only to withdraw their demand once they had sounded the Western position on this point.

First, even though the mandate might not contain any reference to dual capability systems, these would inevitably be covered by the negotiations. The USSR's official position on this question, presented on 3 August 1988 during the elaboration of the mandate for the future Vienna negotiations, leaves no doubt in this respect: "No conventional armament or equipment shall be excluded from the negotiations by virtue of its ability to carry other than conventional charges", but conceded to the Western Powers that "Nuclear charges shall not be included in these negotiations". The Soviets could therefore take advantage of the 23-country conventional forum on stability to initiate a multilateral discussion in which nuclear weapons would be taken into account indirectly on the basis of dual capability ground and air delivery vehicles. Following the elimination of the INFs, the only United States nuclear weapons capable of reaching the territory of the USSR from Europe are the FBS, namely, 150 dual-capability F-111s based in Great Britain. Similarly, over 95 per cent of NATO's tactical nuclear delivery vehicles (artillery and aircraft) can be used either for nuclear or conventional purposes, Lance missiles being the sole exception.

The majority of these tactical nuclear forces are, moreover, subject to a dual ownership régime under which the delivery vehicle is owned by the basing country whereas the nuclear warhead remains under United States control in Europe. The Soviets, who formally called for the opening of bilateral negotiations with the United States on tactical nuclear weapons in Europe following the elimination of the INFs, could thus hope for the eventual initiation of a twofold nuclear disarmament process from the bottom: a United States-Soviet forum on tactical nuclear munitions and warheads, and an essentially European multilateral forum on conventional armaments including delivery vehicles under the dual ownership régime, artillery tubes and "tactical combat aircraft".

Lastly and above all, the Soviet disarmament campaign will probably try to take advantage of the complexity of the nuclear/conventional relationship in which the stakes are difficult to understand by public opinion. By proposing "highly" asymmetrical and symbolic cuts in their conventional forces, and even the unilateral "correction" of sectoral disparities, the USSR may hope to win over Western public opinion by dramatic gestures and improve the image of the new Soviet leadership while at the same time securing strategic advantages over the long term. First of all, an illusion of progress in conventional disarmament in Europe would have to be created, since this in turn would justify the continued reduction of nuclear weapons on the Continent. In other words, steps would have to be taken to throw doubt on the argument according to which the nuclear aspect of the Alliance's deterrent posture has always been necessary to offset the Warsaw Pact's conventional superiority.

The supremacy maintained by the East in the sphere of conventional forces has unquestionably obliged NATO for almost 30 years to depend to a great extent on nuclear firepower in order to deter and cope with a possible attack by the Warsaw Pact in Europe. Yet this does not mean that nuclear weapons are justified solely by conventional disequilibrium and that one can be substituted for the other. Deterrence is a continuous process, in which each element plays a specific role: in the extreme case there is certainly an absolute minimum - and not relative - level of nuclear and conventional weapons for the application of the deterrent continuum.

Unfortunately, the Alliance has never managed to produce an accurate definition of the nature of the conventional aspect of its strategy, and there is no consensus at the present time in the West on the political and military criteria governing conditions for stabilizing the balance of conventional forces in Europe. Until such criteria providing a sound basis for the definition of the Alliance's position on conventional disarmament have been drawn up, the Soviets will enjoy the essential advantage of being able to exploit the ambiguous interrelationship between nuclear and conventional weapons which is rejected formally by the West.

The role of military factors in the evolution of the balance of conventional forces in Europe

Factors of a more specifically military nature, connected with the development of the balance of forces in Europe, unquestionably play a role of paramount importance in the way that the USSR formulates and implements its conventional disarmament policy. It may even be said that this policy is perceived by the Soviets not only as a diplomatic instrument for the promotion of Moscow's views on security matters but also, and possibly above all, as a means of creating favourable conditions for the continuity and development of purely military objectives. However, although the foreign policy of the USSR obviously serves military objectives, its intentions are invariably difficult to determine and are the subject of inevitable speculation owing to the complete secrecy that shrouds these questions.

Experience of over 15 years with negotiations on the control of conventional forces nevertheless reveals two characteristic features of the Soviet attitude in this respect. First, the positions adopted in negotiations with the West seem to correspond closely to a military rationale which is itself dictated by the implications of Soviet defence doctrine and programmes. Secondly, the USSR has constantly regarded disarmament as a politico-diplomatic means of establishing, legitimizing and rendering irreversible a trend in the correlation of military forces which is favourable to it alone.

Soviet military policy during the MBFR talks

The MBFR negotiations on conventional forces in Central Europe since 1973 are a perfect illustration of these two points, the political objective of a territorial *status quo* in Europe being directly justified by the military objective of consolidating the extensive reorganization of Soviet conventional forces that has been carried out since the end of the 1960s.

At the time, the Soviets gradually took note of two developments which were to shape the European security system from the 1970s up to the present, namely, the adoption by the United States in 1964 of an assured second-strike retaliation criterion which determined the size and operational use of their strategic arsenal, and the gradual acceptance by NATO, between 1962 and 1967, of the flexible response doctrine. The first development offered the possibility of a period of strategic parity, during which the United States would be obliged to depend increasingly on its nuclear arsenal situated on the European

continent in order to defend NATO, thereby abandoning the idea of automatic nuclear strikes against the Soviet sanctuary. As for the flexible response, its implicit meaning for the USSR was that the use of nuclear weapons in Europe could now be avoided in certain conditions; by implying a “pause” in conventional warfare before it became necessary to use nuclear weapons, NATO’s new doctrine enabled the Soviets to think in terms of the neutralization of United States nuclear capability in Europe during the conventional phase of the conflict, thereby preventing its escalation into the nuclear phase.

The convergence of these two factors no doubt enabled the USSR to reach the conclusion at the end of the 1960s that a general conflict with the West might possibly no longer be immediately of a nuclear nature and would not inevitably lead to the devastation of Soviet territory. The “sanctuarization” of the USSR now seemed feasible thanks to strategic parity supplemented by a conventional capability which could be used for lightning operations in the European theatre intended mainly to neutralize NATO’s means of nuclear escalation. In contrast with the previous period, during which nuclear weapons predominated, thought had now to be given to the possibility of an essentially conventional war in Europe, while at the same time remaining prepared for the possibility of a nuclear war.

Drawing the necessary lessons from this changing strategic context, even at a time when negotiations on conventional disarmament in Central Europe were starting at the MBFR talks at the beginning of the 1970s, the Soviets had embarked on a broad review of their military strategy, entailing reorganization of the operational concept of their conventional potential in this theatre. From the standpoint of doctrine, steps had to be taken to update and refine the principles governing lightning warfare and in-depth operations against the Alliance’s defence in order to destroy as rapidly as possible the means necessary for nuclear escalation. New Soviet arms programmes geared to the requirements of lightning warfare were also undertaken: between 1965 and 1972 a third-generation tank, the T-62, replaced the T-54/55 tanks, the BMP - a personnel carrier which at the time was very much superior to NATO models - replaced enormous numbers of the trucks used up to that time, and lastly second- and third-generation aircraft (Mig 21/23/27 and SU 17/20/25), mainly fighter bombers used for ground attack purposes, were introduced.

The first proposal made by the Alliance for holding MBFR talks was submitted in 1968. When negotiations began in 1973, all the new equipment needed to bolster Soviet conventional potential had already been decided upon and some of it was already being produced. It is easy therefore to understand why the Soviets showed so little interest in negotiating the constraints which would have slowed down their reorganization during most of the 1970s. By 1979, when most of the programme for the strengthening of its conventional forces had been completed, the USSR ended its obvious temporization at the MBFR talks and launched a series of initiatives with a view to a symbolic agreement on the reduction of forces but not armaments; their proposals were devoid of any real significance from the security standpoint and were simply intended to suggest progress towards conventional disarmament. The unilateral withdrawal at that time of some 20,000 men of the Soviet contingent in the GDR in the autumn of 1979 - a mere propaganda stunt that was rapidly offset in the framework of the regular rotation of GFSA troops - was based on the same political and not military reasoning. In reality, once the modernization of the Red Army in Europe had been largely completed, the USSR had even fewer reasons to sacrifice what it had achieved militarily at the cost of continuous efforts since the end of the 1960s by accepting a meaningful conclusion of the MBFR talks from the standpoint of security. This

attitude is in line with the invariable principle underlying the Soviet approach to conventional disarmament throughout the period, namely, maintenance through the CSCE of a climate of détente and the territorial status quo in Europe while the MBFR talks could lead to the development and later the institutionalization of a balance of conventional forces broadly favourable to the new changes in Soviet doctrine on conventional forces on the Continent.

Essentially unchanged military objectives

The strictly military objectives underlying the new Soviet approach to conventional disarmament under the Gorbachev team are much more difficult to determine in relation to the reasoning apparent at the MBFR talks. This difficulty stems basically from the fact that the USSR adopted an apparently “resolute” attitude in favour of the elimination of any surprise attack capability through substantial reductions of conventional potential on both sides. At the same time, the Soviets suggested an objective of “reasonable sufficiency” in connection with conventional forces in Europe, arguing that their military doctrine was “strictly defensive” in nature.

Behind this statement of policy, various indications suggest that a number of convergent factors are making it increasingly difficult to maintain the massive superiority that the Soviet Union has constantly enjoyed in Europe since the Second World War. In view of these new developments, the repeated proposals made by the USSR since Gorbachev’s arrival in favour of conventional disarmament would suggest that the Soviet Union is seeking a “pause” in its incredibly costly effort in terms of men and resources implied by the maintenance of the completely disproportionate predominance of the Red Army on the Continent. In order to obtain this military respite and embark on its economic restructuring exercise which is intended to enable the USSR to embark upon post-industrial development, the Soviets are apparently prepared to make temporary disarmament concessions. Several factors of a more strictly military nature seem to confirm this interpretation:

- First, the very nature of NATO’s challenge to the Warsaw Pact forces has changed since the beginning of the 1980s.

The Alliance’s conventional potential is about to cross a major new qualitative threshold with the introduction of new systems incorporating the high technology developed as a result of the revolution in electronics during the past 10 years in the West. Although this development will probably not reverse the balance of forces, it nevertheless offers a major challenge to a USSR which is always forced to catch up technologically so as to be able to counter the emergent strike capabilities and target acquisition systems which will be at the disposal of tomorrow’s modern armies. A negotiated “pause” in this field, achieved by exchanging its superiority in numbers against a slowing-down of Western technological pre-eminence would thus enable the USSR to catch its breath and speed up its economic modernization, particularly in advanced sectors of direct benefit to its defence effort.

- This new and changing context in which the balance of tomorrow’s forces is being shaped has already been taken into account by the Soviets in the framework of reforms undertaken under Marshal Orgarkov since the end of the 1970s.

They are in line with the continuity of Soviet lightning war strategy aimed at the operational circumvention of nuclear escalation in Europe but so far have been applied mainly in the reorganization of the system of command together with the revitalization of the Special Operational Group concept and the creation of an integrated Western TVD command. But these reforms will probably not be completely feasible unless the USSR is in future capable of meeting the Western technological challenge by developing futuristic weapons and making changes in its operational planning. In this context, the Soviets are probably now seeking to "slenderize" their conventional posture to some extent by reducing the size of unduly large active service units, but since this reduction would be rationalized and the units concerned equipped with advanced systems they would therefore be much more effective. This approach would provide the USSR with a certain amount of flexibility as regards trump cards in negotiations with the Alliance on conventional disarmament while enabling it to improve the capability of its conventional forces, particularly for the purpose of mounting surprise attacks with minimum prior mobilization without therefore having to renounce major military options in the European theatre.

In view of these convergent factors, the main military objective of the new Soviet approach to conventional disarmament could be to use the future negotiations on stability to maintain the *détente* process in Europe which would give the USSR the breathing-space it needs to preserve its military superiority on the Continent while it enters a new phase of the East-West competition.

These motivations are remarkably similar to those which had had a decisive influence on the USSR's attitude during the MBFR talks. The objective at that time was not to hamper the implementation of a far-reaching programme by which the resources and mission of conventional Soviet forces were modified and then to try, by diplomatic means, to get the stamp of approval for that programme.

Although at the present time, in a different context, the objectives are the same, the diplomatic means available to the Soviets are considerably greater. Freed from its traditional military status quo policy in Europe, the new Soviet approach to conventional disarmament has the advantage of flexibility in negotiations which it requires to influence the Western conventional posture in a direct manner. The promotion of a climate of "*détente*" in Europe by exploiting conventional disarmament for purposes of denuclearization constitutes the essentially political means of the USSR's new European diplomacy, which is also to serve Soviet military objectives in the reorganization of its military machine.

A proposal for a crossed exchange of the East's battle tanks against the West's tactical aircraft could attain these objectives, enabling the USSR to make progress towards denuclearization on the basis of the dual capability aircraft argument but also, and above all, to try to obtain reductions in a category of weapons which accounts for almost 50 per cent of the conventional firepower available to NATO in the European theatre. On the strictly conventional level, the Soviets could thwart any hope the Alliance may have of reinforcing its armoured forces by the establishment of ceilings or by insisting that priority should be accorded to Soviet/United States withdrawals, and thereby reduce the United States armed presence in NATO's posture in Central Europe. Lastly, in the areas in which the USSR has traditionally remained on the defensive, namely, those of verification procedures and confidence-building measures, which represent the second aspect of the mandate of negotiations on stability, the new approach initiated under Gorbachev at the CDE could well have the effect of disrupting Western habits with a view to limiting the operational flexibility as well as the rapid reaction capability of the Allied armed forces in Europe.

CHAPTER V

CONVENTIONAL STABILITY PROSPECTS

It should be possible to begin negotiations on conventional stability from the Atlantic to the Urals in the Spring of 1989, after the current session of the CSCE has completed its work at Vienna. In view of the inevitable complexity, both political as well as military, of the future conference and of what will be at stake for the future of security in Europe, any analysis of the possibilities they offer obviously constitutes a particularly difficult task. In concluding this report, therefore, Yves Boyer and Walter Schütze have presented, in the form of a discussion, two different points of view on Western objectives in the process which is being embarked upon.

Walter SCHÜTZE

Negotiations on the limitation and reduction of conventional armaments in Europe, from the Atlantic to the Urals, should take place providing that the CSCE Follow-up Conference which has been meeting in Vienna since the end of 1968 is able to conclude its work with the adoption of a final document before the end of 1988. The Western Powers must therefore define their position on what the Americans call the conventional stability talks (CST) and what the Germans refer to as the conventional arms control conference (*Konventionelle Rüstungskontroll-Konferenz* (KRK)). The Vienna final document will also give the green light for a further conference on confidence-building and security measures, the first stage of which took place in September 1986 at Stockholm. We shall therefore have to conduct two sets of negotiations, at the same time and in the same place (probably Vienna) in the framework of one and the same conference: one between all members of the two Alliances (23 countries) and the other between all the members of the CSCE (35 countries).

Goals

These negotiations are part of the United States/USSR rapprochement process, features of which include the INF Treaty and the efforts made to conclude a START treaty (50 per cent reduction in the strategic arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union). One factor favouring the dialogue between the two Great Powers, covering all areas of their bilateral relations and promoted by Mr. Gorbachev's reforms, is that a "second détente phase" (Mr. Genscher) appears to be developing between certain Western European countries and those of Eastern Europe. What, in this new situation, should be the goals of the Western countries and particularly those of the Atlantic Alliance countries ?

One might say, paraphrasing Clausewitz, that disarmament is the continuation of policy by other means. And arms control (just like war in the past) is a means of attaining our global political objectives *vis-à-vis* the USSR and its allies, namely:

- To maintain the cohesion of the Alliance and strengthen its foundations in the eyes of public opinion;
- To exploit political and psychological uncertainties in order to promote the domestic evolution of the régime of the Warsaw Pact and CMEA (Comecon) countries, already initiated by Mr. Gorbachev's structural reforms (*perestroika*) and policy of (relative) openness;
- To encourage the tendency towards greater freedom of action among the allies of the USSR, i.e. reduction of the Soviet military presence in its Eastern European reserve and limitation of Moscow's possibilities of threatening to use force to prevent the development of these countries in the direction of greater autonomy; and
- To block Mr. Gorbachev's psychological offensive aimed at Western European public opinion through the elaboration, by the Atlantic Alliance countries, of an overall concept covering both its future strategic "posture" as well as of an outline of a coherent and long-term arms control policy.

In short, in the absence of an agreement on the peaceful change described in the Helsinki Charter, steps must be taken to maintain the territorial *status quo* on the Continent by modifying the balance of political, psychological, military and economic forces. The Gorbachev team's tactic of discrediting nuclear deterrence by suggesting the Utopia of a world free of nuclear weapons by the year 2000 must be countered by Albert Einstein's dictum of 1920 - "Disarmament is the moral equivalent of war" - by emphasizing that disarmament must not be confused with denuclearization.

Principles

The basic principles which should serve as guidance for the West, and specifically for the NATO Governments in the coming negotiations, therefore depend on these objectives and a choice of appropriate means. Such should be the strategy of the Alliance in respect of the other camp which, despite a certain amount of fallout from Soviet *glasnost* is acting in a way that is highly concerted and closely co-ordinated by Moscow.

- *From a political standpoint*, as stated in the Reykjavik Declaration (meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs) on 12 June 1987, a more stable situation in Europe cannot be achieved by military means alone. Progress in this direction therefore implies compliance with the obligations assumed by the 35 States which signed the CSCE Helsinki Charter, particularly in respect of humanitarian contacts and human rights. It is for this reason that the Alliance countries - as well as the 12 neutral and non-aligned countries - are insisting at the Vienna conference that balanced results must be achieved in the three CSCE "baskets".

The CSCE must therefore remain the framework of reference for any negotiations along these lines

as a means of emphasizing that East-West relations cannot be reduced to bargaining between blocs and that the neutral and non-aligned countries once again have an important role to play. Care must also be taken to counter any attempt on Mr. Gorbachev's part to promote his (vague) concept of a "common European house" as a matter of concern only to the Europeans from which the Americans would be excluded.

- *From a military standpoint*, when this principle of non-exclusivity was recognized difficulties arose within NATO concerning the extent to which the neutral and non-aligned countries would participate in the process of reducing military confrontation on the Continent in order to put an end to the Franco-United States dispute on questions of procedure. The Reykjavik Ministerial Council proposed, on the basis of a German/United Kingdom initiative, that two sets of negotiations should be held: one between the 23 countries members of the two alliances on conventional stability and the other between the 35 CSCE countries, the task of the latter being to supplement and extend the confidence-building and security measures adopted in the Stockholm Document of September 1986, both sets of negotiations being part of the general CSCE process. The Reykjavik Declaration, however, states that "negotiations on conventional stability will remain independent as regards objectives, participation and rules of procedure".

The High-Level Group (HLTF) set up by NATO's Ministerial Council at Halifax in May 1986 (in which the French Government decided to participate) in response to the conventional disarmament proposals made a few weeks previously by Mr. Gorbachev in his speech in East Berlin submitted, on 27 July 1987, to the 23-country informal talks that had been held since February 1987 on the periphery of the Vienna Conference, a mandate specifying the following three basic objectives:

- 1) The establishment of a stable and foolproof balance of conventional forces at lower levels;
- 2) The elimination of disparities prejudicial to stability and security;
- 3) The elimination, as a matter of priority, of the capability of launching surprise attacks and initiating large-scale offensives.

The mandate proposed by the Warsaw Pact countries at Vienna on 22 June 1987 contained, with variations in wording, points 2 and 3 of the NATO draft but differed on point 1, since it referred to the "maintenance of the balance of armed forces at the lowest possible level", which implied that a balance already existed and all that was required was the correction of disparities in certain sectors.

The third round of the 23-country talks ended in December 1987 with agreement on a paragraph in the mandate that reproduces NATO's three points *in extenso*.

Methods

In this case too, the Warsaw Pact countries agreed to the wording contained in NATO's draft mandate of July 1987, namely, that the measures to be adopted included reductions, limitations, redeployment, and equal ceilings to be established for the forces and armaments which would be covered

by the negotiations and accompanying measures. The proposal made by the Pact in June of the same year provided only for reductions in forces.

The text of the mandate also specified what is called “regional differentiation”, in other words, one or more reduction zones with a view to eliminating existing disparities in given regions. It is obvious that the region primarily concerned is Central Europe but also that specific reduction measures are called for in respect of the ratio of forces on the northern and southern flanks, in particular in northern Norway and the eastern part of Turkey. The Pact countries and particularly the Soviet Union were at first reluctant to accept regional differentiation measures, and in line with the Budapest Appeal they envisaged the application of mutual force reductions throughout the area from the Atlantic to the Urals (including the territory of the neutral and non-aligned countries) in a linear and proportional manner, which in fact harked back to the draft they had submitted at the beginning of the MBFR negotiations in 1973.

The essential element that the NATO countries managed to have adopted at Vienna concerns the method of arriving at equal ceilings for forces and for their arms and equipment. The result should be highly asymmetrical measures to the detriment of the Warsaw Pact in view of its arms superiority. This was a crucial point and an acid test of the intention announced by the Soviet leaders of reducing military potential in Europe.

Reductions

The establishment of equal ceilings should logically take place in a zone beginning at the demarcation line, and it is in our vital interest to include in that zone the region where the military concentration is the greatest, namely, Central Europe. The West should call for the maximum extension of this zone by proposing the inclusion of the territory of all the countries at present members of the Western European Union (WEU) or at least - apart from the FRG - the Benelux countries, France, England proper and northern Italy (up to Apennines). On the eastern side it would have to include the GDR, Czechoslovakia, Poland and the three western military regions of the USSR (covering the Baltic countries, Byelorussia and the western part of the Ukraine). Denmark and Hungary could also be included in the reduction zone as suggested by the “Jaruzelski Plan” of May 1987.

The MBFR application zone (*NATO Guideline Area*) obviously proved to be too narrow from a military standpoint in view of the range of modern weapons systems, as well as inappropriate from a political standpoint, since it would have resulted in a region with a special status in Central Europe, dominated in fact by the two German States and serving as a framework for a rapprochement between them - with uncertain results and raising problems in connection with Atlantic Alliance solidarity.

We should reject from the very outset any proposal for a corridor 150 km in depth from the demarcation line proposed by the GDR, Czechoslovakia and the West German SPD from which dual capability nuclear and conventional weapons would be withdrawn as well as, in the view of certain American experts, tanks and heavy equipment. Such scenarios are devoid of any real military

significance. They would disorganize the operational arrangements of the two alliances and be politically unacceptable.

The reduction zone should be as broad as possible, since NATO must considerably reduce the Soviet Union's ability to reinforce its front-line divisions and particularly the GFSA (Soviet Forces Group in Germany). It is in this way that the inevitable geographical asymmetries affecting United States and USSR possibilities of bringing up reinforcements in the event of a conflict must be corrected.

Specific measures must also be envisaged for the extreme northern flank, applicable to Soviet forces in the Kola Peninsula (reduction of amphibious forces) and to airborne forces stationed in the Georgian and Armenian region.

According to the Western Powers, reductions could take place in several stages, beginning with the establishment of equal ceilings for forces and armaments. In the second stage, linear cuts of 20 to 25 per cent could be made on each side below the maximum parity threshold agreed to in the first stage - a scenario which has been accepted by the Pact countries. Care should, however, be taken to avoid the error made at the MBFR talks of thinking in terms of a first stage of reductions affecting only United States and Soviet forces in Central Europe. In the case of the MBFR talks, this bilateral proposal was mainly of a symbolic nature, but the ratio in which forces were to be withdrawn, i.e. 5,000 Americans for 11,500 Soviets, cannot be used as a pattern in the coming negotiations. Moreover, the reduction of the United States military presence in Europe alone would have a negative impact on our public opinion and would be regarded as an indication of American disengagement. Nor is it desirable to establish equivalence between the presence of the United States and the USSR, since the former is a symbol of United States solidarity with its European allies and its determination to defend them, whereas the latter is, among other things, an instrument of political domination and of the stranglehold of the USSR over Eastern Europe. Account must, however, be taken of the pressure exerted on any United States Administration by Congress and public opinion to reduce the number of troops (340,000) stationed in Europe and of the tactic (already used successfully at the MBFR talks) of countering such pressure by promising negotiations - at first with the Soviets - on a partial withdrawal. This would obviously be simpler than negotiations involving all the participating countries, but we should oppose this idea if only so as not to accentuate still further the bilateral character of negotiations and in order to strengthen the "joint" decision-making process in European disarmament. If the United States were nevertheless to insist on exclusively United States/Soviet reductions in the first stage (and most of the scenarios developed by "think tanks" in the United States suggest this possibility), the European Allies should certainly demand that any agreement along these lines should establish the principle of applying equal-ceiling and across-the-board reductions to other garrison forces and all national forces in the zone in question. The Western Powers cannot accept sub-ceilings for each country concerned, and NATO should remain flexible so as to be able to decide freely the nature of its Central European command dispositions.

Limitations

In order to make sure that the freeze of forces under the agreement on equal ceilings is not circumvented by increases outside the reduction zones, a régime ensuring the limitation of military potential must be established for all the territories of the participating States from the Atlantic to the Urals. This would help to stabilize the situation and should comprise constraints, such as a prohibition on the movement, without prior notification and duly justified, of major units with a view to their concentration. The NATO countries should in this respect revive the detailed proposals contained in the six points which they submitted at Stockholm on confidence-building measures in January 1984, and which provided for the obligation to notify "outside garrison" activities involving more than 6,000 men and 3,000 men respectively in amphibious and airborne operations. These rules which are connected with the confidence-building measures discussed at Stockholm could also be discussed at the 35-country negotiations, although it would appear more practical to do so in the 23-country forum since it was clear at Stockholm that certain neutral and non-aligned countries were not prepared to accept a régime which, in their view, was too restrictive.

Another important aspect concerns the preparedness of forces outside the reduction zones, namely, the actual and permanent presence of soldiers in units, the "categories" of A, B and C divisions, and the mobilization of reservists. Throughout the region from the Atlantic to the Urals obvious differences between foreign garrison forces and national forces must be taken into account. However the objective is to impose restraints on any rapid and surreptitious mobilization of Warsaw Pact armies without thereby limiting the possibilities available to the United States *Reforger* in the European theatre. For this reason, stockpiles of United States weapons, equipment and munitions in Europe within the framework of POMCUS (525,000 tons prepositioned by the United States army at the present time), should not be affected by limitation measures. The redeployment of operational units throughout the region could also be envisaged, but its nature and extent would depend on the structure of forces agreed upon following reductions and restrictions on movements. It is worth mentioning, however, that the redeployment of major units is a very costly matter (for example, the transfer elsewhere of a single United States brigade in the FRG would cost more than 1.8 billion francs).

Accompanying measures and verification

The mandate for the 35-country CSCE negotiations covers such measures which are intended to establish confidence and strengthen the security of all participating States, but it may prove necessary to envisage a specific régime governing the notification of manoeuvres by stipulating - going beyond what is stated in the Stockholm Document of 1986 - that emergency manoeuvres should be included and that forbidden military zones should no longer be excluded. The measures decided upon would be verified on the basis of an extremely detailed exchange of information on the state and dispersal of forces throughout the region together with - and particularly in reduction zones - regular and mandatory on-site inspection. In this respect, the verification régime adopted in the INF Treaty and the future START Treaty could be used as a benchmark, and these restrictive measures could be strengthened and set out in greater detail to ensure compliance with equal ceilings and to make sure that they are not circumvented.

Substance

The main difficulties that were encountered during the informal 23-country talks at Vienna concerned the categories of weapons that were to be the subject of the negotiations. NATO's position was defined in the proposed mandate it submitted in July 1987 which states: "The forces to be taken into account are the land-based forces of the participants... Nuclear weapons are not and will not be covered by the negotiations. Neither naval forces nor chemical weapons will be discussed". The mandate proposed by the Warsaw Pact provided for the inclusion of tactical nuclear systems, but in November 1987 this requirement was reduced to "dual capability" (nuclear and conventional) systems. At the penultimate meeting of the 23-country talks, the Soviet representative emphasized this point but only in respect of delivery vehicles (artillery pieces, aircraft and missiles) and not nuclear warheads, which would be discussed separately and at a later date. The NATO countries rejected this proposal and views were reconciled on the basis of a formula by which the negotiations were to deal with weapons systems of conventional capability, no mention being made of dual capability or more specifically of the fact that capability other than conventional would not be a reason for exclusion or inclusion in the agenda.

In any event, it was impossible to resolve the question once and for all in the text of the mandate and it had to be tackled in the course of the negotiations. For purely technical reasons, the reference to dual capability delivery vehicles had to be eliminated so as not to leave the door open for a Soviet attempt to introduce them subsequently by referring to the INF Treaty under which delivery vehicles are regarded as an integral part of the agreement but which does not require the signatories to destroy their nuclear warheads.

However, in the Soviet view, the main reason for not including the gradual disarmament process in respect of nuclear weapons in the 23-country forum was explained by the fact that NATO had first of all to reach agreement on what the Germans call the *Gesamtkonzept* which was to govern the overall defence "posture" of the Alliance. The problem was not resolved by the Brussels Summit of March 1988, since the semantic compromise of "maintaining (nuclear) systems operational wherever necessary" does not in any way prejudge the number and quality of these weapons or their future use. The term "minimum deterrence" is rather unfortunate, since the minimum tends towards zero and it would be more appropriate to speak of "optimum deterrence", combining what is required from the standpoint of military credibility with what is acceptable politically. Meanwhile, everything possible should be done to ensure that, through a reference, even indirect, to weapons which also have nuclear capability, the Soviets are not allowed a say in decisions relating to modernization which concern only the countries members of the Alliance. Moreover, the Reykjavik communiqué of June 1987 expresses the desire of the Alliance to achieve, within the framework of a coherent arms control and disarmament concept, a significant and verifiable reduction of land-based United States and Soviet shorter-range missiles in conjunction with the establishment of conventional equilibrium and the global elimination of chemical weapons. The point at issue is not, therefore, an inflexible demand but the result of the first stage of the 23-country negotiations. The European Allies - at least those which possess (a few) SNF *Lance* delivery vehicles - must act in concert in order to avoid a repetition of the traumatizing *Pershing IA* experience of the FRG. It is understood that shorter-range French nuclear weapons will not be taken into account, since what is done with them is a matter entirely up to the French authorities.

The five main categories of weapons specified by NATO as being the most offensive are:

- battle tanks
- artillery
- armoured vehicles etc. (including equipment for crossing river)
- combat helicopters
- combat aircraft.

Aircraft should not be considered during the first stage as desired by the Warsaw Pact. The principal reason for this refusal is not that some aircraft are capable of nuclear missions but concerns their characteristics. The value of limiting or reducing the number of aircraft is questionable, since they can go into action within a few hours from their bases outside the zones. The somewhat fanciful scenarios involving exchanges of tactical aircraft for tanks are incompatible with the position adopted by all the NATO countries, and would be to the advantage of the Warsaw Pact (it was for this reason that General Jaruzelski proposed a swap of this kind between Western fighter bombers and Eastern tanks).

Equivalence must therefore be achieved in the first three categories of ground weapons of the greatest offensive capability. However, the reduction scenarios which have been presented unofficially by the United States and the FRG and which, for example, envisage a reduction of 800 NATO tanks and 25,000 Pact tanks, are completely unrealistic. The reduction ratios obviously depend on the size of the zone agreed upon in this connection and does not correspond to the entire area stretching from the Atlantic to the Urals. Moreover, there is no question of counting tanks and artillery pieces in isolation, but rather combat formations, i.e. tactical units with their equipment, taking into account differences in structure and organization, including their support systems (for example, an Eastern armoured regiment is equivalent to a Western battalion).

Whereas NATO's forces in Central Europe are quite homogeneous from this point of view, this is not the case in the East. Our main interest is clearly in reducing the fire-power of forward-based Soviet divisions (in the GDR and in Czechoslovakia), since they are the ones which would form the spearhead of any attack (surprise or mass), the function of their allied troops being rather to act as a reserve or support force. The other armies of the Pact are in any case of doubtful military efficiency and political loyalty, and do not in themselves constitute a serious threat. Yet any national differentiation which is contrary to the collectivity principle would raise insoluble problems on both sides (cf. rejection of the United States/Soviet reduction scenario) and it is therefore not negotiable. Similarly, any idea of establishing a rule governing a foreign forces/national forces ratio is to be dismissed. At the MBFR talks the Soviets proposed that, in the total forces subject to ceilings in the zone, a 50-50 ratio should be established for foreign and national contingents (with the obvious intention of restricting the Bundeswehr), which would give a treaty-based stamp of approval to the disproportionate presence of the Soviet army in Eastern Europe and impose unbearable constraints on the flexibility of Western forces. It would be all the more absurd to apply the 50-50 rule country by country. In the FRG alone the size of garrison forces is (by far) greater than that of national forces, and it would be quite unrealistic to ask the Soviets to reduce the number of their GFSR tanks from their present number of some 7,000 to 1,700.

Nevertheless, the task of establishing equal ceilings for ground forces will present the most crucial and difficult problem. It would be pointless to hope that the USSR and its allies will undertake unilateral

reductions and massive withdrawals in order to approach such ceilings. This would not be verifiable (cf. the withdrawal of 20,000 Soviet troops from the GDR at the end of 1979) and would have the political and psychological disadvantage of subjecting the Western Powers to pressure to make major concessions in the negotiations. Given the present ratio of forces, particularly in the central region, the NATO countries can offer only a rather small reduction in their forces, probably not exceeding 5 per cent, while calling upon the Warsaw Pact to reduce its own forces highly asymmetrically on the basis of the equivalence of combat units and fire-power.

The concept of “conventional stability”, doctrines and structures

The 23-country forum will begin by determining what the two sides understand by the stability of forces. This concept is meaningless if it is confined to conventional forces and ignores other general - and in particular nuclear - factors. Nor should it be confused with numerical parity. Traditionally, stability reflects a situation in which two opposing military systems can no longer hope to gain a rapid and overwhelming victory in the field, putting an end to the conflict to the advantage of the aggressor. It is therefore tantamount to a mutual deterrence situation, in which conventional defence is admittedly important but insufficient in itself. An exchange of detailed information on the opposing forces will provide a basis for this intellectual exercise. The USSR has proposed a meeting of experts from the 23 countries for this purpose before negotiations actually begin. This proposal is unacceptable, since it is apparently aimed at prejudging the course of future negotiations and placing the NATO countries on the defensive and even launching a propaganda exercise.

Another proposal by Moscow, made at the end of 1986, for discussions between the military authorities of the two alliances on “military doctrines” also seems to be aimed mainly at Western public opinion. The Soviets are trying to create confusion by denouncing the allegedly “offensive” elements of NATO’s doctrine, such as the FOFA and the United States Airland Battle operational concept. The military doctrine of the USSR (and consequently that of the Warsaw Pact) has two aspects: one, purely political and rhetorical, is defensive, and the other - technical and military - concerns the choice of weapons, their use and their operational objectives, is offensive. A meeting of experts to discuss this matter would be acceptable only if it confined itself to the second aspect, but it would be even better if it were dealt with by the 35 participants in the CSCE, since the neutral and non-aligned countries are also concerned by this problem. A factual comparison between operational concepts would inevitably be made during exchanges of views between the 23 countries on stability and might possibly enable us to find out what Mr. Gorbachev means by a “reasonably sufficient” defence posture (report to the Twenty-seventh Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in February 1986 and speech at Prague on 10 April 1987), an idea that was taken up in the Declaration by the Warsaw Pact on military doctrine in East Berlin (end of May 1987).

The idea suggested by left-wing intellectuals, particularly in the FRG, of “restructuring” the two military systems with a view to non-offensive defence (*strukturelle Nichtangriffsfähigkeit*) can only create further confusion. There is no question, during the 23-country negotiations, of laying down rules in this respect or establishing constraints. Defence structures depend on available military resources, and

it goes without saying that the reduction of the most suitable offensive weapons implies modification of the organization of units, their use, their logistical support, etc. Our objective is to get the Soviets to adopt a "posture" more similar to our own - first on hardware and later on software. Care must also be taken to ensure that continuing modernization through technological innovation, particularly in the area of data processing, target recognition and acquisition, etc., is in no way affected by arms reduction and limitation agreements. In other words, the Western Powers should not give up the advantage they possess as regards quality. In any event, it is difficult to see how any restrictions on the technical improvement of existing or future weapons systems could be verified. For example, are the Soviets seriously thinking of prohibiting the replacement of tanks or other heavy equipment by more modern models?

Procedures and perspectives

The general CSCE framework will serve as an umbrella for two sets of negotiations. In this respect the Reykjavik compromise of June 1987 establishes a link between the two by arranging for the 12 neutral and non-aligned countries to be provided with current information on the progress made by the 23 countries and by the examination of the results achieved by the next CSCE Review Conference. In addition, the fact that the two sets of negotiations will take place simultaneously and in the same place will establish an organic link between them.

The NATO countries have nevertheless agreed to emphasize the independent nature of the negotiations between the countries members of the two alliances. The Final Document of the Vienna Conference should therefore include not the complete text of the mandate of the 23-country talks but simply a summary. It was also agreed that the Atlantic Alliance partners would act on the basis of concerted instructions during the negotiations. The High-Level Group (HLTF) consisting of national representatives will be responsible for co-ordinating the position of the Allied Governments and developing the concept to be used as a basis in the negotiations on substance.

Yet it would be wrong to talk of negotiations between blocs, if only to avoid relapsing into fallacious rhetoric which would place NATO on the same political and moral level as the Warsaw Pact. The latter remains dominated by the Soviet Union despite *glasnost* and Moscow's apparent desire to pay greater heed to the interests of its partners. For our part, we must at every moment and on each question harmonize the views - initially sometimes very divergent - of 16 countries, and it would be impossible to speak of a "bloc" unless the United States managed to impose its views. The unfortunate experience of the MBFR talks should serve as a lesson and induce the European Allies to co-ordinate their points of view in order to present a joint position to the Americans. France's participation and the search for common ground with the FGR, which is hoping to play a pilot role, is of capital importance in this connection.

Manoeuvres and initiatives must certainly be anticipated on the part of Mr. Gorbachev, both before and during the negotiations, intended to divide the Western Powers and influence public opinion to be sympathetic to the Soviet Union's objectives. In the present context - one of hope if not euphoria - and

in view of the recent and substantial progress made towards disarmament, the traditional stratagem of submitting proposals which will obviously be rejected by the other side can no longer be used, since this would undermine the credibility of politicians and create serious dissention. We must therefore take the offensive by denouncing the ulterior motives of the opposing camp and probe its real intentions by adopting a specific and realistic approach. In this battle of wills, sight must never be lost of our objective of modifying, to our advantage and through arms control, the balance of moral, political and military forces between East and West.

Yves BOYER

Will negotiations on "conventional stability" take a more favourable turn than those on the MBFR, the 476th Plenary meeting of which ended in the summer of 1988 without any results being achieved? It is to be hoped that they will, especially as what is at stake in these new negotiations is part of the CSCE process, which gives them a political dimension that the MBFR talks did not enjoy to the same extent.

Yet the difficulties likely to be encountered in these negotiations are considerable. A major initial obstacle will be overcome by the Western Powers if they succeed in reconciling in their proposals the two lines of political and military reasoning which, more than a decade after Helsinki, justify the holding of a conference on conventional arms control. This requirement was moreover recognized and emphasized in the Declaration of the Chiefs of State and Government of the Atlantic Alliance at Brussels in March 1988 which states that "... defence and arms control policies must remain harmonized in order to preserve their respective contributions to the security of the countries members of the Alliance. In drawing up their proposals, the Allies shall ensure that their defence and deterrence interests are not compromised".

To varying degrees the Western Powers hold the view that the political reason for the forthcoming conference on conventional stability to be held under the CSCE is to correct the discrepancy between the marked improvement of political, cultural, humanitarian and, to a lesser extent, economic relations between the two parts of Europe since the 1970s and the Warsaw Pact's military arrangements which are structurally offensive and designed to maintain Soviet order in Central Europe. This prospect makes it attractive to exchange armaments against hope for the relative emancipation of Central Europe, relieved of part of the Soviet military presence. Yet there is no guarantee that the States concerned will enjoy a greater margin of manoeuvre, nor that the Western Powers - or at least their public opinion - will not lower their guard as a result of further progress towards détente and that they will be willing to continue their defence effort.

The military reasoning behind the negotiations on conventional stability suggests that other things are at stake. Here the objective is to reduce the possibilities of a surprise attack as well as the disproportionate size of the Pact's military machine, and particularly that of the Soviet forces, whose divisions in Central Europe alone possess approximately the same number of tanks as the seven Allied

armies deployed in the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium. *Above all, the objective is to prevent any disorganization of NATO's minimum defence arrangements.* For removal of but a few elements of the Alliance's military posture would destroy the coherence of the whole and undermine its balance to the extent of making its forward defence strategy impossible to apply. Moreover, the Western Powers have embarked upon a significant revamping of their armed forces as a result of technological developments and demographic pressure, and the negotiations should accompany rather than interfere with this trend.

Indeed, the prospect of a population decline in the West makes it indispensable to modify recruitment procedures (extension of compulsory military service and calling up more men to serve in conscript armies) as well as the role assigned to the reserves. These measures entail considerable expenditure over and above that implied by the new weapon technologies required on an "expanded" battlefield. Marshal Ogarkov had, as early as 1984, grasped the importance of this technological change on which the Western Powers were embarking. It was precisely at that time that the Soviets began submitting an increasing number of arms control proposals in a way that many regarded as a breach with the past. Their acceptance would have had the effect of restraining, slowing down and limiting Western progress in the field of high-tech weapons.

The reconciliation of political and military negotiating requirements obviously creates tension for the Western Powers which are reflected in the difficulty of reaching agreement on generally-acceptable ways of evaluating the balance of forces. These contradictions can be overcome only by considerable scaling down - at least in a first stage - the objectives sought in the negotiations on conventional stability in Europe. Only in this way can common ground be found to accommodate ambitious political goals and the need to maintain the military security of the Alliance.

The nature of this common ground depends on the adversary's objectives. The course charted by the Warsaw Pact presents two snags for the West, and both should be avoided. The first is the rate at which it wants negotiations to proceed, *and in this respect it is vital to bear in mind that there is absolutely no need to agree to the pace set by the USSR.*

The second danger consists in assuming from the very outset that the Kremlin is prepared to make substantial concessions. This is the impression it is trying to give by means of carefully worded pronouncements. For example, the Soviets are telling international public opinion that they wish to negotiate deep cuts in conventional armaments and even go so far - as indicated for the first time in the 1987 edition of "*Qui menace la paix*" - as to admit to the existence of asymmetry in battle tanks and artillery to their advantage.

Yet together with this rhetoric intended for external consumption, the political and military leaders of the Warsaw Pact use much more guarded language in discussing chances of significant disarmament. Some of them, such as Heinz Hoffman, the Minister of Defence of the GDR, is even gratified by the Pact's military superiority - "... all in all the States members of the socialist community enjoy military superiority ... there is no balance of forces and that is a good thing for socialism, peace and the people of Europe".

Other Eastern leaders betray a reluctance to envisage massive and rapid reductions. There is, for

example, General Ivan Tretiak, an important military figure and Deputy Minister of Defence of the USSR, who in March 1988 drew attention to the “terrible blow struck at [the USSR’s] defence capability by the manpower reductions decided upon at the end of the 1950s” and added that any proposal for “changes in the army should be pondered a thousand times before being accepted ...”.

The last and by far the most important point is that *Soviet military doctrine still accords priority to offensive operations*. The emphasis at the political level might well be on defence as the basis of the Soviet Union’s global strategy, but at the operational level this does not imply renunciation of an offensive strategy. The benchmark is the battle of Kursk in the summer of 1943: resist the attacks of the adversary, defend positions, mobilize forces and counter-attack. In the Western theatre, for example, defence could be the rule for operations carried out on the scale of the northern and south-western TVDs, whereas the western TVD could be the scene of attacks on a vast scale. In other words, nothing so far indicates that the Soviets have envisaged or embarked upon the reorganization of their military machine with a view to reducing its offensive character.

In the circumstances, the reinforcement of the Alliance’s defensive military posture is fully justified, at least during the first stage of the negotiations, during which this objective should have priority over any conceivable political and military bargaining. This brings in mind the desire expressed at the Brussels Summit in March 1988 to elaborate a twofold approach, namely, to reduce the threat through arms control proposals while at the same time making good the structural shortcomings of the Alliance in respect of conventional forces.

The test of Soviet intentions: stability measures

It is extremely difficult to grasp all the various quantitative and qualitative parameters on which conventional strategy is based. For example, by modifying the geographical reference zone and the preparedness of the units concerned, the Warsaw Pact/NATO tank ratio varies from 1.51:1 to 3:1 and that of the strength of combat units from 1.01:1 to 2.1:1. This methodological difficulty partly explains the failure of the MBFR talks. Any progress during the negotiations on conventional stability will be governed by reference to the yardsticks which the East and West may agree upon for the evaluation of forces.

One of the units of measurement which best indicates where the emphasis has been placed in the structure of forces is fire-power. Tactical aircraft represent 50 per cent of NATO’s total fire-power (forces present in Europe) whereas most of the Warsaw Pact’s fire-power is accounted for by tanks and artillery, since tanks are one of the means used for launching an offensive and seizing territory.

The fire-power indicator reveals an alarming degree of asymmetry between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The figures presented by Senator Nunn to the *Wehrkunde* in February 1988 indicate that the overall East/West fire-power ratio has increased from 1.88:1 ten years ago to 2.2:1 at the present time. This already considerable imbalance is still increasing as a result of the pace of arms production in the East. For example, the number of tanks produced by the Warsaw Pact countries in 1987 alone

exceeded the number in the possession of the combined French and FRG armies.

The general consensus in the West is that efforts to reduce the military pressure exerted by the Warsaw Pact should therefore, as a matter of priority, be concentrated on tanks, which represent two-thirds of the fire-power of a Soviet armoured division (against two-fifths of that of a United States division).

This should be the primary objective at the conference on conventional stability in Europe. To meet the French goal of achieving a 1:1 foreign/domestic tank ratio from the Atlantic to the Urals in each country concerned, initial efforts to obtain reductions should be concentrated exclusively on Soviet forces, and specifically on the 11 GFSA divisions deployed to the West of a Rostock-Leipzig line, in other words, less than 100 km from the frontier with the FRG, so that the Pact's most modern tanks would be affected to a large extent by the reductions.

Only in this way can the fire-power ratio of the NATO and Warsaw Pact armies be reduced during the first stage in a manner that is less prejudicial to the security of the Alliance. During the second stage of the negotiations, discussions could concentrate on ways of achieving parity between the two Alliances.

The Alliance has two possibilities of offering a *quid pro quo* for a relative reduction of the Warsaw Pact's military pressure. One is suggested by the West German proposals of March 1988, according to which the Pact would reduce the number of its tanks by 25,000 as against a reduction of 800 on the Western side. The other possibility would be to exchange - in a highly selective manner - some of the potential of the United States 17th Air Force stationed in the FRG for the withdrawal of Soviet tanks. The exchange could be effected on the basis of one aircraft for 60 tanks. The aircraft in question would be only A10s or F16s, and no more than four squadrons would be involved (72 aircraft). In the case of the A10s, this exchange would affect only aircraft without any nuclear capability. In addition, it would not entail the physical withdrawal of United States ground units from the Continent. In this scenario, the Soviets would have to withdraw 4,320 tanks including at least 2,100 from the GDR. The withdrawal should not entail mothballing on the spot and the necessary facilities for the maintenance of equipment would not be affected. In other words, the units concerned by the reduction would be deployed to the east of the Urals and in the United States. They would not be disbanded.

An agreement of this nature would clearly indicate that the Soviets had serious intentions. It would constitute an important first step and after the withdrawals had been verified by means of effective procedures, a second stage in the negotiations on conventional stability could be envisaged.

At the same time as the Alliance endeavours to reduce military pressure in the heart of Europe, it should maintain its cohesion and demonstrate its determination not to slacken its defence effort unilaterally.

The test of the Alliance's collective determination: accompanying measures

Population trends reveal that, among the members of the Atlantic Alliance, only in Turkey will there be an increase in the number of men in the 18-22 age group by the year 2000. In all the other Western European countries the number will decline - by 47 per cent in the extreme case of the FRG. This trend will not affect the Warsaw Pact countries with the exception of the GDR. The number of men in the 18-22 age group will decline by an average of 12.4 per cent in the NATO countries as a whole, whereas it will increase by 15.2 per cent in the Warsaw Pact countries.

This asymmetry, over and above that already apparent in the ratio of forces, should be taken into account in defending Western positions at the negotiations on conventional stability. In order to offset this decline in the Alliance's human resources, a number of specific measures should be envisaged. Those which merit serious consideration include the incorporation in defence plans of a strategy involving preparation of the terrain with a view to organizing defensive positions and slowing down a surprise attack. The possibility of creating a far-flung system of obstacles and barriers has been discussed internally by the Alliance for a number of years. It is more than ever justified from an economic standpoint and is a must for demographic reasons. Moreover, it would enable the Alliance to agree to reductions in forces affecting its ground units but not its air potential.

The West should also invest in systems that tend to boost its strength, and specifically in the C³I and in means of launching accurate in-depth attacks against the enemy. In other words, in arrangements and systems that have the effect of considerably increasing the effectiveness of the Alliance's limited resources while at the same time forcing the Soviets to invest more than they want to in certain sectors (such as air defence).

During the negotiations on conventional stability, therefore, the Soviets should be prevented from restricting the modernization programmes undertaken by the Atlantic Alliance and in particular the weapons systems needed for the FOFA operational sub-concept. This is probably one of their negotiating objectives. They have realized, since the beginning of the 1980s and in particular under Marshal Ogarkov, that military competition between the two alliances was assuming a technological dimension. They are lagging considerably in this respect - estimates range from six to ten years in the case of data processing, although they seem to have made considerable progress in the field of optical integrated circuits. They recognize and are concerned by Western progress on new systems which they call "recognition and strike complexes" (operational level) and "recognition and fire complexes" (tactical level). If they manage through the negotiations to reduce the rate and scale of the development by the West of new attack platforms they would also thereby have succeeded in restricting possibilities of modernizing part of NATO's tactical nuclear weapon delivery systems.

The Kremlin's insistence on discussing the military doctrines of the two alliances should be viewed in this context. The West must not allow itself to be swept along in this direction which, from the standpoint of public opinion, could result in its being placed in the position of the accused, since FOFA is depicted by the East as an aggressive doctrine and the weapons systems required for its application as surprise tactical weapons.

The Atlantic Alliance should, during the discussions on conventional stability in Europe, protect its ability to modernize its arsenal and avoid giving the appearance of being a “potential aggressor” whose forces should be balanced across the board with those of the Warsaw Pact. It should also make preparations for the next stage in these negotiations. In this way it will demonstrate that it takes them seriously, without mortgaging its security.

CONCLUSION

P. Lellouche

I

Although the quickening pace of discussions on conventional disarmament during the past few years can be explained by a number of factors (including the signature of the INF Treaty and the increasing importance of conventional forces and weapons in the security policies of both East and West), the decisive element in this respect has nevertheless been the impetus given by Mr. Gorbachev to the disarmament process as a whole. Any consideration of the prospects for conventional disarmament in Europe should therefore be based on an understanding of the Soviet Union's objectives and views concerning the future of the European political and territorial order.

The following two preliminary observations are in order at this point:

1. Disarmament or the reduction of conventional forces in Europe inevitably implies a modification of the political and territorial pattern inherited from the Second World War - an order characterized by the presence of United States and Soviet forces in the centre of Europe. This situation presents the Western Powers with their first dilemma of what might be called a conceptual nature, namely, that a numerical and purely military approach to *arms control* tends to obscure the fundamental difference between the presence of the United States on the one hand and that of the USSR on the other within a divided Europe. The United States, whose presence is freely accepted, participates in the defence of a group of democratic countries. The USSR's presence, imposed by the force of arms 40 years ago props up and is vital to the very existence of régimes whose legitimacy is non-existent. Yet the very logic behind the process embarked upon - tank for tank, division for division, with a view to the achievement of equal arms ceilings - not only ignores this basic aspect of the problem but even, to a certain extent, gives the stamp of approval to the Red Army's role in Europe by treating it as though it was quite natural. There has been much talk recently, in the East as well as in the West, about asymmetrical reductions in certain categories of weapons. However - and this is precisely the irony of the situation - this very concept of asymmetry as well as its logical counterpart in the *arms control* field, namely, *parity* in the final balance of forces, tend to support the erroneous idea of equally symmetrical legitimacy between the presence of Soviet forces in Eastern Europe and those of the United States in the West.

This explains the difficulty that arises for the Western Powers: how can they negotiate reductions in the opposing forces without *ipso facto* accepting the political symmetry which would result? How can they ensure that the withdrawal of all or some of the forces of the two Great Powers in Central Europe will not lead to unfavourable developments in the political order not only in the East but also in Western Europe?

It is clear that in these circumstances the idea of *parity*, inherited from *arms control*, is devoid of meaning should a given level of armaments agreed upon in the negotiations not have the same political results on both sides. Another consequence is that the massive reduction of military forces (as proposed, for example, in the Budapest Appeal) far from promoting "stability" (the alleged objective of the negotiations) will on the contrary simply increase instability in so far as it would bring about political changes that are radically different in the West (*de facto* dismantling of NATO) than in the East (where Soviet domination would not be affected). The first observation therefore tends - from the standpoint of France but also that of Western interests - to point up an approach of a primarily political nature, phased rather than radical and designed to achieve parallel results in both the political and military spheres.

2. The second observation is that the conventional negotiations will to a great extent be influenced by the dynamism of Gorbachev's diplomacy. Admittedly even during the period of "Brezhnevian immobility", which is so disparaged at the present time in Moscow, the Soviet Union consistently demonstrated the importance it attached to its "peace policy". Under Gorbachev, however, disarmament has become of very basic importance in the application of the "new thinking" in respect of the outside world. It may even be said that, together with changes in the domestic, cultural and political scene, it is apparently disarmament which has been accorded top priority by the new Soviet team. For three years, therefore, we have been inundated by a tidal wave of proposals and agreements on all aspects of disarmament. These include the Washington INF Treaty, START, conventional and chemical disarmament, not to mention related agreements such as that of September 1986 on confidence-building measures at Stockholm or more recently the agreement on the establishment of reduced nuclear risk centres with the United States in May 1988. In this context, it is extremely important not to regard the forthcoming negotiations on conventional stability as an isolated initiative, but rather as integral part of broader process comprising all Soviet initiatives in various disarmament fields; each one of these elements is part of a clear-cut and coherent policy relating to the Europe of tomorrow.

It will be seen below that, fitted together, these various Soviet initiatives (in the nuclear and conventional spheres) constitute an articulated and consistent policy serving permanent geopolitical objectives, namely, guardianship over Western Europe and the marginalization of the United States.

Yet this set of proposals also reflects a specific political objective - the psychological demobilization of the Western democracies by loosening the bond that hitherto justified their defence efforts, i.e. the perception of a potential enemy, thus depriving them of the Atlantic Alliance itself. The destruction of the SS-20s, the withdrawal from Afghanistan, the announcement of a strictly defensive military doctrine and the undertaking to open up all Soviet installations for on-site inspection (on a reciprocal basis, of course) - all this replaced at a stroke the image of a totalitarian, military and expansionist empire by that of a "ordinary" country whose main concern was its economic development. From this standpoint, the high profile of Soviet disarmament proposals inevitably exacerbates the anti-nuclear malaise that persists in Europe (after 10 years of bickering about Euromissiles) as well as the increasing constraints on defence budgets and demographic trends in most of the Western countries.

In this context, there is a not negligible danger of blunders on the part of the West in the face of the dynamism being shown by the Soviets. A goodly number of persons in the West - persons of substance at that - are already making the Gorbachev experiment out to be a "historical opportunity" that

should be seized. The implicit idea being that not only is the West able to influence the course of events in the USSR (this idea is not new) but that it is even our "historical" duty to do so by assisting Gorbachev to get the better of his "conservative" opponents. Even Mr. Reagan himself at the last Moscow summit explained that Mr. Gorbachev was confronted by the same bureaucratic constraints as himself. The inherent danger for our democracies of attributing to others their own intentions is particularly dangerous in the field of defence and disarmament.

Many persons will be tempted in this particular respect to indulge in wishful thinking and therefore to base our security policies on what we perceive to be a basic change in the USSR to the detriment of the permanent security interests of our countries. The almost blind acceptance of the Soviet Union's declarations of intent as well as the current debate on the need to "encourage" changes in the domestic as well as foreign policy of the USSR are already indicative of this danger.

This approach might well lead us - by taking a few irresistible steps - to mortgage our future security interests in exchange for a few words or promises of action, the entire trend being set in motion by short-term political considerations or even for electoral reasons in the case of certain Western countries.

This danger will be all the greater in the next few years, since the subject of *arms control* will inevitably remain dominated by a considerable amount of USSR-United States bilateralism. From this standpoint, the rapprochement of the two Great Powers during the past three years has been particularly spectacular, especially if compared to the coldness that prevailed at the beginning of the first Reagan administration; in less than 30 months we have had 4 summit meetings and no less than 26 USSR-United States meetings at the level of ministers of foreign affairs, namely, more than the total number of intra-Western concertation meetings within NATO and even within the EEC. In this connection, we should not forget the lessons of Reykjavik and the negotiation of the INF Treaty, where vital European security interests would have been undermined by undue haste and insufficient reflexion. This bilateralism will also affect the forthcoming conventional negotiations owing to the central role played by the United States and Soviet military presence in the political and military order of post-war Europe. The Soviets will not fail to give the United States - if the future of the presence of GIs on the Old Continent and "burden-sharing" in the Alliance once again come to the forefront - every opportunity for a negotiated withdrawal either on the basis of exchanges between blocs or on the periphery of the negotiations, or yet by exploiting differences in the approaches adopted by various Western Powers.

All these convergent factors, namely, the Soviet Union's dynamic disarmament policy, internal difficulties in the West and increasing bilateralism, suggest that our policy should in future take the following three dangers into account.

1. Above all it is vital to prevent a schism between the perception and articulation of the respective interests of Europeans and Americans in these negotiations, since this could lead to the Balkanization of Western security policies which would rapidly result in individual States vying with one another in their desire for accommodation and disarmament with Moscow and eventually a *de facto* splintering of Western and even European positions. This danger is also present in the field of human rights - which are connected with the European disarmament process in the CSCE context - where some might seek disarmament for disarmament's sake whereas others might adopt a balanced human rights/disarmament approach or even give priority to political and human aspects. This problem, which is of special

importance to France, is difficult to resolve and leaves it very little room for manoeuvring in the process which is beginning. Because of imperative European considerations it wishes to avoid the danger of a European/United States rupture, and has therefore allowed itself to be drawn into a process - as a means of getting its views heard - that of necessity has bloc-bloc overtones and is considerably permeated with USSR/United States bilateralism. The obvious danger is that its voice will eventually be drowned out by the process itself which could, in the long run, place French officials in a difficult situation, namely, that of either accepting a common position not in accordance with our views or withdrawing abruptly from the negotiations.

Conversely, by refusing to go along with this process by deciding to retain maximum independence might result in France's increasing political isolation in Europe and the loss of most of its influence not only as a major protagonist in the European/United States context but also of its power to influence negotiations on substance.

2. The second concern is that the negotiating strategy adopted and the conduct of East-West relations in general should avoid repeating the error of the 1970s when *arms control* became the cornerstone of *détente*. This would be to overlook the fact that the new Soviet foreign policy is aimed not only at stabilizing the balance of forces but also at achieving a complete reorganization of Europe's post-war political and military order; disarmament and conventional stability from the Atlantic to the Urals are in fact simply instruments of choice for achieving a political goal - that of the "common European house". This would make East-West relations hostage to their strictly military dimension and risk a sudden reversal of a favourable trend in view of the inevitable difficulties that will be encountered during negotiations on subjects as complex as the enumeration of forces or the highly sophisticated inspection régime required by conventional disarmament. If the basic priority objective of the Western Powers is to achieve the "demilitarization" of East-West relations as a whole, it is uncertain that too much *arms control* is the best way of doing so. Paradoxically, if arms are to have less influence on East-West relations in future, the area covered by these relations must on the contrary be extended to embrace other than strictly military matters through a series of initiatives, as coherent as possible, in the political, economic and humanitarian fields.

3. Lastly, we should never lose sight of the basic contradiction between *domestic reform* and *revolutionary change in European security*, which is a characteristic feature of the USSR's "new political thinking". Mikhail Gorbachev never lets slip an opportunity of impressing on us that the domestic reform of the Soviet system is a difficult and slow process requiring more time and patience, as well as our understanding and even active assistance. Yet what is proposed to us at the same time as regards security is nothing less than a complete revolution of the European security system by the elimination of the "intolerable danger" inherent in nuclear deterrence, the denuclearization of Europe, the "restructuring" of conventional forces to emphasize defence, and drastic reductions in conventional forces leading to the withdrawal of United States troops from the Old Continent. This contrast is not only flagrant but tantamount to the signature of a blank cheque by the West, since a mere promise of domestic change in the USSR and in its domination over half of Western Europe would be exchanged for a security scenario in which legitimate European interests would be difficult to detect. The Soviets must realize that, after building up their military might to an unprecedented degree over a period of more than 70 years and placing it at the service of what has become a totalitarian continental empire, the Europeans are unable to dismiss at the stroke of a pen an order that is described as reflecting "old thinking" without

tangible proof that it is to be replaced by something better. What is at stake here is in point of fact an essential political test of the sincerity and real intentions of the USSR in its approach to disarmament in Europe: progress towards genuine joint security must inevitably include recognition by the USSR of the legitimate security interests of the other peoples of the Continent, beginning with full and complete recognition of the legitimacy of nuclear deterrence as a means of avoiding war and therefore strengthening the stability of the system. Similarly, we should get the Soviets to agree that disarmament in Europe is not something that they alone should control to their advantage but is necessarily a phased process connected with the internal development of the Soviet system on the military as well as economic and humanitarian levels.

As will be seen below, the priority goal of France - as well as that of the Western Powers - should be to induce the Soviets to accept these principles. This in turn would permit progress on a considerable number of points which are at present in dispute and on which the West remains on the defensive (inclusion of aircraft and dual capability systems in particular and the link with nuclear weapons in general).

II

Having discussed these principles we must, at this point - at a time when the complex negotiating process is about to begin - examine the respective positions of the Western Powers and the Soviets.

We shall begin with the USSR which, as has been seen, has dominated the diplomatic manoeuvring that has been taking place in this area.

The following four main observations are in order.

1. First of all, ever since Mikhail Gorbachev came into power, the USSR has been taking the initiative and setting the pace of the East-West diplomatic exercise.

Although this may seem obvious at the present time, it was certainly not the case in 1985-86, for a retrospective comparison reveals that the modification of the Soviet position is nothing short of spectacular. For example, at the end of 1985 Soviet diplomacy was still in a state of shock following its defeat in the battle of the Euromissiles; despite the wave of pacifism and internal divisions in the Atlantic Alliance, the blackmail used against the deployment of Pershing missiles failed in the end. In Great Britain, Germany and Italy, the Governments which had not without difficulty deployed the Pershings were re-elected. Moreover, on the SDI and strategic weapons fronts, the Europeans refused to join a crusade against United States rearmament which was denounced as the driving force of the arms race.

In the space of three years this situation was completely reversed. Previously stigmatized as a closed and sclerosed society, systematically building up its military strength and with a foreign policy rooted in the past, the USSR is today, from the standpoint of Western public opinion, a foremost

promoter of international peace and security through its proposal for a truly common security system. Even in the United States, on the occasion of the Washington Summit at the end of 1987, President Reagan was well behind Mikhail Gorbachev in popularity polls. In the sphere of disarmament in itself, the USSR agreed for the first time to on-site inspections in connection with the Stockholm Agreement, signed the Washington Treaty, drew up with the United States the basic principles of a START treaty and at last negotiated a mandate for conventional stability in Europe. And it was Moscow's proposals which gave an impetus to negotiations in all these spheres.

2. This progress along a broad front was supplemented by the unprecedented adaptability of Soviet diplomacy.

Soviet foreign policy at present displays a remarkable ability to change course abruptly when changes are required by the political and diplomatic situation, to identify and turn our blunders to its own advantage, and to absorb its own errors by reversing a difficult situation to its benefit - all with a clear understanding of the contradictions which are in some cases inherent in the Western position.

The INF affair offers the most striking example of this new flexibility. In 1985 Gorbachev realized that Gromyko's policy had led the USSR into a blind alley by refusing to pay the price of the withdrawal of Western forces and at the same time by falling into the trap that the Alliance had prepared in 1981 with Reagan's zero option proposal. Even more surprising, Gorbachev admitted his mistake on the morrow of the Reykjavik Summit, where he himself had insisted on linking a solution to the SDI problem with the definitive adoption of the zero option. Since then, events have unfolded with an apparently inexorable logic: severance of the negotiating link between the START/SDI/INF in February 1987, acceptance of the first zero option in the following March and even of an immediate second zero option in order to add to the nuclear dilemma faced by the members of NATO and by Germany in particular in the post-INF context.

Another example concerns the SDI. As soon as the Soviets realized that the United States programme was to a great extent compromised by difficulties of an essentially domestic nature due above all to budgetary and technological constraints, the anti-SDI propaganda campaign came to an abrupt end in the summer of 1987. The compromise reached on the interpretation of the ABM Treaty at the Washington Summit enabled the Reagan Administration to devote its efforts to the achievement of a START agreement while Congress took over from Soviet diplomacy the task of limiting the scope of the SDI programme and forcing the Administration to comply with its obligations under the ABM Treaty of 1972.

Last but not least, a third example concerns the spectacular reversal of the USSR's traditional position concerning on-site inspection. Ever since the beginning of the Helsinki process, insistence on the need for an on-challenge inspection régime covering the territory of the USSR and the persistent refusal of the Soviets in this connection have become the recurring theme in *arms control* negotiations as well as the basic argument used by Western negotiators, namely, that the secrecy shrouding Soviet society was in point of fact an insurmountable obstacle to genuine disarmament. By accepting the principle of on-site inspection - first under the Stockholm Agreements and then for the verification of the Washington Treaty - the new Soviet diplomacy satisfied a basic condition laid down by the West for progress on disarmament in Europe but also by the United States in connection with START. Moreover,

the Soviets went as far as taking the West at its word by proposing an on-site and on-challenge inspection régime covering all territories without any exception whatever, in other words, a régime which by definition the West would find difficult to accept and which once more places the Western Governments on the defensive.

The common features of these examples reveal that we are dealing with a form of Soviet diplomacy that is much more effective than in the past. For this reason, the pace and intensity of the forthcoming negotiations on conventional stability should be much greater than that suggested by the rhythm of the MBFR talks. Indeed, the Soviets will probably maintain unremitting pressure by submitting proposals in the form of highly tempting asymmetrical “concessions” with an eye to longer-term basic political objectives.

3. Even more important, Soviet diplomacy has managed, in a matter of two years (and with the implicit assistance of the United States) to impose a framework for and to specify the parameters of the kind of European security that meshes fully with the interests of the USSR itself but which, in the long run, is extremely dangerous for European security interests.

This is true of denuclearization, initially suggested by President Reagan in his speech introducing the SDI programme in March 1983 and subsequently taken up by the Soviets. From the programme of general and complete nuclear disarmament up to the year 2000 formulated by Mr. Gorbachev in his keynote speech of 15 January 1986 to the Washington Treaty which eliminated two entire categories of nuclear weapons, the theme of denuclearization emerges as a desirable ultimate objective in the debate on European security. For the first time since 1945 and the abortive negotiations on the Baruch-Lilienthal Plan, the idea of a world free of nuclear weapons (Europe would of course be the first continent concerned) is therefore being proposed as the goal - implicitly by Washington and explicitly by Moscow. The same is true of the idea of deep cuts as being synonymous with greater security. The idea that genuine disarmament, brought about by deep cuts or better still by the elimination of weapons through zero options, *ipso facto* means greater stability and security for all has been gradually gaining ground as a result of the INF precedent. This constitutes a reversal of the *arms control* situation which prevailed during the 1960s and 1970s, when the objective was a stable balance of forces and not reductions in themselves. Here again the Soviet position reflects an idea dear to the hearts of American conservatives, namely, reductions (START) rather than limitation (SALT). This led to a change both in the conduct and the substance of negotiations which were steered in a direction completely opposed to the basis of the European security system, namely, the essential role of nuclear deterrence, the presence of theatre nuclear weapons and United States conventional forces in Europe, thus opening a discussion even in the West on an alternative and radically different order, this time based on negotiation, denuclearization and disarmament.

4. Lastly, as regards basic objectives, it is to be noted that, far from calling in question the objectives characteristic of the Brezhnev era, the USSR's security and disarmament policy under Gorbachev could well on the contrary imply a return to its original objectives.

An examination of Soviet *motives* implies relativizing the idea that, owing to the critical situation of the Soviet economy, as demonstrated by *perestroika*, military expenditure must be reduced and resources transferred to the civilian economy by means of massive reductions in the Red Army's

conventional arsenal. The USSR which, at the present time channels 15 to 20 per cent of its national product into the military sector, must certainly expand its production base for fear of having its super-Power status undermined in the long run; this is probably one of the main reasons behind the reforms being carried out at the present time. But the direct transfer of resources from the military to the civilian sector through disarmament savings is far from an easy matter owing to the long-term nature of current arms programmes (this explains why the Soviet defence budget has not declined under Gorbachev and why military production continues at a very high level, as in the past). But it is also due to the fact that a reduced number of Soviet forces will probably cost just as much, if not more, since for the military this is simply yet another argument in favour of the modernization of equipment. There is also the high cost of the increasingly sophisticated and intensive verification procedures called for under arms limitation agreements. In point of fact, the economic effects of extensive conventional disarmament should become apparent only after a long time in the form of results *induced* by general political developments, stabilization of military competition with the United States and a change in the USSR's image in the world - factors which as a whole will promote the development of East-West relations. In analyzing the motives behind Soviet disarmament policy, the immediate economic argument should therefore be dismissed in favour of traditional political objectives promoted, however, by means of a radically new approach.

Anti-deterrence rhetoric coupled with the idea of global nuclear disarmament and the dismantling of the two military Alliances which constitute the cornerstone of current Soviet propaganda, far from signalling a change in the direction of a genuinely peaceful USSR and equitable recognition of the legitimate security interests of the Europeans, on the contrary recalls the major themes of post-war Soviet diplomacy. If something has changed it is certainly not the nature of the USSR's political and military objectives which remain basically the same, but rather the strategy adopted as a means of attaining those objectives. The USSR, through its new policy, seems to have made an admirable job of drawing the necessary lesson from the setbacks it suffered as a result of the Brezhnev approach during the 1970s, *since it has replaced its traditional strategy of an exclusively military saturation response corresponding to all levels of NATO's escalation scenario by a new approach entailing the deliberate psychological moral and material demobilization of the West*. This strategy is based on two elements of vital importance: first, a modification of the USSR's image presented to the outside world and a reduction of the threat inherent in its military power; secondly, the systematic use of renewed East-West détente and disarmament on Moscow's conditions as the main means of achieving Soviet objectives in Europe.

Indeed, taken together, the Washington Treaty, the principles agreed upon at the START negotiations, as well as the proposals already submitted in connection with the forthcoming conventional negotiations, are all obviously coherent parts of one and the same thing corresponding both to the political concept of the "common European house" and military projects (Ogarkov in the past, Gareyev at the present time) aiming at a smaller Red Army but one which is more mobile and has more modern equipment.

As for the START talks, what is already known about the general outline of the agreement - such as the reduction of approximately 30 per cent in overall strategic arsenals on both sides - indicates that it will bring about very little change in the strategic intercontinental relationship between the United States and the USSR. However, the reduction of the United States arsenal (particularly as regards its

submarine fleet with launching capability) will perpetuate (and even increase) the vulnerability of land-based systems and further limit the contribution made by the United States central arsenal to expanded deterrence in Western Europe. In view of these START constraints and foreseeable arms programmes in the United States, it is extremely difficult to conceive of these central systems being used other than in the event of a direct attack against United States territory. Yet as the future START Treaty will hardly impose any real constraints on Soviet modernization programmes - i.e. as regards the deployment of mobile SS 24/25 missiles - the USSR will be able to continue pursuing its traditional objective of neutralizing the strategic arsenal of the United States as an expanded deterrent covering the European Continent.

Without going into a detailed discussion of the military consequences of the Washington Treaty, it is clear that the INF agreement has drastically reduced the number of selective strike options against the USSR from the European Continent. For this reason, the neutralization of central strategic arsenals which will be achieved by the future START Treaty is all the more important. The prospects of a START agreement should, however, be evaluated in conjunction with the dilemma created for the Alliance by the United States nuclear posture in Europe in the post-INF context, and specifically in the light of the problem of its modernization(*).

The INF Treaty, the outline of the START agreement and the forthcoming negotiations on conventional stability taken together clearly have a synergic effect from the standpoint of Soviet nuclear and conventional disarmament objectives in Europe. Coupled with a drastic reduction in the Alliance's nuclear options not only at the theatre level - the INF Agreement and the highly problematic prospect of the modernization of short-range weapons - but also at the strategic level by the emerging START Agreement and the possibility of massive conventional withdrawals of United States and Soviet forces in Europe, suggests a coherent restructuring of the European security system. This scenario, if realized by means of the political "common European house" concept, would represent the achievement of all traditional Soviet foreign policy objectives pursued since the end of the Second World War.

III

It must be said that, in this political and military context and in view of the dynamism of Soviet diplomacy, the Western Powers have not exactly excelled themselves in their choice of the position they have adopted so far on the substance of the problem.

For almost two years now disputes have been continuing on questions of procedure, and as a result the Western attitude has largely been one of reacting to Moscow's initiatives. Despite the establishment of NATO's High-Level Group (HLTF) at the Halifax meeting in May 1986, no clear-cut concept in the form of a set of principles has yet been developed with an eye to the forthcoming negotiations. In principle the latter are to begin at the end of 1988, and precious time for reflection on the subject has already been lost as a result of differences among the Western Powers concerning the French idea - that

(*It is worth pointing out that, for the Europeans, 80 SS-24 missiles are equivalent to all the SS-20 warheads destroyed under the INF Treaty.

is of vital importance politically - of establishing a link between the future negotiations and the CSCE.

As to the substance, the reduction scenarios presented by unofficial United States and German sources, logically centred on the idea of highly asymmetrical reductions to the detriment of the Pact's forces, seem to be highly unrealistic. Indeed, it is difficult to see - and Soviet officials have been the first to point this out - why the USSR alone should agree to reduce its forces to the level of NATO's, especially if it is offered nothing in return. The Soviets have skillfully turned the idea of asymmetrical reductions to their advantage by offering to reduce their superiority in tanks in return for a reduction in NATO's tactical aircraft which, as if by chance, constitute the last delivery vehicles authorized under the Washington Treaty for any modernization of long-range nuclear forces. As in the past, the Soviets continue to maintain that there is overall parity of conventional forces in Europe, although they recognize the existence of asymmetries in certain categories of weapons. By means of a rather surprising juggling of figures the Soviets arrive at the conclusion that NATO has more attack aircraft than the Pact. It is moreover noticeable, especially since the speech by E. Shevardnadze, the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs at the United Nations in June 1988, that the Soviets have in particular been playing up NATO's naval superiority (undeniable, admittedly) to further justify their arguments, despite the fact that the future CST negotiations would be limited to ground forces alone.

The other weakness in the Western approach concerns the exclusion of tactical nuclear weapons. Here again two points must be borne in mind. First, the Soviets must be prevented from using the negotiations on conventional stability to achieve a third "zero option" and thereby the Continent's denuclearization that they are after. Secondly, an order of priorities must be drawn up in the light of the INF Treaty, the elimination of the Warsaw Pact's superiority in forces being a prerequisite for the continuation of the nuclear disarmament process on the Continent.

This approach raises three types of problems, however:

- The first concerns the argument presented to Western public opinion, for it is risky to make out that nuclear deterrence can be dispensed with once a parity of forces has been brought about by conventional disarmament. This argument, which is quite common in certain Western circles has, however, been officially repudiated by the sensible formula agreed upon in the Alliance's "conventional declaration" at Brussels in 1988: nuclear deterrence will have to remain even if the conventional negotiations are successful. This point is of vital importance. It is to be hoped that the Governments concerned will bear it in mind and bring it to the attention of their public opinion at every opportunity.
- The second is of a technical nature and suggests that the Western approach leaves much to be desired. All tactical nuclear weapons are launched by conventional delivery vehicles, which may be missiles, aircraft or even artillery. As might have been expected, the Soviets have taken over the problem of these "dual capability" delivery vehicles and called for their inclusion in the conventional negotiations, leaving nuclear warheads to one side. For the time being the West is standing its ground on the question of aircraft - that are at least excluded from the first stage - but the Western Powers which wanted to include Soviet artillery had to give way on this distinction at least as regards nuclear artillery. In view of this precedent, it is difficult to see how tactical aircraft can long be kept outside the scope of these negotiations.

- The third and really vital problem concerns strategic concepts and the policies on which they are based. In essence, the distinction that the West wants to make as clear as possible between nuclear and conventional weapons in point of fact conceals a considerable divergence of views between the main Western Powers concerning the type of military posture that should be maintained during the post-INF period. Whereas for the Western nuclear-weapon Powers (the United States, Great Britain and France) this posture implies the inclusion of nuclear weapons, including tactical weapons in Europe, such is not so obviously the case in Germany, where the anti-nuclear malaise has been considerably aggravated by the INF Treaty. One thing is clear, however, namely, that the FRG will not retain nuclear weapons on its territory since the only ones would be short-range weapons which could be used only for its own destruction or the destruction of the other part of Germany. Whence the German insistence on defining a "global concept" (*Gesamtkonzept*) in respect of both the strategic doctrine and the negotiations themselves, as a precondition for the long-term retention of these weapons.

In the circumstances, only very slow progress is possible on United States plans to develop a successor to the short-range Lance missile (in the form of an ATACM surface-surface system or TASM air-surface system) as well as on the definition of the famous "global concept" within NATO.

Western difficulties in coping with conventional disarmament policy are therefore apparent:

- The obvious inferiority of Western conventional forces means that, in point of fact, the Western Powers have only one course open to them in the negotiations, namely, to call for drastic reductions on the Soviet side alone without really being able to offer anything in exchange.
- Western dissension and uncertainty about the future of the Alliance's deterrence concept have resulted in a sort of paralysis both in respect of the arms programmes envisaged (FOFA in the case of conventional weapons and the Lance successor in the case of nuclear weapons) as well as in respect of negotiations, owing to the inevitable link between conventional and nuclear aspects.

A situation of this kind, although conceivable in the short run, obviously cannot be allowed to last. By leaving the diplomatic initiative to the Soviets and retreating behind unduly defensive positions, the Western Governments are running the risk of eventually "losing" what is ultimate at stake in the negotiations, i.e. their own public opinion. Moreover, it is difficult to see how the Alliance countries can continue to negotiate with Moscow on conventional aspects if the problem of reorganizing the system of the Alliance's strategy is not solved at the same time. Even in the best case, this situation can lead only to an impasse in that the "flexible response" concept would be maintained - at least for the sake of appearance, whereas its actual application would depend only on a rag-bag collection of tactical weapons systems and - without any intermediate stage - strategic weapons systems whose use would - as everyone would realize - be to say the least questionable.

In view of what has been stated above, the following three recommendations may be addressed to the Western Powers:

1. Negotiations with Moscow should be accompanied by the reorganization of the Alliance's

strategic concept. Whether this is done internally by NATO or by a high-profile political group (Harmel II), it is clear that the Western Powers cannot hope to continue negotiating on conventional forces while major disagreements persist about the type of nuclear posture that should be adopted in the future.

2. The reorganization of United States nuclear arrangements in Europe should be achieved by means of unilateral decisions taken by the countries concerned and not through negotiations with Moscow concerning tactical weapons. These decisions could be based on the following:

- A drastic unilateral reduction of very short-range tactical weapons; and
- The introduction of long-range weapons authorized under the INF Treaty and compatible with the concept of deterrence - and not that of a limited nuclear war in Central Europe, namely, airborne and sea-surface systems.

This combination would be capable of preserving a minimum consensus concerning the retention of nuclear weapons in the Alliance's non-nuclear-weapon countries.

3. The Western Powers at the conventional negotiations must most definitely recover the diplomatic initiative by ceasing to give their public opinion the impression that they are solely on the defensive. Specifically, their priority should be to get the Soviets to recognize first of all the need for a *stability concept* that explicitly includes nuclear deterrence as an essential element of any future military balance.

This would immediately dispose of the problem of whether dual capability systems and especially aircraft should or should not be included. The democracies would thus have nothing more to fear from the elimination of these weapons in so far as their very principle would be recognized as a prerequisite for negotiations. In other words, each party would indicate in advance the level below which it was not prepared to reduce its nuclear systems so that those below this level would automatically be excluded from the conventional negotiations.

4. Lastly, under the protective safeguard of truly deterrent and mutually accepted nuclear postures, conventional disarmament could gradually modify the existing balance of conventional forces so as to achieve general stabilization from the Atlantic to the Urals. The reduction and deconcentration of troops and material and the limitation of reserves and arms stockpiles, such as armoured equipment, artillery and river-crossing facilities would then offer possible means of eliminating, step by step, the danger of a surprise attack or prolonged war - all these measures being based on the nuclear weapon as the central stabilizing element during the evolution of the European security system which is beginning at the present time.

Once this has been accomplished, it is difficult to see why the Western Powers should refuse to embark on negotiations based on exchanges of data accompanied by verification, as has recently been proposed by the Soviets. Such exchanges would inevitably reveal the inferiority of Western forces, not only across the board but also in each category of weapons. Since the USSR has undertaken to correct any asymmetries as soon as they are demonstrated, why prevent it from doing so?

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