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Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions  
Between NATO and the Warsaw Pact

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of mutual and balanced force reductions (MBFR) has been an element of the European Security dialogue for well over a decade. The basic argument in its favor -- at least in the West -- has remained relatively constant: that the existence of large opposing military forces in Central Europe is, in itself, a source of tension, and, accordingly, limitations or reductions would make a positive contribution to East-West stability. A corollary assumption has been that mutual reductions would not create new vulnerabilities or instabilities and essential security could thus be maintained at lower costs. Finally, it has been argued by many that even if the degree of reductions was minimal, the political effect of virtually any East-West accommodation in this field would contribute importantly to a broader based detente.

Others argue that forces organized, equipped and disposed defensively are not a source of tension but have been, in fact, a source of stability. Further, they argue that it is questionable whether maintenance of essential security is possible under a negotiable MBFR agreement, and whether lower costs would result.

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Whatever the putative advantages to MBFR agreements, the prospects for negotiations during the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s never appeared to be very serious. One reason was the unresolved issue of whether arms control in Europe could be separated from a simultaneous or prior settlement of the underlying political issues that gave rise to the military confrontation. As long as the policy of the West German government placed priority on the German and Berlin question, the prospects for negotiating a regional arms control arrangement based on the political status quo were clouded. On the Eastern side, there was no dearth of proposals -- including nuclear free zones, a one-third reduction of all foreign troops in Europe, 50% reduction in Germany, etc. But, there were also serious Soviet reservations over the effects of Soviet withdrawals on the cohesiveness of the Soviet Bloc in Eastern Europe in a period of loosening of ideological ties. There was also a tacit recognition that as long as the general strategic situation between the US and USSR remained essentially competitive, sub-strategic agreements were uncertain.

MBFR has gradually revived as some of these factors have been modified. The German government has not only been willing to consider regional arms control separately from the German problem, but has become a leading Western advocate of such negotiations. On the Western side the interest in MBFR has also been sharpened by rising speculation over unilateral

American reductions, which Europeans hope might either be delayed by the prospect of MBFR or used in negotiating mutual reductions. Until recently, however, the Soviets have remained distinctly cool to Western approaches, largely because of the need to consolidate in Czechoslovakia. The June meeting of the Warsaw Pact, however, suggested some movement. The Warsaw Pact countries repeated the proposal for a European Security Conference, but added to its agenda a new proposal for the establishment of an "organ to deal with questions of security and cooperation in Europe." This "organ" might take up the question of reducing "foreign armed forces on the territories of European States" -- the first response to the Western proposals.

Thus, at present, NATO, having given several "signals" to the East on MBFR, probably could not refuse to negotiate MBFR and now faces the problem of deciding on various concrete positions. As foreseen in the Rome NATO Ministerial meeting last May, most of our Allies will want our agreement on "criteria and objectives for substantive negotiations."

Within NATO, however, there are a wide variety of motives stimulating interest in MBFR, and a corresponding variety of objectives. Among the more important are the desire to establish some ceiling on Soviet forces as well as establish a floor on American forces, to begin a movement away from military confrontation in Central Europe to contribute to a trend

of detente, to resist expansions of national forces, to obtain financial relief, and to use mutual reductions as a cover for "inevitable" unilateral reductions. In short, there is a strong political strain in NATO's view of MBFR that tends to overshadow the arms control aspects.

Finally, there is a clear interrelationship between MBFR and the Alliance Defense Review (AD 70). Should a new consensus emerge in the Alliance on proper force levels and strategy, including some understanding on financial burdens, it will naturally affect attitudes and interest in mutual reductions. Above all, if American forces are reduced unilaterally, before an MBFR agreement, then the interest in negotiating further reductions may be circumscribed.

II. THE EFFECT OF MBFR ON THE PRESENT MILITARY BALANCE AND POLITICAL SITUATION

In order to evaluate any MBFR agreement, it is necessary first of all to establish what the military situation is now and likely to be in the absence of agreement.

The main criteria for such an evaluation are the three basic objectives for which NATO forces are maintained:

1. To deter attacks and threats of all kinds;
2. To cope with attacks that the Warsaw Pact force could mount;
3. To maintain the confidence of the Allies, the political cohesiveness of the Alliance, and other political purposes.

A. Warfighting Capabilities

Given the differences between NATO and the Warsaw Pact in organization, geographical scope, and non-comparability of various types of equipment and units, an obvious common denominator for MBFR is manpower.

-- Much of NATO's total manpower -- about half -- is in Southern Europe, while about 75% of the Warsaw Pact and Soviet forces are concentrated in Central and Northern Europe.

-- Thus, the Center Region (Benelux, Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia) where an attack would be most critical to the Alliance as a whole is of prime concern for MBFR:

-- The numerical balance in the Center Region is slightly in the Pact's favor, even if France is counted (820,000 for the Pact; 750,000 for NATO.)\*

-- Because of differences in organization, the Pact forces have a higher percentage in divisional manpower than NATO [434,000 (53%) to 347,000 (46%).]

-- NATO forces contain about 25-1/3 active divisions versus 56 Pact divisions; NATO divisions are substantially larger, however. (The number of Pact divisions includes 29 East European divisions, of which 11 are at low strength.)

On the Central Front, there is also a considerable difference in the national composition of the forces at M Day:

-- About 46% of Warsaw Pact forces are Soviet or "foreign troops," while in the same region, the NATO percentage of foreign troops is only 38%.

-- In terms of divisional manpower, foreign or stationed troops on the Warsaw Pact side are about 55% (all Soviet), while on the NATO side, they number about 40%. U.S. troops account for about 20% of the divisional manpower in the Central Region (even less if France is counted).

\* All of these comparisons include France.

-- Of NATO's indigenous forces 60% are West Germans (compared with 20% for the GDR).

### Equipment Levels

#### Tanks

Pact forces have available in the Center Region twice as many tanks as NATO forces (13,797 to 6,343); NATO forces have some qualitative advantages, and in defensive deployments might achieve kill ratio of about 3 to 1; NATO's inventory of anti-tank weapons (3,941) also partially offsets the Pact's numerical advantage in tanks.

#### Artillery

NATO, and the U. S. in particular, relies heavily on artillery for fire support of its maneuver battalions; NATO artillery is highly developed, uses modern fire control techniques, and is primarily self-propelled. Pact artillery is less developed in fire control, and is largely towed artillery. The Pact, consequently, relies less heavily than NATO on accurate artillery fire, but has a large numerical advantage (5,155 to 1,745, including rocket launchers) in the Center Region.

### Logistical Support and Supply

U. S. military planning is based on being able to conduct a prolonged conventional battle, with logistical support, which, when forward deployed, can sustain combat for an indefinite period. Actual stock levels, however, vary; our Allies maintain stocks at much lower levels than the U. S.

The Pact, on the other hand, plans for a short war, possibly turning nuclear in the earliest stages. Pact forces are thus not designed or supplied for conventional fighting over a protracted period.

Tactical Air

The Warsaw Pact has a numerical advantage over NATO in tactical aircraft deployed in the Center Region.\* One third to one half are Soviet. Both sides, however, have very large numbers of tactical aircraft worldwide that could be deployed in support of the Center Region. The numerical balance of these forces worldwide is 5800 for the Pact and 6500 for NATO.

NATO has a marked ground attack advantage over the Pact. However, a major deficiencies in NATO's air force is the lack of an improved anti-tank capability, and lack of shelters.

The Impact of Mobilization and Reinforcement

Both sides have a very substantial capability to reinforce.

-- The Soviets could build up most of their Center Region force in about 10 days, but would probably take about three weeks to generate and organize their full force of about 1.3 million men, 19,000 tanks, and nearly 3,900 aircraft. The Pact forces would not increase substantially over the next few months thereafter.

\* Estimates vary, depending on assumption of tactical employment. The high estimate is a 2.5-1 Pact advantage; the low estimate is about even. (For MBFR purposes, the high estimate would be used.)



-- Most of the manpower and almost all the equipment the West Europeans will contribute is also mobilized by M+15: 1.5 million men, tanks, and 2,000-3,800 tactical aircraft in the Center Region.

including the U.S.  
-- After 30 days of mobilization, NATO manpower/reaches about 2.1 million; tank strength is about 8,500 and tactical aircraft strength is estimated at from between 2,700 to 3,800. NATO's forces do not increase much after this until U.S. Army reserve divisions begin arriving. These are presently scheduled to arrive no earlier than M+120 days.

The Pact plans for and has the capability to mobilize and deploy its forces somewhat more rapidly than NATO, especially faster than the U.S. Within three weeks, the Pact has generated the forces it will use against the Center Region and has more than doubled the quantity of its forces. NATO's failure promptly to detect and react to initiation Pact mobilization would place NATO in a much more vulnerable position.

-- The major mobilization capability of the Pact stems from its maintenance of many low-strength Category II divisions, which provide a nucleus that can be quickly fleshed out with reservists and support equipment from the civilian economy.

-- While our NATO Allies mobilize about as rapidly as the Pact, their units have relatively less combat equipment, especially tanks. At M+30, the Allies will have mobilized 10% more men than the whole Warsaw Pact, but will have only one third as many tanks and fewer anti-tank weapons.

Moreover, beyond any of the mobilization numbers cited earlier, the Allies have large pools of reservists, totaling about 800,000, who are not assigned to units with equipment.

-- While the distance delays all U.S. reinforcements somewhat, a more significant limitation on U.S. contribution to a NATO buildup is that U.S. reserve divisions also spend 14 weeks being recalled, equipped, and trained before they start to deploy.

-- By M+30, the U.S. provides only about 15% of the manpower, but increases its share of combat aircraft to 50%; Soviet forces and equipment contribute about 60% of the Pact's forces after mobilization.

The Effects of MBFR

It is, of course, unreasonable to expect that MBFR agreements in themselves would correct NATO warfighting inadequacies, or gain some new advantage over the Pact. What we may be able to reasonably expect, if there is a serious desire on both sides to enhance security and stability, is a combination of trade-offs, much like SALT negotiations, in which certain

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disparities could be balanced against others. In the end, the situation created by an MBFR agreement could increase the confidence of both sides that their forces will not be overwhelmed. In this sense, then, MBFR could offer the opportunity to maintain and perhaps strengthen a situation of mutual deterrence.

The preceding comparisons of forces and weapons imbalances, and especially the effect of reinforcement, etc., allows us to identify some general propositions concerning the advantages and disadvantages to NATO of differing approaches and combinations.

#### Scope and Size of Reductions

Since both NATO and the Warsaw Pact forces in the Center Region are not grossly unequal in numbers, proportional reductions, of up to 10%, might not alter the warfighting capabilities of the residual forces compared to the present situation. With a larger percentage of its forces in supporting and logistical roles, NATO may be more able to absorb across-the-board cuts (e.g., combat, combat support, services) than the Warsaw Pact forces which have more men concentrated in direct combat units. It follows from this, however, that specification of the types of combat units for reduction begins to reduce NATO residual capabilities more than the Warsaw Pact:

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-- If Soviet forces in European Russia are excluded from any reductions, the Pact gains an obvious advantage;

-- If French forces are excluded, however, NATO gains a more immediate advantage, since French forces make up 10% of the potential NATO forward combat capabilities.

Across-the-board reductions, without specifying the types of units, may be more in NATO's interest, compared with more discrete reductions that concentrate on equal numbers in identifiable combat units, e. g., divisions, regiments.\*

In view of the highly uncertain balance that currently exists, and the doubts whether NATO could sustain a defense of the forward area, even assuming simultaneous mobilization, the size of reductions could be critical.

-- As the potential defender, committed to a forward defense, reduced NATO forces in the Center Region must defend a given area. As the attacking forces, the Soviet-Warsaw Pact can choose the main lines of concentration and still achieve favorable ratios with reduced manpower.

Force reductions in this situation tend to favor the aggressor, especially since the principal source of Soviet offensive strength is in its tank superiority rather than manpower.

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\* Verification difficulties of "thinning out" are dealt with later.

-- Current analysis does not permit us to establish with any precision or confidence a threshold beyond which reductions would be unacceptable.

Composition of Reductions

If there are, nevertheless, some reductions, the composition of force mixes on both sides indicates that proportional reductions of only stationed forces will result in a greater aggregate loss to the Pact than to NATO and (stationed forces comprise 38% of NATO's total in the FRG, Benelux, while 46% of the Pact's total in the GDR, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. )

-- NATO's indigenous forces - the FRG and France -- are clearly superior to the GDR, Czechs and Poles.

-- The largest aggregate loss to the Pact would follow from a percentage reduction of Soviet and American ground forces.

Equipment

Tank/Anti-Tank

By far the most important imbalance in ground forces is Soviet tank superiority:

-- Any MBFR agreement that did not attempt to cope with this problem would be of limited military value to the NATO side.

-- Reductions in manpower in the Center Region, even if acceptable on a purely man-for-man brigade-for-brigade comparison, become questionable in light of the potential for the Soviets to mass their armor. (To obtain 3 or 4 to 1 advantages on main attack axes.)

-- This problem is even more significant in light of the maldeployment of NATO tanks; there are more NATO tanks and armored vehicles in the CENTAG area, where the terrain is more defensible, than in the North German Plain, which is less defensible against armored attacks.

-- Proportional reductions in tanks, without specifying as to Commands (NORTHAG, CENTAG), might partly correct the imbalance. NATO could reduce its share in southern Germany while retaining the same tank forces in northern Germany.

On the other hand, because the tank/anti-tank imbalance is so critical, an agreement that caused the withdrawals of U. S. armor to the continental U. S. would be disadvantageous, both in the present situation and after mobilization.

-- Moreover, there would come a point at which the dependence of the remaining NATO tank forces on terrain advantages and anti-tank weapons would become so great that forward defense against a mass tank attack

becomes doubtful.

-- Any restrictions on redistribution of tank forces after reduction would also be highly disadvantageous.

-- Finally, an agreement might preclude NATO from redressing the tank imbalance, through unilateral options NATO may very much wish to exercise (more light anti-tank weapons, improved anti-tank air capabilities, more tanks).

Artillery

There is no clear advantage to be gained from reducing, on a one-for-one basis, superior and more sophisticated NATO artillery for Pact artillery.

-- It might be argued, however, that since traditional Pact doctrine calls for massed artillery attacks to prepare breakthroughs, that large reductions in the total number of Pact artillery tubes could be advantageous.

Tactical Air

Analysis (from NSSM 84) suggests that the outcome of a tactical air battle is uncertain, and that tactical air is not likely to play a decisive role in the early stages of conventional land battle.

-- Since NATO has newer aircraft than the Pact in Eastern Europe, this is an area for possible reductions on an equal percentage basis; the question of comparability of models is highly complicated (NATO deploys 12 different models of aircraft) as is the question of comparable missions.

-- U.S. aircraft returned to U.S. bases could be quickly redeployed; some limiting factors are tanker availability, readiness posture, Pact counterair, the availability of airfields and their potential vulnerability.

-- Vulnerability of unsheltered NATO aircraft is an argument for partial withdrawal (assuming no further shelter programs).

-- Because most NATO aircraft are dual capable and have both conventional and nuclear missions, one-for-one reductions would be qualitatively disadvantageous; the superiority in payload and range of U.S. /NATO air also casts doubt on proportional reductions.

-- As in the case of tanks, asymmetrical reductions would seem more advantageous for the NATO side.

-- As in the case of tanks, however, MBFR agreements that limited the freedom to exchange types of aircraft, especially to improve NATO anti-tank capabilities would exclude an important NATO option.

#### Reinforcement

In MBFR terms, it is difficult to see how an agreement dealing with reductions and limitations on manpower alone, or even including equipment, would significantly affect reinforcement capabilities on the Warsaw Pact side.

-- Reinforcement capabilities could be influenced by the demobilization of reduced units; if totally demobilized on the NATO side, however, the Pact, which reinforces by filling out understrength divisions, would gain significantly. American units returned to the U.S. and demobilized would constitute a distinct net reduction in NATO capabilities.



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-- Prepositioning of equipment also affects reinforcement capabilities; if permitted it would add to the already vulnerable and overcrowded U. S. / NATO supply positions.

-- On the other hand, denial of prepositioning would place new burdens on NATO airlift and sealift capabilities, while the Soviet-Warsaw Pact LOCs capabilities could move the additional equipment back without lengthening re-enforcement time.

The most important aspect of an MBFR agreement as it relates to reinforcement might be the measures that added to the chances of receiving early and definitive warnings:

-- Since a lag in mobilization could be a disaster for NATO, the establishment of observer teams or posts, restrictions on maneuvers and limitations of re-entry rights (especially for the USSR) advance notifications of maneuvers could all be a positive advantage.\*

IN SUMMARY:

Manpower cuts alone may be the least risky for NATO, and numerically advantageous if applied in equal percentage to stationed forces.

-- In terms of residual capabilities, an advantageous reduction may be to reduce Soviet for American forces in Germany because the residual NATO and Warsaw Pact forces are more favorable to NATO.

\* Further discussed under Verification.

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-- NATO's advantage in MBFR could be improved if there were provisions to monitor reductions and re-entry to improve early warning capabilities.

Symmetrical reductions in tanks or aircraft hold little if any net gain for NATO, even though the absolute reductions would be greater for the Warsaw Pact.

-- NATO's principal advantage would be through asymmetrical reductions in tanks and perhaps aircraft.

-- An MBFR agreement that froze tank and aircraft deployment could exclude the two most important areas for unilateral efforts to improve NATO capabilities.

All of this illustrates the central dilemma of MBFR agreements: symmetrical reductions on a large scale could be quite risky and disadvantageous to NATO in the vital Center Region; however, asymmetrical reductions that might correct imbalances and provide some guarantees of a more stable balance raise important problems of negotiability, unless suitable compensatory trade-offs can be determined.

NATO's principal strengths, in tactical nuclear weapons and in naval deployments, could be the only areas for NATO reductions in return for Soviet reductions to achieve a balance in conventional ground force capabilities.

All things considered, a limitation that froze the present precarious status quo in the Center Region might be more advantageous than the uncertainty

and risks of reductions schemes, unless an agreement could be devised, negotiated and verified that reduced each side to roughly equal levels of manpower and equipment.

Nuclear Forces: NATO and the Warsaw Pact

NATO's MBFR planning has paid little attention to the inclusion of nuclear weapons in an agreement. The approach has been to assume that some of the reduced units would include their equipment as well, and some of this would be nuclear delivery systems. Beyond this, there has been no real analysis of the consequences of such reductions either on NATO strategy or capabilities.

The major problem is that NATO, including the U.S., is highly uncertain of what a limited nuclear war strategy should be. There is no overall NATO plan for limited nuclear war (by target group, yield, number of weapons or geographical group). One reason for this is political. In the debates over approving the political guidelines for first use of nuclear weapons by NATO, it was apparent that U.S. and European views were in almost direct conflict. The Europeans find it almost impossible to conceive of a "limited" nuclear war; the damage to Western Europe would be intolerable in their view. Moreover, they are highly suspicious that agreement on a precise concept of nuclear war limited to Europe implies a degradation of the overall deterrent because it raises doubts the U.S. would be willing to continue the escalation to

general strategic attacks. Thus, there has been an effort in NATO to discover other concepts such as "demonstrative" use of nuclear weapons, but without much serious thought of the credibility of such a tactic.

The present situation becomes more nightmarish when NATO uncertainties and confusion are compared with estimates that the Pact, rather than accepting some limits on nuclear warfare, would respond by an attack on the rear areas in Europe. In other words, the USSR and its allies may well be deterred by the prospects of any use of nuclear weapons, but their doctrine and planning suggests they may not be deterred from expanding the scope of nuclear warfare in Europe once it begins, and indeed may even be committed by their forces as well as their doctrine to such escalation.

Even if the NATO's doctrinal problems could be resolved before MBFR negotiations, there are the immense problems of trying to reduce two disparate nuclear forces to common denominators for comparison and potential reductions or limitations. For example, NATO has tube artillery in its nuclear arsenals, but the Soviets do not. From the forward edge of the battlefield NATO has a great numerical superiority in shorter range weapons (up to 25 km), while the Pact has an advantage in the ranges of 25-100 km, and the two forces are roughly even in systems with ranges of 100-500 km. The Pact has more weapons in ranges beyond 500 km.

Both sides initially have sufficient stockpiles to strike all targets which they could locate. (The Pact may have a greater post-exchange capability.)

#### Theater Nuclear Strike Forces

The U.S. has been primarily responsible for inventing the concept of "theater" nuclear war, in part as a political device to give the Alliance the appearance of being able to wage another level of nuclear war short of all-out exchange of intercontinental arsenals. Since the USSR has deployed a large MR/IRBM force targetted on Europe, it is psychologically important to the Europeans to believe they have some counter.

NATO theater nuclear force is supposed to have an independent role, but is tied to the US SIOP and supplementary to it. Even if it were used separately the residual Soviet capabilities after a first strike by NATO theater nuclear forces could destroy half of Europe's urban population and one third of Europe's total population. Moreover, Pact "theater" forces could be highly effective against NATO's war support capability. With fewer than 100 nuclear warheads the Pact could close NATO's major ports, cripple its depot system and destroy as many as 3,000 nuclear warheads.

Nevertheless, it must be conceded that the existence of a nuclear force capable of reaching the Soviet heartland, and ostensibly under the control of

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NATO (SACEUR) has a deterrent effect. Moreover, the fact that France or the UK alone (SLBMs) could destroy at least Moscow and Leningrad may, in the end, be more important than all the comparisons of warhead balances, weapons systems, etc.

The Effect of MBFR

The only basis for an MBFR agreement in the nuclear area would seem to be a situation in which an agreement first of all achieved a more stable conventional balance, thereby reducing the probability that nuclear weapons would have to be employed quite early. Though this may not necessarily be in Moscow's interest, if NATO added to a conventional limitation and reduction package a large reduction of tactical or theater nuclear forces, the Soviets might see a bargain.

-- Such a package might be based on range limitations, so that each side might retain only those weapons that could be used in direct battlefield support. This would mean limitations and reductions if not complete elimination of the Soviet MR/IRBM force, mutual withdrawals of bombers, and withdrawal of Sergeant and Pershing missiles and presumably the French and British nuclear forces.

-- More extreme would be the withdrawal of all nuclear weapons from Central Europe, this is, of course, an old Soviet-Polish proposal; it has been consistently rejected by the West because it excludes Soviet MR/IRBMs

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in Russia. However, if there is no assurance that the outcome of waging war in Europe with nuclear weapons would result in an outcome favorable to NATO, this approach may be worth reconsidering, if it is linked to the context of a conventional balance more favorable to NATO than the present one, and attacks the problem of MR/IRBMs.

-- There is a middle ground of limitations on certain kinds of weapons. It is difficult to see how the NATO forces can be increased or improved to any advantage. Thus, agreeing to ceilings at the present or lower levels would seem to be acceptable, though the main benefit, if any, would seem to be psychological and political. Such an option might emphasize retention of highly survivable systems in limited numbers.

In Summary:

-- On the NATO side, nuclear doctrine and the role of tactical and theater nuclear forces are so uncertain as to suggest that NATO is in no way prepared to negotiate in this area with the Warsaw Pact, but should, instead concentrate on putting its own house in order. Yet the fact that NATO, as such, does have large nuclear forces in Europe may be the only real concern for the Soviets that would make an asymmetrical agreement even remotely negotiable.

NAVAL FORCES

Limitation and reductions of naval forces has been almost totally ignored

in MBFR. Yet it is an area of interest in trying to devise an agreement that tries to use NATO's limited sources of strength to bargain for adjustments in areas of NATO weaknesses.

Reduction, that is destruction, of naval forces, has meant little since the 1920s and 1930s. And withdrawals to certain areas poses limited advantages. Yet in terms of NATO concern, some limits on the operating areas of Soviet attack submarines, for example, might be advantageous.

-Another area of possible limitations or reductions worth considering are the NATO naval forces in the Mediterranean. Leaving aside important political considerations, it can be argued that the NATO (US) naval superiority in the Mediterranean is waning, that the carrier forces deployed there are vulnerable. On the other hand, the Soviets may view the continuing presence of carrier aircraft capable of reaching the USSR with sufficient concern to consider some trade-offs. One possibility would be the withdrawal of the US, UK and the USSR from the Mediterranean. Alternatively, limits might be negotiated on the number and types of combat ships and submarines deployed.

Although this area has been ignored under MBFR, it could be considered in the search for reductions in return for a balance in conventional force capabilities.



B. Deterrence .

1. The Concept of Deterrence as Distinct from Warfighting Capability. To deter a Soviet attack in Europe, NATO must be able to convince the Soviets that it can and will effectively counter military actions either by defeating an attack directly or by exacting costs (in the area of the initial attack or more widely) in excess of the advantage which might be gained by a successful attack. A perfect warfighting capability, able to defeat all possible attacks without significant expansion of the conflict, would be the perfect deterrent because no attack could succeed in attaining its goals.

In practical terms, of course, deterrence is a complex of factors of which warfighting capability is only one, although a major element.

Among the elements which contribute to deterrence are:

-- Soviet perception of NATO's resolve, i. e., its willingness to use in timely fashion the forces theoretically available to it for responding to an attack.

-- The Soviets could doubt the ability of NATO to agree on a course of action, especially where it involved a widening of the war and an exaltation of risks. In particular, the Soviets might expect differences between the US, on the one hand, and the Europeans, on the other. Similarly, the Soviets may see a likely source of political indecisiveness and alliance disunity in the fact

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that a war in the center of Europe, if it were to come, would probably be a result of a crisis over Germany -- an issue which latently, at least, divides the West.

The impact of BFR on Soviet perceptions of NATO unity and resolve seems likely to be determined more by the politics of the agreement and the process of negotiating it, than by its specific terms. On the one hand, a BFR agreement as a part of a general European detente could presage a general lessening of a Western sense of the need for a common front against a potential threat. On the other hand, if there are, as there seem to be, strong pressures within Western Europe for detente and strong pressures in the U.S. for some withdrawal of U.S. forces from Europe, a BFR agreement could be a part of a "Western settlement" which would establish a collective defense policy and purpose appropriate to new conditions. The result could be a more unified NATO than would result from a failure to reach an agreement strongly desired by some of the allies or from a unilateral U.S. troop withdrawal.

-- A second factor is the impact of uncertainty on Soviet assessment of the advisability of initiating an attack. The Soviets, in the role of attacker, may evaluate NATO forces and the likely results of a clash much more favorably to NATO than does NATO itself, simply because they will, if they are prudent, tend to consider the "worst case."

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This may mean that a NATO force posture which, from NATO's point of view, looks "marginal" against our projections of Soviet capability -- may appear very different to the Soviets, and that they would require greater margins of superiority for the attack than we would regard as necessary for them. For example, in our analysis of Soviet attacks we assume that it would suffice if the Soviets positioned forces approximately equal to NATO's along the frontier outside the primary attack areas. There is intelligence evidence, however, that the Soviets in their planning believe they require 2-1 superiority in "quiet" sectors of the front for security.

Of still greater importance in deterring Soviet attacks in Europe is the uncertainty about the chance that the U. S. would respond to a Soviet attack in Europe with large scale use of nuclear weapons. From a rational point of view, there might be strong reasons for Moscow to doubt the U. S. would start on a course toward general U. S. -Soviet nuclear war even as a response to an apparently successful Soviet attack in Europe. The losses to the USSR of such a war would be so great, however, that even a relatively small chance the U. S. would actually resort to a large-scale nuclear war might make the Soviets draw back from an attack which otherwise appeared attractive.

An MBFR agreement that reduced American forces in large numbers might suggest to the USSR that the U. S. would be increasingly unlikely to initiate the use of nuclear weapons or escalate to a general exchange if Soviet

forces had achieved a major conventional breakthrough, especially in Northern Germany where there are no U.S. forces. However, the existence of small, but not insignificant, French and British nuclear forces independent of U.S. control, and possible doubts about U.S. ability to keep all nuclear weapons out of German hands in a situation in which a collapse of conventional military defense of Germany seemed imminent presumably add to Soviet uncertainties about nuclear escalation following the beginning of a conventional war in Europe.

2. Factors in Deterrence in Europe

The Level of Forces. While warfighting capabilities unquestionably contribute to a credible deterrence, there is no historical reason to believe that there is necessarily a direct cause-and-effect relationship between adjustments in force levels and the maintenance or breakdown of deterrence. Deterrence failed in Korea after we reduced our forces and implied that Korea was no longer within our sphere of security interests. Deterrence has been maintained, in the sense that there has been no Soviet attack against NATO since 1945, despite very great fluctuations in the level of forces on the two sides. Indeed, more Europeans probably feel more secure from Soviet attack now than a decade ago, even though U.S. forces have declined, and the Soviets have 5 divisions in Czechoslovakia. Even superior forces are no guarantee against successful attack -- Nazi Germany was numerically inferior on the Western Front at the time of the

Blitzkrieg in 1940, not to mention the German attack on the USSR in 1941. However, these observations establish little more than that absolute and relative force levels are not the sole determinant of deterrence -- a proposition few would advance seriously.

From the broader perspective of deterrence, however, the most significant finding from analysis of warfighting potential may be that from the Soviet point of view, NATO's conventional capability is clearly not so weak that the USSR can be assured of success. This is particularly true of the circumstances without mobilization. Moreover, the USSR's main advantage comes after about 3-4 weeks of mobilization of both Soviet and East European divisions and their movement to forward positions -- a process never tested on either side. That combat would start in the manner and time of Soviet choosing is a significant advantage but a risky basis for the Soviet marshals guaranteeing the force ratios necessary for success.

-- NATO's military forces on the scene play a role in deterrence beyond their contribution to straightforward military power because they are an important symbol of the cohesiveness of the alliance and an earnest of the commitment of the allies to collective defense. This is particularly the case with respect to U.S. forces in Europe and the Mediterranean. Not only are these forces visible sign of U.S. political commitment to the defense of Europe, their presence in forward positions also means that the U.S. would be involved

in the military defense of Europe from the start and would suffer a serious immediate military loss if Europe were overrun. BFR agreements, even those which would cut stationed forces more than national ones, would not bring U.S. force levels in Europe below those likely to be sufficient to meet these symbolic and "hostage" functions -- at least not in Soviet eyes.

However, both the East and our Allies might interpret our seeking preferential cuts in "stationed" forces as a sign of weakened U.S. commitment to Europe, lowering the significance of the residual U.S. presence.

The U.S. -Soviet Strategic Relationship. A major element in deterrence of a Soviet attack on Western Europe is believed by many -- particularly in Europe--- to be Soviet uncertainty lest an attack in Europe on the scale necessary to produce significant pay-offs would ultimately lead also to general nuclear war between the U.S. and the USSR.

For obvious reasons the USSR could doubt the credibility of massive U.S. nuclear attack as a response to a conventional attack in Europe:

-- As the USSR has deployed a large number of ICBMs, it has become increasingly certain that Europe and the U.S. could not escape immense destruction, even if the U.S. struck first. This fact has gradually eroded the evident credibility -- and with it the "rational" grounds for Soviet uncertainty -- of a massive U.S. nuclear response to all but the most large-scale Soviet attacks in Europe and perhaps not even to those.

-- Moreover, some believe that the advent of strategic parity -- and the willingness of the U.S. to acknowledge it formally in a SALT treaty -- will further undermine deterrence in Europe. With the establishment of an undoubted, and possibly formally acknowledged "assured destruction" posture for the USSR, they argue, the inhibition of the SIOP will be gone from Soviet planning in Europe and the imbalance of conventional forces magnified in effect.

Others believe that the impact of numerical strategic parity on deterrence in Europe is not likely to be great. They maintain that since at least the early 1960s Soviet strategic power has been sufficient that a U.S. massive nuclear strike on the USSR has not been a "rational" U.S. option. Those who hold this view tend to doubt that U.S. strategic capability has played a central role in deterrence in Europe, at least after the Soviets broke the U.S. nuclear monopoly on an effective scale. If the Soviets were nonetheless deterred from an attack in Europe by the possibility of a massive U.S. nuclear attack, it must, according to this view, have been because of a concern that in the extreme crisis accompanying a major ground war in Europe, nations would not act wholly "rationally"; a process of nuclear escalation could ensue either as a result of deliberate US and Soviet actions or because the situation became in some sense "uncontrolled." The possibility of such an uncontrolled escalation is not, they argue, importantly affected by "parity": what was always irrational but possible and terrible remains so.

A BFR agreement affecting conventional forces would be unlikely to have much effect on this aspect of European deterrence. Agreements focusing on nuclear weapons and delivery systems would, presumably be aimed at stabilizing the nuclear relationship in Europe and reducing the chances of unintended or unnecessarily rapid nuclear escalation. If a fear of a fundamentally irrational process of escalation is an important element in deterrence, however, such an agreement could, in theory, actually make deterrence less sure. However, any "European SALT" or other BFR agreement intended to raise the nuclear threshold would be likely to leave ample nuclear weapons on both sides for nuclear reactions, even if such thought unlikely or even "irrational."

Presumably all would agree that whatever the credibility of a strategic nuclear response to an attack in Europe, it is greater if the scale of the attack is greater, so that vital NATO interests are more obviously threatened. If an MBFR agreement meant that NATO would be unable to deal with even relatively small conventional attacks -- attacks so small that no nuclear response to them could possibly be regarded as credible -- a gap would be opened in deterrence. However, it seems implausible that agreement that NATO would enter an MBFR depriving the alliance of the capability to deal conventionally -- given time and continued limitation of the conflict on the Soviet side -- with small attacks.



Tactical nuclear weapons.

From the point of view of deterrence, tactical nuclear weapons are probably less important for their direct contribution to warfighting capability than for their use in setting off a process of rapid nuclear escalation. (For example, from exercises and other sources, it is apparently the Soviets' military doctrine that they would respond to "battlefield" use of nuclear weapons by NATO (which they expect at a very early stage) not by a "battlefield" response of their own, but by a quasi-strategic nuclear strike at rear-area targets in Europe. Whether the Soviets would make the political decisions to expand the nuclear arena to France and the UK is very debatable.

-- If one concludes that conventional defense capability is unlikely to be much affected by BFR, the tactical nuclear threshold should be similarly unaffected, and its contribution to nuclear deterrence of conventional attack would remain as before the agreement.

-- If one concludes that a particular BFR agreement is likely to erode conventional capability and that the interplay of conventional capability and the nuclear threshold are the dominant factors in deterrence, this would mean that for attacks to be deterred, there must be a corresponding increase in the fear of nuclear escalation -- a fear which may become increasingly incredible as the scale of the attack decreases. However, while it is clear that the credibility of a nuclear response depends greatly on what is at stake, it is not clear that it depends very much on how big an attack is required to

pose a given level of threat to NATO interests.

Theater nuclear forces. Between the possibilities of a European conventional attack setting off a massive U.S. -Soviet nuclear exchange and a war remaining limited to conventional arms (perhaps with tactical nuclear weapons employed in battlefield areas only) lies the case of "theater nuclear wars" in which nuclear strikes are made in rear areas of Europe, on both sides, by nuclear-capable forces available in Europe. The principal forces available for such exchanges are Soviet IR/MRBMs and medium bombers, the British and French nuclear forces and, in principle, U.S. forces at the disposal of SACEUR for strategic missions.

From the point of view of BFR, it is sufficient to say that no agreement -- even a "European SALT" focusing on theater strategic forces -- is likely to deny either side the delivery capability necessary to make such exchanges possible. A properly constructed "European SALT" might be able to stabilize the deterrent relationship of the theater nuclear forces on each side visa- viz the similar forces on the other side. It seems unlikely, however, that such an agreement would have much effect on the linkage between initiation of such exchanges and conventional ( and battlefield nuclear) warfare.

### 3. Politics and Deterrence

Deterrence does not exist in a vacuum, isolated from the basic sources of the conflict to be deterred. An attack may seem worth the risks involved

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if the product of success is one which is very important to the attacker, while the same risks would deter a play for a lesser payoff. Therefore, deterrence in Europe -- and the impact of BFR on the balance of deterrence -- depends on Soviet goals and purposes as well as on the elements of deterrence identified above.

At the time NATO was formed, many believed that the Soviet Union was actively seeking to take effective control of Western Europe, as it had of Eastern Europe, and that it was quite prepared to use military force to that end. Many both in Europe and the U.S. believe that it is still true today that without a NATO military capability sufficient to create a viable possibility of unacceptable military costs -- whether imposed conventionally or by nuclear weapons -- the Soviets would revive active efforts to seize Western Europe.

Others believe, that whatever may have been the case when NATO was formed, the Soviets have few foreign policy goals today which they would see as likely to be served by an attack on Western Europe, especially one in which they would conquer a Europe reduced to a shambles by the short, heavily nuclear war for which their forces are basically configured. In any event, according to this view that the Soviets may see important advantages to themselves especially vis-a-vis Germany, in the existence of NATO, the U.S. leadership role, and even the development of the Common Market. They believe the Soviets find many other parts of the world, e. g., the Middle East,

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far more inviting as theaters for military adventures. They would argue that there is little reason to believe the Soviet Union has any desire to attack Western Europe militarily and that no change in Western military strength short perhaps of the creation of a total military vacuum in Europe or the appearance of a credible, i. e., German, threat to attack the USSR is likely to have much effect on that situation.

Those who hold the latter view argue that a BFR agreement, coming as part of a general round of agreements -- SALT, Ostpolitik, new Berlin agreement -- could be an important part of a general European detente, ratifying the status quo in Europe and confirming what they regard as the present range of Soviet objectives in Western Europe. They believe that in the current European political situation, radically transformed from that of 1949, the continued high level of military confrontation in Europe is not only a senseless burden on both sides but an anomaly which is potentially, at least, an independent source of tension and misunderstanding.

Those who hold the other view of Soviet objectives take, naturally, a very different view of the possible impact of a BFR agreement on the activity with which the Soviets would pursue those objectives. They emphasize that any weakening of NATO defense capability which might flow from force reductions or the political atmosphere would offer the Soviets a tempting

opportunity for exploitation. They caution that the process of negotiation itself could weaken NATO defense policy. They believe that the military forces of NATO have, by their capability and their manifestation of resolve, contributed to deterrence and a lowering of tension.

Whatever the nature of Soviet objectives and their sense of the relevance of military attack in Europe as a means to achieve them, it is clear that events and forces outside Western Europe, such as the effects on the internal stability of the Eastern European regimes, the reaction of China and the effects of a military attack in Europe on Soviet efforts in other parts of the world have an effect on, or would be regarded by the Soviets as relevant to, any decision to launch an attack.

The East Europeans contribute some 40 percent of the manpower and equipment to the total Warsaw Pact build up. Their reliability thus is critical, and, some would argue, quite doubtful. Czechoslovakia is the most obvious case in point. If the trend toward nationalism and autonomy continues to grow in Eastern Europe, the net effect may be to dilute the absolute decision-making power of the USSR in vital matters of war and peace, particularly where Soviet policy requires not merely acquiescence, but active participation from the other Pact nations.

Enough has been written about the Sino-Soviet conflict and its restriction on Soviet freedom of action. Suffice to say that tensions with China drain Soviet military resources of all kinds. What China would actually do in European War no one can say, but the Soviets can scarcely gamble on Peking's help or

benevolent neutrality. Indeed, as long as the Sino-Soviet conflict is not mitigated or resolved, it may constitute a deterrent against Soviet actions in Europe independent of NATO's relative military capability.

An MBFR agreement, including the process of negotiating it, would probably increase the complexities of Soviet decision making both in regard to its relations with Eastern European members of the Warsaw Pact and in terms of relations with China. Many observers argue that one Soviet motive for a reasonably serious approach to MBFR would be to reduce tensions on its Western flank in order to deal with China and, possibly, even to free Soviet forces for redeployment from West to East. While this may be, it is nevertheless doubtful that MBFR in itself would be the decisive factor in the Soviet view of the risks of "dealing with" China. The Soviet leaders would probably consider that they need much broader Western understanding that they should have a free hand in China -- this would mean primarily an understanding with the U.S.

In sum, deterrence of Soviet attack in Europe is sufficiently complex that the changes resulting from a mutually acceptable MBFR are highly unlikely to make enough difference to shift decisively the perception of deterrence by either side. The major unresolved question, however, is whether MBFR could contribute to a chain of events in Europe and in U.S. - Soviet relations which, at some point, would lead to a reconsideration in Moscow of credibility of Western capabilities and resolve, of the benefits of military action against Western Europe by the Pact, and of the risks of all-out nuclear war flowing from such action.

C. MBFR and the Politics of Europe

Military forces in Europe serve a variety of political ends.

Soviet forces in Eastern Europe not only threaten and deter NATO, but also reinforce Soviet political leadership in Eastern Europe. In the West, NATO forces, especially in Germany, betoken the stake of the West Europeans in the German question and in some degree give each a voice in determining the structure, leadership and direction of Western Europe.

NATO

NATO has served not only as a device for linking Western Europe to the U.S. nuclear umbrella -- a linkage which, in European eyes, is weakened by unilateral U.S. reductions -- but also as a frame of reference for intra-European cooperation on strategic and military questions.

The question is whether in a situation of increasing detente, characterized by SALT and the West German Ostpolitik, accompanied by reductions in military establishments, this latter function of NATO would suffer. The answer would appear to depend upon the degree to which the military reductions reflected a NATO consensus. A series of unilateral reductions

in Germany, undertaken in the face of conflicting views on how far it is safe to relax defense efforts, clearly would tend to weaken the NATO framework and might cause nations to concentrate on national, bilateral or smaller-scale collective defense efforts.

On the other hand, it is difficult to see how reductions which resulted from an alliance consensus, and particularly which resulted from negotiations between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, would weaken the Western alliance, including intra-European defense cooperation and European solidarity with the U.S., at least in the short run.

The same analysis appears to be valid for judging the impact of force reductions on European unity vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. Reductions which were seen within NATO as weakening the deterrent value of U.S. forces in Europe and eroding European self-defense efforts through NATO might encourage bilateral attempts to reach accommodation with the Soviet Union. Reductions which resulted from agreement within the alliance would probably have no adverse impact on European unity vis-a-vis the Soviet Union.

#### The European View of Strategic Deterrence

Europeans believe that strategic nuclear deterrence works in Europe. European governments can and do ascribe all sorts of motivations to Soviet leadership which would lead to the conclusion that the Soviet Union



will not attack Western Europe. But, the most basic and least contested of these reasons is Soviet fear of nuclear war. At the heart of the defense thinking of every Western European government lies the conviction that a vision of nuclear catastrophe should appear before the Soviet leadership whenever it is tempted to consider a move against Western Europe; Moscow should never be allowed to believe that it could invade Western Europe without risking the devastation of the USSR.

The transition from a strategic condition distinguished by U.S. superiority to one characterized by a closer balance of forces has not escaped European awareness. The alternatives, however, to continuing European dependence on the United States are not apparent, and the Europeans have always focused more on the political and psychological effects of the risk of a U.S. nuclear response to an attack in Europe than on the complex strategic analyses favored by Americans.

All strategic analysis beyond the simple proposition that an attack on Europe should pose an unacceptable risk of general nuclear war becomes somewhat academic for most European statesmen. The value of a strategic concept tends to be measured in terms of its effect on the nuclear deterrent. European politicians, reflecting quite accurately the sentiments of their constituents, are not interested in making nuclear war more rational or conventional defense more feasible -- they want to make war in Europe impossible. Consequently, by keeping it linked with general nuclear war

between the U.S. and USSR, there is little European interest in buying either conventional or nuclear forces to improve war outcomes or give NATO "flexibility." Many Europeans tend to think of their own military efforts as of secondary significance and of all NATO forces based in Europe as important primarily because of their potential for triggering the use of the American strategic nuclear force. Conventional forces, especially European ones, are important perhaps in a Western context and useful in keeping the U.S. formally in the Alliance, but relatively meaningless in terms of deterrence or their value in the event of war with the Soviet Union.

Contrary to U.S. views, European governments are not interested in theater nuclear strike forces or tactical nuclear weapons as a means of defeating an enemy attack. Theater nuclear weapons are important to them as a useful link in the chain of deterrence -- a substantial U.S. strategic nuclear strike force explicitly committed to NATO whose use should precipitate a U.S. -Soviet strategic nuclear war.

However, critical to European deterrent theory is the requirement that all U.S. nuclear strike forces be fully committed to European defense. European governments, therefore, do not warm to ideas involving setting aside a portion of the U.S. nuclear strike force for the defense of Europe,

with the remainder committed to the defense of American soil. They do not, in other words, like the concept of an escalatory stage which might permit Washington and Moscow to make a peace over the ashes of Europe.

Europeans reject the idea of a major conventional war in Europe, but they seem to have abandoned the "trip-wire" or "plate glass" strategy. NATO governments now appear to accept the idea that NATO conventional forces should be able to cope with Soviet limited aggression as well as with hostilities arising from accident or miscalculation without resorting to nuclear weapons. It is not, however, entirely clear to what extent the Europeans have endorsed this view simply as a verbal concession to the U.S. Nor is it clear where various governments might draw the line between "limited" and "major" aggression. It is certain, however, that most European NATO governments today are committed to the principle that NATO should maintain a conventional force at least sufficient to demonstrate its will to resist, to drive up the ante for any potential attacker, and thus to establish the nature of any Warsaw Pact attack.

These differences between U.S. and European views of deterrence in Europe have, naturally, an impact on views on MBFR:

-- Since the Europeans do not think conventional defense of Europe feasible, nor the attempt to achieve it strategically or politically desirable, they are not likely to regard the rather marginal impact of MBFR agreements on NATO conventional defense capabilities as significant, if the agreements are otherwise acceptable. The U. S. and European forces which would be left after any likely MBFR agreement would be sufficient to meet European conceptions of their mission.

-- The Europeans are concerned to maintain U. S. force levels in Europe against pressures for unilateral U. S. force cuts not so much because they think the cuts would degrade conventional defense capability -- which they think marginal already, -- but because they fear all parties concerned would take such cuts as a sign of lessened U. S. commitment to Europe. They may, therefore, think that it is extremely important that any "inevitable" U. S. cuts be carried out in the framework of an agreement with the other side, so that they can be viewed as signs of improved conditions in Europe and not as a unilateral U. S. disengagement. Moreover, they may hope that an agreement to "cover" the cuts the U. S. might otherwise now make unilaterally would establish the "principle" that the U. S. should not cut forces in Europe without agreement on matching cuts by the Soviets. If these are their views, and to the extent they think substantial U. S. cuts "inevitable," they will put a high priority on advancing proposals which are likely to be acceptable to the Soviets.

-- The European states are no more immune than the U.S. from domestic pressures to cut defense spending. Their strategic doctrine teaches that they could do so safely -- that it is the U.S. nuclear force, not Europe's "outnumbered" armies which deters the Soviet army. But, they recognize that the U.S. regards their forces as a measure of their own self-defense efforts "justifying" U.S. commitments to the defense of Europe and, more immediately, that unilateral European force cuts would make it altogether impossible to resist U.S. desires to withdraw forces. They may see in MBFR a device to legitimize the cuts they want to make, both by providing for specific reductions and by contributing a further element to the "detente" in Europe, with its prospects of settlement, reconciliation, and reduced threat of war.

-- In some sense, the Europeans -- and, in their view at least, the Soviets -- may regard the stability of the U.S. force level in Europe as more significant than its absolute height. Even if an MBFR agreement could not be manipulated to convert a ceiling on U.S. force levels into a floor, it might be seen as providing a way to deal with future pressures for U.S. force cuts through some mechanism which would focus on the state of affairs in Europe, not on U.S. -Allied defense policy differences.

-- Most important, the Europeans would want MBFR to take a form which could reduce uncertainties about possible nuclear escalation following an attack. While they presumably would accept proposals intended to reduce the danger of unintended nuclear use (especially of tactical weapons) and would, on the basis of their views in SALT consultations, be likely to support measures which put a control on the Soviet IR/MRBM force, they would probably not embrace readily proposals which looked liable to create a "nuclear firebreak" between Europe and the U. S. or those which put constraints on the independent nuclear forces which seemed to the Europeans more severe than those placed on the forces of the U. S. and the USSR.

Forces deployed in Europe, particularly those of the U. S. and the USSR, also serve other functions in Europe:

-- In the eyes of the Soviets, the Europeans and perhaps also the Americans, American forces in Europe are the most important tie holding NATO together.

-- Many Europeans, and perhaps also the Soviets and even some Germans, see the existence of an integrated NATO defense system, with a large U. S. contingent, as a key to keeping Germany from again becoming a threat to stability in Europe.

-- The Bundeswehr is an important element in NATO's defense and a symbol of Germany's "rejoining" Europe. However, a significant expansion of the force, or a weakening of its integration with NATO would be a matter of concern to many Western European governments, as well as to the Soviet Union.

-- The role of the French armed forces in NATO and in Europe is a reflection of the ambiguities of French foreign policy. Two of France's five active army divisions are in the Rhineland on the basis of a bilateral arrangement worked out in 1966 following France's withdrawal from integrated NATO Command. NATO considers these divisions -- and the other French forces -- vaguely part of its "reserves" and conducts contingency planning with French staffs on their possible employment. France's growing nuclear force is an important element in analysis of strategic nuclear problems in Europe, as will its small tactical nuclear force be when deployed in Germany.

-- Soviet forces are, obviously, critical factors in the internal stability and pro-Soviet orientation of the regimes of Eastern Europe, and their continuing presence limits how far the Soviets would go in MBFR.

-- Some of the East Europeans, however, see in MBFR political inhibitions on the use of Soviet power against them.

The nature of these functions and the ability of forces to play their roles could change in the political situation which might accompany a general European detente of which MBFR could be a part. However, no likely BFR agreement would have much direct impact on these aspects of the role of military forces in Europe. In particular, Soviet post-reduction forces would be adequate for internal security functions, absent severe constraints on movement of forces within the area of reduction.

European concerns -- to maintain an effective defense posture and retain substantial American forces, but promote an East-West detente in Europe -- provide limited scope for the substance of MBFR. None of the Europeans want or would accept deep cuts in American forces, even to gain a major withdrawal of Soviet forces. Few, if any European leaders expect that the political situation in Eastern Europe will allow the Soviets to consider anything more than tokenism in MBFR.\* Finally, most Europeans would be concerned over an MBFR arrangement that greatly inflated the political and military role of West German forces.

Thus, MBFR is by-and-large a political affair for the Europeans, (including the East Europeans). They would see in a successful negotiation, assuming essential security was somehow preserved, a new signal that the dangers of major war were receding and at least a partial accommodation with the USSR was possible. If such a prospect materialized, they would

\*Reports of the German conversations with Brezhnev in Moscow suggest that the Soviet interest, in fact, is limited to possible "token" withdrawals of foreign troops.



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further see some potent arguments to the United States that any unilateral reductions should be deferred for bargaining leverage for further Soviet withdrawals.

The other side of this attitude is the European concern over the failure to try for MBFR. Many European governments, with small majorit shaky political bases, must remain more or less permanently committed to an active East-West diplomacy. While they recognize the pitfalls in a broad European conference, they see MBFR as a viable alternative that will eventually gain Soviet acceptance. Thus, they are cool to any American efforts to slow down or block MBFR, and would suspect such attempts were motivated by a desire to reduce unilaterally.

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