

Military Power in Soviet Strategy Against NATO

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The Soviets are sincere in their expressed desire for security and peace in Europe. Furthermore, should Soviet efforts toward peace in Europe fail and war occur, Soviet leaders would strive to avoid the use of nuclear weapons in achieving their military objectives. But the security and peace the Soviets envisage is essentially the security of the *gulag* and peace borne of hopeless resignation. Likewise, the Soviets' strong preference for conventional victory in Europe is based, among other considerations, on the simple assessment that while such a war would result in death and destruction in East and West Europe, it is much less likely than is nuclear war to lead to massive destruction in the Soviet Union. Paradoxically, Soviet military power is central to Soviet hopes for achievement of peace as they define it just as large, survivable nuclear forces at tactical, theatre and global levels are required to support the Soviet preference to limit any war to the use of conventional weapons alone.

In an attempt to describe and hopefully to explain this paradox, the following discussion focuses first on Soviet efforts to establish Soviet peace in Europe by means other than war. This is followed by an explanation of why and how the Soviets would hope to achieve victory without nuclear use should war actually occur in Europe.

The "peaceful" road to hegemony

Marxism-Leninism predicts and, in effect, prescribes, the inevitability of the triumph of socialism over capitalism.¹ Furthermore, Soviet hostility toward "uncooperative" socialist and communist states indicates that, in the Soviets' variant of Marxism-Leninism, their model of socialism must prevail.² The very legitimacy of rule of the Soviet Union by the Communist Party and any claim to ideological leadership of world socialism rest on at least the appearance that the "correlation of forces" is shifting in favour of the Soviet Union. In service of this prescription, the goal of the USSR is world hegemony in what the Soviets have referred to as the "Era of Global Democratic Peace".

In an effort to provide long-term guidance in the struggle to attain the Era of Global Democratic Peace, the late Leonid Brezhnev proposed at a Warsaw Pact meeting in Moscow in October 1966:

... that the countries of the Pact should draw up a Strategic Plan giving their long-term domestic and foreign objectives. This plan would be complementary to the existing five-year plans, which would become tactical documents specifying the targets to be reached at each stage of the Strategic Plan. Its full title was "The Long-Term Strategic Plan for the Next Ten to Fifteen Years and the Years After".³

Although the principal target of the Strategic Plan is the United States itself, the Plan also calls for the isolation of the US through "Finlandisation" of Europe; reduction of Western political influence and economic access to the Third World; and the encouragement of insurgency in areas of importance to the US, such as Central America.⁴ The foreign policy section of the Strategic Plan was, in 1968, divided into four phases: (1) the Period of Preparation for Peaceful Coexistence, covering the time from the 20th Party Congress of 1956 to the 21st Congress of 1959; (2) the Peaceful Coexistence Struggle, which was expected to last from 1960 to 1972; (3) the Period of Dynamic Social Change; and (4) the Era of Global Democratic Peace.⁵

The main strategic purpose of Phase Three, the Period of Dynamic Social Change, was, in the words of the Soviet directive, "to smash the hope of false democracy" and bring about the total demoralisation of the West. Our relationship with the United States would be the vital element in this phase. By fostering belief in our policy of friendship and cooperation with America, we planned to receive the greatest possible economic and technological help from the West, and at the same time convince the capitalist countries that they had no need of military alliances. The erosion of NATO began in Phase Two would be completed by the withdrawal of the United States from its commitment to the defence of Europe, and by European hostility to military expenditure, generated by economic recession and fanned by the efforts of the "progressive" movements.⁶

While the original Strategic Plan included approximate dates for completing each phase,⁷ "... each section of the Plan is subject to constant revision to ensure that it takes into account new factors introduced by changes in the world's political forces and unforeseen advances in Western technology which necessitate Soviet arms control initiatives".⁸ Thus, "... the Plan's objectives were firm but the means and methods of achieving them were flexible".⁹

While early attainment of the Era of Global Democratic Peace is the Soviet goal, peace is also the preferred method for achieving this advanced stage of Soviet-dominated socialist tranquillity. Peace in this sense is actually war carried on by political means. Many in the West who later felt betrayed by very aggressive Soviet behaviour in the Third World since the mid 1970s despite outspoken Soviet commitment to *détente*, had failed to understand earlier Soviet explanations of their policy of peace. Brezhnev himself stated openly in December, 1972 that: "We are realists and are well aware that influential circles in the imperialist world have not yet abandoned attempts to conduct policy from positions of strength... The Soviet Union will continue to work for *détente* and for consolidation of peace...". Brezhnev then added the important qualification:

The CPSU [Communist Party of the Soviet Union] has always held, and now holds that the class struggle between the two systems—the capitalist and the socialist—in the economic and political, and also, of course, the ideological domains, will continue. That is to be expected since the world outlook and the class aims of socialism and capitalism are opposite and *irreconcilable*. But we shall *strive to shift this historically inevitable struggle on to a path free from the perils of war, or dangerous conflicts*, and an uncontrolled arms race. This will be a tremendous gain for world peace...¹⁰ (Emphasis added by authors.)

In the Soviet view then, the struggle goes on, in fact, it must go on—but in the nuclear era it must be peaceful in the sense that a major war, and certainly nuclear war, is to be avoided.

Of course, private statements by the Soviet leadership were more explicit. As early as June 1961, Nikita Khrushchev had concluded that:

We must divide the West, not unite it by crude attacks on capitalism." But that did not mean, he went on, that he would restrain the international communist movement; on the contrary, one of the principal objectives of his policy was to improve the climate for world revolution. "As Prime Minister of the Soviet Union I could promise Kennedy many things", he told the Czechoslovakian President and First Secretary Antonin Novotny. "But as First Secretary of the Communist Party of the USSR and leader of the world communist movement, my hands are still free."¹¹

Only two months before Khrushchev was to depart the political scene, he described his foreign policy as one of "leading America to the grave with one arm around her shoulder".¹² That honest men in the liberal democracies fail to understand this peace offensive is not surprising. In 1966 Brezhnev noted that "some Left extremists misunderstand *détente*" as well. "They do not understand", he told Czech leaders during a Moscow visit, "that it gives us a free hand—a free hand through almost all the communist movements in the world..."¹³ One can see then that, in its rather long history, the post-Stalin Soviet peace offensive has been directed specifically at establishment of a Soviet peace in Europe achieved by weakening and dividing the NATO Alliance. The specific goal is political isolation of individual member states and reduction of their military potential.

A recent instructive example of the Soviets' specific

use of pacificism to achieve ascendancy over NATO without war, and military advantage should war occur, is provided by a Soviet GRU officer who defected in the late 1970s. Writing under the assumed name of a famous general, he noted that:

Pacificism is sweeping through the West. It is doing the same in the Soviet Union. In the West, though, it is uncontrolled while in the USSR it is encouraged from above. However, both movements have a common aim. Western pacifists are fighting to stop the installation of new rockets in Western Europe. Soviet pacifists speak out for the same cause—against the installation of rockets in Western Europe.¹⁴

There is some sensitivity concerning the nature of the relationship the Soviets expect to have with Western European states should Soviet leaders achieve their goal of hegemony in Europe without armed conflict. In a public speech made in 1978, CPSU General Secretary Andropov revealed the essence of that desired relationship:

The Soviet Union's European policy remains unchanged... Our position is clear. Europe must become a continent of peace and good-neighbourly cooperation. Here, in Karelia [Soviet-occupied sector of Finland], we have to emphasize the significance of the Soviet Union's good-neighbourly... cooperation with Finland. Soviet-Finnish relations today... represent the very kind of *détente* which makes for a more lasting peace... .

In the final analysis, this is the highly humane purpose of the foreign policy... of our Party and of the Soviet state.¹⁵

Peace is the preferred method for attaining hegemony because it involves a lower risk to accumulated Soviet gains. Local wars may be used when they are perceived not to run a risk disproportionate to expected gains (for example, Afghanistan).¹⁶ Regardless of whether peace or war is the method applied, military power plays the central role in achievement of the Era of Global Democratic Peace. In war, military power would be applied directly, but it still would be political in character and serve a political goal. If Soviet hegemony is to be achieved through peace, military power must serve to intimidate target states into accommodation, constituting an iron fist in a political glove.¹⁷ Regardless of how the Era of Global Democratic Peace is achieved, it would be policed by a Soviet Army. For even at such an advanced stage of socialist development the Soviet Army would have to be retained to guard against any lingering bourgeois tendencies.¹⁸

War with NATO

While the Soviets prefer to wage peace rather than war, especially against such a technologically sophisticated enemy as NATO, they anticipate that conditions might arise that would lead to a major war. The Soviets manifest their concern by maintaining a large and expensive military force and by constantly refining an elaborate system of military thought to ensure development of appropriate operational concepts for execution in the event of war. The maintenance of such a large military force is driven by the Soviet assumption that the only responsible security policy is one that strives to secure victory in advance. The Soviets prefer

to achieve a quick victory at the lowest possible level of intensity and thereby reduce uncertainty and minimise the costs of war to the Soviet homeland.¹⁹ They understand, however, that this preference requires the ability to defeat all opponents at every level. This military posture enhances the Soviets' capability to limit conflict once it is initiated by enabling them to apply optimum requisite force in a timely way. Moreover, the capability to secure victory at every level not only might avoid escalation through domination of the process, it might even enable the Soviets to avoid war altogether by so intimidating opponents that they will seek to avoid an unequal violent struggle through accommodation to Soviet wishes. The Marxist-Leninist concept of democratic centralism under which Soviet society is governed facilitates the development, deployment and training of forces adequate to support such an extravagant approach to military force development. Unlike the Western democracies, in the Soviet system resource allocation is made by a few decision makers who are not directly affected by the costs such decisions impose on other sectors of society.

The Soviets regard peace as a pre-war period, divided into the time when normal peacetime readiness obtains, and a crisis period that immediately precedes the outbreak of war. War itself is seen to be comprised of two periods, the beginning period of war and the period of subsequent/concluding operations.²⁰

In evaluating the transition from peace to war, the Soviets have noted several trends. The time when the most critical preparation for war must occur has shifted from the crisis period and wartime itself to the period of normal peacetime readiness. This conviction is driven by the perception that the beginning period of a major war would be shorter, larger in scope, and much more decisive than has previously been the case. As a result, the relative levels of readiness of the opposing sides at the beginning of a war will largely determine its outcome. This change is due not only to the development of modern nuclear missile weaponry, but also to dramatic increases in the mobility, manoeuvrability, and lethality of air, missile and ground general purpose forces.²¹ Vastly improved technology not only promises to make the beginning period of war shorter and more decisive, it also makes the initiation of war a more important determinant of its outcome. Because of the power and speed of modern weapons, first use of force and first use of greater levels of force can cause significant and possibly decisive shifts in the military, economic, and political correlation of forces in a matter of hours, if not minutes.²² The side that is to be successful must manage the perceptions and hence the actions of the opponent so as to avert initiation by the enemy at an unfavourable time and to ensure initiation by one's own forces at a time when one's relative advantage is greatest.²³

The Soviets have noted that modern technical reconnaissance makes it extremely difficult to achieve surprise by denying information about one's activity to the enemy.²⁴ Surprise must instead be achieved through manipulation of the enemy's interpretation of the observed activity. Enemy perceptions may be influenced through generation of a false peak to a political crisis and subsequent initiation of hostilities after such tension has been artificially defused. Surprise

may also be achieved by attacking at a time when the enemy does not yet believe the crisis has reached a point that justifies overt military action.²⁵

Moreover, deception required for surprise today must continuously offer to the opponent a plausible reason other than impending war for military activity observed. Such deception must be reinforced by a stepped-up political offensive designed to fragment the opposing alliance through intimidation and persuasion directed at inducing individual members of the NATO alliance to seize upon more benign explanations for observed Warsaw Pact military activity. This political offensive would continue into the beginning period of war with even greater intensity, still with the objective of isolating individual members of NATO. Less benign forms of intimidation would be used to facilitate a rapid conclusion to the war, before, if possible, nuclear weapons could be employed by the enemy.²⁶

The Soviets' thinking about war with NATO is driven by their perceptions of the Alliance as it might behave under the threat and actuality of war. Obviously, any Soviet strategy for war against NATO would attempt to exploit perceived vulnerabilities of the NATO alliance.

The Soviets believe that "until nearly the end of 1960, US leaders adhered to the strategy of so-called massive retaliation . . . and recognised only the possibility of waging a general nuclear war against the Soviet Union". They noted that "in accordance with this strategy, the US government put the main emphasis on the development of nuclear weapons of strategic and operational-tactical designation, de-emphasising the conventional armed forces, especially the ground troops". However, by Soviet assessment, Soviet successes in the fields of nuclear weapons and rocketry resulted in the failure of the strategy of massive retaliation. In the Soviet perception, as Soviet nuclear strength grew and approached parity with that of the West, the credibility of a US threat to employ nuclear weapons decreased.²⁷

Against this backdrop of a less credible global nuclear threat, NATO forces deployed in Europe were seen to be vulnerable in ways that offered possible opportunities for exploitation by the Soviets. The Soviet strategic offensive plan of the late 1960s ". . . considered the German Army the strongest, best trained and most highly disciplined force in NATO, with the possible exception of the US contingent".²⁸ Holland, on the other hand, was seen to be one of the weakest links in NATO. It was believed that ". . . Holland would declare itself neutral in any conflict with the East, and the Dutch armed forces would not only support this decision but would actively resist any attempt by the Western powers to use Dutch ports or cross Dutch territory".²⁹ The Soviets, nevertheless, expected Holland to become a battleground. "The Soviet ploy would be to recognise Dutch neutrality at once, and then to guarantee its non-belligerent status by military occupation".³⁰ In addition, after 1963, Warsaw Pact operational plans no longer recognised the concept of neutrality. The occupation of Austria is to facilitate operations against the Federal Republic of Germany, and the occupation of Switzerland is to ensure that it does not become a refuge for defeated Western forces.³¹ The strategic offensive

plan "... assumed France would never use her nuclear missiles or its *force de frappe*. The plan anticipated the capitulation of the French Government as soon as the Warsaw Pact armies crossed the Rhine and parachute [forces] dropped around its principal cities".³² The Soviets have since come to recognise a much stronger French commitment to defence and increased collaboration with NATO. However, the fact that Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands have been unable to keep their commitments to a stronger defence may give hope to Soviet planners who would attempt to paralyse NATO politically before or during the course of a conflict.³³

The Soviets also understand that NATO, unlike the Warsaw Pact, is an alliance by choice of its members and major wartime decisions such as nuclear release require agreement of the allies. Therefore they may perceive that the confusion and anxiety that would likely characterise the beginning period of war in Europe might introduce sufficient delay into the nuclear release decision process to make NATO nuclear use ineffective or inadvisable altogether.³⁴ Geography alone would lead one to anticipate that a successful Soviet high-speed conventional offensive might cause some NATO members to argue for early release and others to strongly oppose such action.

Forward defence is seen by the Warsaw Pact to be vulnerable to the extent that the necessity of early forward deployment of most NATO forces available in theatre denies the Alliance the depth and large reserves required to counter major Warsaw Pact penetrations early in the war. Most of the forces that would constitute NATO's strategic and operational reserves must be brought from the North American continent.³⁵ Obviously, the extent to which reinforcement might be delayed would be largely determined by the success of Soviet efforts to manipulate the perceptions of Alliance members throughout the pre-war crisis period. Finally, NATO command, control and communications (C³) facilities and nuclear weapons systems are vulnerable due to insufficient mobility, dispersion, and hardening.

Given these NATO vulnerabilities and the changing global strategic balance, by the late 1970s the Soviets were able to give serious attention to extended conventional operations. Recent changes in operational concepts and force structure and the nature of recent weapons modernisation evident in the Soviet air, ground and missile forces are interrelated and clearly enhance Soviet capabilities to execute Pact strategy for a rapid, destructive conventional offensive as discussed by Warsaw Pact authors.³⁶ In December 1981, General Colonel F. Gayvoronskiy, the deputy commandant of the prestigious General Staff Academy in Moscow, summarised the major operational elements, required to execute such operations:

Under present-day conditions when only conventional weapons are used in the conduct of the offensive, effecting a penetration could require the application of large masses of artillery, aircraft, and tanks; thorough suppression of the enemy's numerous anti-tank weapons; and protection of the attacking force from air strikes, including strikes by combat helicopters. To increase the tempo of the offensive and stop the approach of enemy

reserves towards the penetration sectors, it will be necessary to make air and missile strikes throughout the depth of the enemy's defences and make wide use of airborne (air assault) landings.³⁷

The offensive described by General Gayvoronskiy would be composed of three major elements: the air operation, the anti-air operation and rapid, deep OMG-led penetrations on the ground.³⁸ The air operation, designed to neutralise the bulk of NATO's air and nuclear capability in the theatre of military operations, would in its effect, substitute for an initial mass nuclear strike.³⁹ Very soon after commencement of the air operation, Warsaw Pact ground manoeuvre forces would seek to launch large-scale, one-way raids by OMGs in conjunction with air assault and airborne landings into the depths of NATO's defences in an effort to induce the perception among NATO allies that continued resistance or nuclear escalation would be futile.⁴⁰ At the same time, the anti-air operation would bring to bear, under unified control, ground and air based air defence systems for protection of aircraft and missile systems conducting the air operation, ground manoeuvre forces as they move into the depths of NATO territory, and Pact operational tactical and strategic nuclear weapons systems that would ensure the continued viability of a nuclear option should NATO attempt nuclear use or should conventional operations fail.⁴¹ Follow on forces would then exploit to the depth of the theatre of operations to ensure a rapid conclusion to the war.

The structural and operational refinements developed since the mid to late 1970s to support this strategy are too numerous to list completely, much less discuss in any detail. A few of the most significant developments should be mentioned. The Soviets consider very heavy conventional air, artillery and missile support to be the primary alternative to nuclear weapons in supporting a high-speed offensive. Consistent with this view they have made truly significant increases in the quality and range of artillery, missiles and rocket launchers to Soviet forces in Europe and they have placed high-level emphasis on improving the density, intensity and responsiveness of fires under an ambitious new variant of their fire support doctrine called "integrated fire destruction of the enemy".⁴² The Soviets see troop strikes by air assault and airborne forces against deep targets as central to maintaining the momentum of a theatre conventional offensive.⁴³ The Soviets have formed special air assault units in Europe and have greatly increased helicopter lift capacity for this purpose while they have virtually tripled the mobility and tank killing capability of the seven airborne divisions based in the Soviet Union.⁴⁴ Soviet planners believe that the greatest threat to a Pact offensive is NATO air and nuclear assets.⁴⁵ In response, they have resurrected and refined both the World War II air operation and the anti-air operation and they have made significant increases in the quantity and quality of the offensive air as well as air and ground based air defence systems needed to execute these operations in Europe. Finally, the Soviets have restructured their air and air defence forces better to support the more complex theatre operations now called for in their doctrine.⁴⁶

Soviet development of less vulnerable, more flexible theatre nuclear weapons systems and deployment of those systems in considerable numbers in East Europe and the Western Soviet Union supports Soviet planners' preference for achievement of victory at the lowest possible level of combat intensity. For while the Soviets reject the Western concept of deterrence (which they characterise as terrorising one's opponent with the threat of catastrophic nuclear punishment for military misconduct—*ustrasheniye*) they clearly recognise the restraining effect (*sderzhivaniye*) that genuine readiness to fight nuclear war at every level of intensity might have on an enemy who is contemplating nuclear use of escalation to more or larger weapons.⁴⁷ Hence, unlike some Western military thinkers, the Soviets do not seek to be able to manage escalation as much as they seek to restrain (*sderzhat*) NATO by being able to dominate the process at every level.⁴⁸

Examining how this concept is being applied in Europe, we can see that any Soviet military strategy that seeks to avoid nuclear use requires a nuclear capability that could survive a nuclear strike and still deliver a devastating counterblow. The new Soviet SS-20 IRBM meets that requirement. Because of its mobility, the SS-20 is much less vulnerable than the older SS-4s and SS-5s which must launch from fixed sites. As a consequence, Soviet planners could seek to extend conventional operations with greater confidence that NATO could not seriously degrade Pact nuclear capability with a surprise nuclear attack during a conventional phase. Second, Soviet deployment of nuclear artillery to forces in Europe⁴⁹ enables the Soviets to respond to NATO nuclear attack with much greater precision and reduced yield using their own low-level tactical nuclear weapons—even after opposing forces have become deeply interpenetrated during prolonged conventional operations. Furthermore, the availability of nuclear artillery in quantity gives the Soviets the option of attempting to dominate the escalation process at a level of intensity below that of a massive theatre nuclear exchange. This represents a tremendous increase in flexibility in comparison to the Soviets' previous nuclear posture which forced them to choose among three somewhat unattractive alternatives in the event of NATO use of tactical nuclear weapons: to continue the attack with conventional operations only; to initiate chemical warfare on a large scale; or to resort to mass use of relatively inaccurate, large-yield operational and theatre strategic nuclear missiles.

Refinement of the range of possible Soviet responses to nuclear attack is further improved by their deployment of longer range, more accurate tactical and operational missiles such as the SS-21, SS-23 and SS-22 which are replacing the older FROG, Scuds and Scaleboards.⁵⁰ As more nuclear capable artillery and improved missiles are deployed, Soviet confidence that can dominate escalation at the tactical, operational, and theatre strategic levels should increase appreciably. Most important, the Soviets may believe that the NATO members' perception of this capability should dissuade the allies from ever agreeing to initiate nuclear use and hence keep the war at the conventional level where the Soviets clearly have an advantage in numbers and speed of reinforcement.

Conclusion

The right of the Communist Party to rule the Soviet Union and the legitimacy of its claim to ideological leadership of world socialism rest on fulfilment by the USSR of the Marxist-Leninist prediction, continually restated by Soviet ideologues over the past three decades, that the correlation of forces is shifting in favour of (Soviet) socialism. This prediction constitutes a prescription that compels the Soviet leadership relentlessly to strive to achieve world hegemony or forfeit its claim to rule. Because of the unpredictability of the outcome of a major modern nuclear war, the Soviets prefer to achieve this goal without war if possible and with limited, low-risk wars if necessary. Consistent with this approach, in the event of a major war, the Soviets would seek to win it at the conventional level through a combination of surprise, speed, political pressure and superiority at every level of conflict intensity. Superior military power is the basis for Soviet hope of victory without war and superior tactical, theatre, and global nuclear capability is central to Soviet hope to dominate nuclear escalation and, if at all possible, to achieve victory with conventional weapons alone should war occur.

1 Soviet ideologues are fond of quoting long passages from Lenin's *Imperialism, the Highest Form of Capitalism*, predicting the crises and ultimate collapse of capitalism and its replacement by a higher social economic system—socialism. In the context of one such reference, the author of a recent Soviet book on local wars, repeated a statement that has been appearing in Soviet literature for over two decades: "After the Second World War, when radical changes took place in the world and there arose a world system of socialist countries, the process of change in the correlation of forces in the world arena in favour of democracy and socialism took an irreversible character" (I. E. Shavrov, ed., *Lokal'nye voyny, istoriya i sovremennost'* (Local Wars in History and in the Present) (Moskva Voenizdat, 1981), p. 284).

2 The Soviets very bluntly lump their principal "socialist" competitors with the capitalists. "Powerful and influential forces in the West are still trying to remake the world in accordance with their bourgeois ideals of 'freedom and justice'. This is especially true of representatives of the military industrial complex in the USA and other capitalist countries, as well as being true of the Maoists who side with them and upon whom the enemies of peace and *détente* now rely" (Shavrov, p. 286).

3 Jan Sejna, *We Will Bury You* (Sidgwick and Jackson, London, 1982), p. 104. Sejna was the Chief of Staff to the Minister of Defence in Czechoslovakia and Assistant Secretary to the Czech Defence Council when he defected in February 1968.

4 *Ibid.*, pp. 103 and 153-154.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 106.

6 *Ibid.*, pp. 107-108.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 106.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 101.

9 *Ibid.*

10 Leonid Brezhnev, *On the Policy of the Soviet Union and the International Situation* Doubleday, Garden City, 1973, pp. 230, 231. In the Soviet view then, the struggle goes on, in fact, it must go on—but in the nuclear era it must be "peaceful" in the sense that a major war is to be avoided.

11 Sejna, *We Will Bury You*, p. 52.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 89.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 112.

14 Viktor Suvorov, *Inside the Soviet Army* (Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., New York, 1983), p. 169.

15 Yuriy V. Andropov, *Izbrannye rechi stat'i* (Selected Speeches and Articles) Izdatel'stvo, Moskva, 1979), p. 287.

16 In summarising a study on local war completed by Soviet military scientists in 1975, Soviet General of the Army I. Shavrov asserted an "... important conclusion that springs from the

analysis of the system of local wars and military conflicts after the Second World War is the growing trend per five-year periods of the number of victories of the forces of socialism and national liberation over forces of imperialism and reaction". And lest there be any doubt that this symptom of the workings of "the objective law" of the shift in the world correlation of forces is related to Soviet foreign policy, he explains in the same article that, "In the second five-year period of the 60s and especially in the 70s, the number of local wars and conflicts noticeably declined, which serves as a reflection of the further process of changes in the correlation for forces in the world arena in favour of the forces of progress and socialism and of the ever more sharply rising contradiction between the policy of 'from a position strength' conducted by imperialism and its real capabilities, and as proof of the triumph of the Soviet foreign policy line for *détente*" (I. Shavrov, "Lokal'nye voyny i ikh mesto v global'noy strategii imperIALIZMA" (Local wars and their place in the global strategy of imperialism), *Voyennoistoricheskiy zhurnal* (Military Historical Journal—hereafter *Vizh.*), No. 3, 1975, pp. 15 and 18).

17 It is clear from Shavrov's 1981 book on local wars, that the Soviets understand the utility of military power in winning the struggle for the allegiance of newly independent countries while actually reducing the likelihood of Soviet military confrontation with major Western powers. They write that, "The history of our time has dispelled the aggressors' hopes of conquering nations fighting for independence, nations that can rely on help and support from progressive forces everywhere.

"Experience has shown that capitalist powers, formerly engaging in direct aggression, are now frequently forced to limit the scale on which they use arms and armed forces so as to avoid a strong international reaction in response. The restraining factor here has been the emerging political, economic and military power of the socialist countries and, above all the rocket-nuclear power of the Soviet Union" (Shavrov, *Local Wars in History and in the Present*, p. 229). In 1967, another Soviet author attributed NATO's movement away from a policy of "massive retaliation" to one of "flexible response" to the "sharply increased nuclear might of the Soviet Union" (Col. V. Samorukov, "Combat operations involving conventional means of destruction", *Voyennaya mysl*, (Military Thought—hereafter, *VM*), No. 8, August 1967, trans. in *Selected Readings from Military Thought; 1963-1973*, US Air Force, Studies in Communist Affairs, Vol 5, Pt I (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1982) (hereafter, *Selected Readings*, Pt I), p. 17).

18 Sejna, *We Will Bury You*, p. 106.

19 "The aim is to teach the military personnel to handle their weapons and equipment unflinchingly so as to enable them, to win victory in the shortest possible time and with minimal losses" (Grigory G. Borisov, "For effective combat training", *Soviet Military Review*, No. 11, 1982, pp. 14-15). Also see Sejna, *We Will Bury You*, p. 53.

20 Marshal of the Soviet Union I. Bagramyan, "Kharakter i osobennosti nachal'nogo perioda voynyi" (The nature and peculiarities of the beginning period of war), *Vizh.*, No. 10, 1981, pp. 20, 21. Also see S. P. Ivanov and M. M. Kir'yan, "Nachal'nyy period voyny (The beginning period of war), *Sovetskaya voyennaya entsiklopediya* (Soviet Military Encyclopedia—hereafter *SVE*) (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1978), Vol. 5, pp. 557, 558.

21 Ibid., p. 558.

22 S. A. Tyushkevich, "The methodology for the correlation of forces in war", *VM*, No. 6, June 1969, trans. in *Selected Readings from Soviet Military Thought; 1963-1973*, US Air Force, Studies in Communist Affairs, Vol. 5, Pt II (hereafter, *Selected Readings*, Pt II), pp. 60, 65.

23 O. Losik, "Lokalni valky a vojenske umeni" (Local wars and military art), *Lidova Armada* (Peoples Army—Czech), Vol. 16, 1982, pp. 746, 747.

24 M. M. Kir'yan, "Vnezapnost'" (Surprise), *SVE.*, Vol. 2, pp. 161, 163; and V. A. Efimov and S. G. Chermashentsev, "Maskirovka" (Camouflage), *SVE*, Vol. 5, p. 177.

25 Kir'yan, "Vnezapnost'", *SVE*, p. 161.

26 Ivanov and Kir'yan, "Nachal'nyy period voyny", p. 555.

27 V. D. Sokolovskiy, *Soviet Military Strategy*, edited by Harriet Fast Scott (New York: Crane, Russak & Company, Inc., 1968), pp. 54-55.

28 Sejna, p. 114.

29 Ibid., p. 128.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid., p. 121.

32 Ibid., p. 130.

33 Boris Ponomarev noted that the Soviets were "... astonished by the fact that France, which advocates *détente*, has recently been in the vanguard of those West European countries which are increasing their military spending most. This is all the more surprising since even some NATO military organisation member countries such as Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands have announced that they are going to freeze or even reduce their military spending". See "Strong criticism from Ponomarev", *L'Humanite*, 18 December 1980, p. 7.

34 The Soviets assessed over a decade ago that, for the side which "... is successfully developing the offensive it will be advantageous to delay the beginning of the use of nuclear weapons as long as possible. . . . In such a case the opposing side might considerably accelerate the beginning of operations with nuclear weapons in order to achieve a sharp change in conditions in his favour. For it is obvious if he does not do this at the critical moment, then subsequently it will be all the more difficult to use nuclear weapons with the necessary effect". The Soviet author then noted that in Western exercises "... the use of nuclear weapons, began in a maximum of four to five days (Colonel B. Samorukov, "Combat operations involving conventional means of destruction", *VM* No. 8, 1967, *Selected Readings*, Pt I, pp. 174-175. A NATO decision for nuclear use at that time might appear inadvisable if the Warsaw Pact has been able to destroy a large part of NATO's nuclear forces in the conventional phase. In a recent article in the Polish military press a Polish military scientist explained that "... the success of an offensive operation will largely depend on depriving the opposite side of his (combat) capabilities and, above all, on the elimination of nuclear missiles during the conventional phase of battle". (Major (Diploma) Wojciech Michalak, "Lotnictwo w dzialaniach rajdowo-manewrowych wojsk ladowych" (Aviation in raid manoeuvre operations by ground forces), *National Air Force and Air Defence Force Review* (hereafter, *Polish Air Review*), No. 2, 1982, p. 5).

35 In a 1964 *Military Thought* article, Major General Dzhelaukhov examined the importance of strategic reserves in a theatre of military operations and both the necessity and methods of destroying them. He pointed out the significance of the "geographic factor" by observing that it is one thing when strategic reserves "... are still located in the depth of the theatre at a distance of 600-1000 km or more (requiring three or four days to move them and bring them into battle), and another matter when they are already in the zone of military operations and can be brought into battle within 24 hours". He also noted that, "Reserves formed on the opposite side of natural barriers still have to overcome them before they can arrive in the area of military operations" (Maj. Gen. K. H. Dzhelaukhov, "Combating strategic reserves in a theatre of military operations", *VM*, No. 11, November 1964, *Selected Readings*, Pt I, p. 90), Also see Captain (1st Rank), A. Korablev "Obespecheniye strategicheskoy mobil'nosti" (Supporting strategic mobility), *Zarubezhnoye voynoye obozreniye* (Foreign Military Review), No. 9, 1981, pp. 7-12, and Maj. Gen. M. Below (DSci), "Views on NATO's strategic mobility", *Soviet Military Review* (hereafter *SMR*) No. 10, 1980, pp. 39-40. Both articles examine the US "Rapid Deployment Force" and "Dual Based" units. Relative to the later, Korablev points out that "REFORGER" experience indicates the United States can airlift "up to 12,000 men (without heavy weapons and equipment) and 1,500 tons of cargo to Europe in six to eight days". Further, he points out that to airlift a complete airborne division to the Persian Gulf region would require two weeks, while another division would require 30-35 days to arrive by sea.

36 The Soviet Minister of Defence, Marshal of the Soviet Union D. Ustinov, made explicit the relationship between the goal of keeping war conventional and developments in Soviet force structure and doctrine in a July 1982 article in *Pravda*. Referring to Brezhnev's June announcement in which the Soviet president unilaterally renounced first use of nuclear weapons, Ustinov stated that "This means that now, in the preparation of the armed forces, even more attention will be devoted to the task of preventing the development of a military conflict into a nuclear one; and those tasks, in all their diversity, are becoming an unalterable part of our military activities. . . . This establishes an even stricter framework for the *training of troops and staffs*,

for the determination of the *composition of armaments*, and for the organisation of still tighter control so as to exclude non-sanctioned launch of nuclear weapons, from tactical up to strategic" (emphasis added) (D. F. Ustinov, "Otvesti ugrozu yadernoy voyny" (Removing the threat of nuclear war), *Pravda*, 12 July 1982, p. 4).

37 Gen. Col. F. Gayvoronskiy, "Razvitiye operativnog o iskusstva" (The development of operational art), *Vizh*, No. 12, 1981, pp. 28, 29.

38 N. V. Ogarkov, "Strategiye voyennaya" (Military strategy), *SVE*, Vol. 7, p. 564. Marshal of the Soviet Union Ogarkov actually lists six major types of operations as components of the strategic offensive: air, anti-air, front, airborne, amphibious, and naval. This article focuses on the first three operations. The role of the OMG within front operations is discussed in some detail in Michalak, *op. cit.*, and SZA, "Operacyjne grupy manewrowe" (Operational manoeuvre group), *Zolnierz wolnosci (Soldier of Freedom)*, 26 October, 1982, p. 4.

39 Colonel (Diploma) Pilot Alexander Musial, "Charakter, znaczenie operacji powietrznych we wspolczesnych dzialaniach wojennych" (The character and importance of air operations in modern warfare), *Polish Air Review*, No. 3, March 1982.

40 "In the event that war begins and for some time conventional means of destruction are used, the general aim of the offence may be primarily the defeat of the main opposing troop groupings of the first strategic echelon of the defending side, the maximum destruction of its operational-tactical and tactical means of nuclear attack, and seizure of important individual targets, the loss of which would result in the loss of defensive stability. In achieving this aim, the drive of attacking troops deep into operational field forces of the defensive side, into areas where its nuclear rocket weapons and aviation are located, will provide the possibility for defeating opposing defensive ground forces and destroying their nuclear weapons before they can employ them" (Major General S. Shtrik, "The encirclement and destruction of the enemy during combat operations not involving the use of nuclear weapons". *VM*, as translated in *Selected Readings*, Pt I, p. 187). Several sources indicate that the OMG represents the latest Soviet attempt to accomplish the mission identified by General Shtrik. See for example, SZA, "Operational Manoeuvre group", and Colonel (Diploma, Philosophy) Alexander Musial, "Dzialania bojowe lotnictwa na korzysc operacyjnych grup manewrowych" (Aviation combat operations on behalf of operational manoeuvre groups), *Polish Air Review*, Nos. 7-8, July/August 1982, p. 9, and Michalak, p. 9.

41 "Strategiya, voyennaya", *SVE*, Vol. 7, p. 564; "Protivo-vozdushnaya operatsiya", *SVE*, Vol 6, pp. 589-590; Witold Pokruszynski, "Operacja przeciw powietrzna wojsk OPK (The national air defence force anti-aircraft operation), *Polish Air Review*, May 1982; and Musial, "Aviation combat operations on behalf of operational manoeuvre groups", p. 10.

42 The term "integrated fire destruction of the enemy" (*kompleksowe porazenie ogniowe przeciwnika*) has been used recently in the Polish military press. In one article, Colonel Musial relates it in detail to operations by the OMG. See Musial, "Aviation combat operations on behalf of operational manoeuvre groups", pp. 12, 13. In another article Col. Musial applies the same terminology and concept to air support of amphibious operations, suggesting that integrated fire destruction has general applicability to fire support of any force moving "from the depths" to commitment and subsequent exploitation (Colonel (Diploma) Alexander Musial, "Rola lotnictwa uderzeniowego w zabezpieczeniu dzialan desantow morskich" (The role of air support in protecting naval landing detachments), *Polish Air Review*, No. 5, May 1982, p. 12. In Soviet fire support doctrine, fire destruction of the enemy (*ogneyoye porazheniye protivnika*) is an old term and a traditional concept. The application of the word "integrated" (*kompleksnoye*) to fire destruction is new and apparently has become an educational "code word" that reflects a serious effort at the highest levels to ensure that all fires are intensely and continuously coordinated to achieve maximum destructive effect upon the enemy. For a discussion of the integrated character (*kompleksnyy kharakter*) of contemporary fire destruction see Colonel R. Portugal'skiy and Major A. Vorshchov, "Sovershenstvovaniye metodov raboty komanduyushchikh i shtabov po organizatsii ognevoogo porazheniya protivnika v nastupatel'nykh operatsiyakh" (Perfection of the work of commanders and staffs in the organisation of fire destruction of the enemy in offensive operations), *Vizh*, No. 3,

March 1982, pp. 11, 12, 18, 19. Integrated fire destruction" is apparently the capper concept for numerous doctrinal changes in the areas of density of fire, "firestrikes" and air-ground fire coordination.

43 The best single discussion on the subject of "troop strikes" is to be found in Major General I. Vorobyev, "Oruzhiye i taktika: komandir i sovremennyy boy" (Weapons and tactics: the commander and modern combat), *Krasnaya zvezda (Red Star)*, 12 January 1982, p. 2. Air assault troops are apparently an integral part of the OMG and are routinely involved in the execution of OMG raid operations. According to Major Michalak, for example, one of the "principal tasks" of aviation will be "to land tactical air assault units drawn from raiding and manoeuvring forces or from the main forces of ground troops acting in support of the operational manoeuvre group". Growing Soviet enthusiasm for airborne forces in offensive operations in general, and their participation in operational raiding in particular, is readily apparent in more recent Soviet military literature. The chief of Soviet airborne forces, Lt. Gen. D. Sukhorukov stated in 1981 that, "Vertical envelopment of the enemy has become an important manoeuvre without which not a single contemporary offensive operation will be possible" (Captain A. Oliynik, "High mastery of the airborne troops", *Krasnaya zvezda*, 11 September 1981, p. 2). The association of airborne operations in conjunction with the operational raid is routine in Soviet military writings. See for example, Lt. Gen. V. Reznichenko, "Razvitiye taktiki nastupatel'-nego boya" (Development of the tactics of offensive combat), *Vizh*, No. 12, 1981, p. 26, and Marshal of the Soviet Union, Professor O. A. Losik, "Sposoby vedeniya vysokomam-evrennykh deystviy bronetankovymi i mekhanizirovannymi voyskami po opyty belorusskoy i vistula-odevskoy opevatsiy" (Methods of conducting high-manoeuve combat operations with tank and mechanised troops according to the experience of the Bylorussian and Vistula-Oder operations), *Vizh*, No. 9, 1980, pp. 19, 21, 24, 25.

44 *Soviet Military Power* (Washington: GPO, 1983), pp. 41-42, 46. Also see Phillip A. Petersen and John G. Hines *The Soviet Conventional Offensive in Europe*, DDB-2622-4-83 (unclassified) (Washington, DC Defense Intelligence Agency, 1983), pp. 20-21.

45 The present commander of Group of Soviet Forces Germany, General Zaytsev, estimated that aviation constitutes up to 50 per cent of the destructive fire power of "enemy" forces today. He declared that, as a consequence, the success of ground operations depends to a significant degree on the outcome of the battle in the air—(General-Colonel of Tank Forces M. Zaytsev, "Organizatsiya PVO—vazhnaya zadacha obshchevovskogo komandira" (Organisation of air defence—an important mission of the combined-arms commander), *Voyennyy vestnik (Military Herald)*, No. 2, 1979, p. 23). In a recent article in the Polish military press a Polish military scientist explained that "... the success of an offensive operation will largely depend on depriving the opposite side of his (combat) capabilities and, above all, on the elimination of nuclear missiles during the conventional phase of battle" (Major (Diploma) Wojciech Michalak, "Lotnictwo w dzialaniach rajdowo-manewrowych wojsk ladowych" (Aviation in raid manoeuvre operations of ground forces), *Polish Air Review*, No. 2, 1982, p. 5.

46 *Soviet Military Power*, pp. 40-43, and *The Soviet Conventional Offensive in Europe*, pp. 16-18.

47 Chief of the Soviet General Staff, Marshal Ogarkov, in his recent book, identifies the strategic nuclear forces as the main component of the combat power of the Soviet Army and Navy, "which serves as the principal factor in restraining the aggressor" (N. V. Ogarkov, *Vsegda v gotovnosti k zashchite otechestva* (Always in readiness to defend the Fatherland) (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1982), p. 49). Ogarkov's use of the word "restrain" (*sderzhivat*) is typical of the manner in which the Soviets relate their own concept of the political utility of military power. In contrast, the Soviets always translate the American concept of deterrence as *ustrasheniye*, a derivative of the Russian verb for frighten or scare. As an example of this usage, Defence Minister Ustinov quotes the President Reagan's statement on the subject of "preventing any war with the help of deterrence (*ustrasheniye*)" which is, Ustinov charges, based upon the concept of "balance of fear" (*ravnovesie strakha*). In essence, the Soviet concept expresses the need to be able to hold the enemy at every level of political and military conflict which, in turn, requires the Soviet forces to be continuously prepared to do battle

and win at every level of conflict should war occur. The Soviets further assert that deterrence (*ustrasheniye*) is a concept associated exclusively with Western thinking.

48 The Soviets have clearly expressed their need for military forces capable of waging any type of conflict. "The organisational forms of the army and navy have been improved in relation of the character of a probable war, the organisation of the forces of the probable enemy, the conditions in the theatres of military operations, the requirement of military art, and other factors. The basis of the structure of military formations lies in

the possibility of conducting combat operations both with the use of nuclear weapons and with only conventional weapons. Consequently, a well-proportioned military organisation has been created, permitting the accomplishment of missions of any scale under any conditions" (Lt. Gen. M. M. Kir'yan, ed., *Voyenno-tekhnicheskiy progress i vooryzheniye sily SSSR (Military-Technical Progress and the Armed Forces of the USSR)* (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1982), p. 326.

49 *Soviet Military Power*, p. 40.

50 *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

Multi-National Peace-Keeping Forces

By Major J. C. G. MACKINLAY, 6GR

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect official opinion.

Within the space of a year two multi-national forces have been established in war zones to the north and south of Israel. On the southern border the Multi-national Force and Observers (MFO) are deployed in the Sinai and to the north in Beirut is the Multi-National Force (MNF). Both forces are successfully carrying out their tasks and neither was authorised nor constituted by a United Nations mandate. However, here the similarity ends, for the MFO in Sinai and the MNF in Beirut are totally different in their role, composition and political genesis. In this article the author, who served six months on the MFO force HQ in the Sinai and also carried out a comparative study with the British contingent in Beirut, sets out to show what their differences are and assess whether the multi-national concept (if there is such a thing yet) is likely to open a new chapter in the development of peace-keeping operations.

The MFO in Sinai

The background

The significance and result of the Camp David agreement are already well known. The withdrawal of the Israelis to the line of the 1949 armistice boundary now running from Eilat to Rafah was a major concession to the Egyptians; nevertheless both parties were able to see that if the agreement was to survive national and international vicissitudes in the long term, a caretaker force would be required to assist in supervising the mutual observation of the treaty. However, it soon became clear to all parties that the UN mandate which would have authorised such a force was likely to be blocked in the Security Council by the Soviet veto. Undaunted, the Americans together with the two parties took the unprecedented step of convening a multi-national trustee force which became established outside the framework of the United Nations.

At the time there were doubts as to the credibility of a peace-keeping force which lacked the assent of such a powerful member of the UN. However, as we are

about to see there are (fortuitously), a number of spectacular advantages to this arrangement which only became apparent after the force had deployed to the desert. After the decision had been taken to go ahead, the embryo phase of the MFO was spent in the Landmark building in Virginia near Washington. Here, two important tasks were carried out. The first was to negotiate the status of the soldiers of the nations which had agreed to participate—both within the force and within the two host nations. It is interesting to note that not all nations agreed to the same status. The second was to establish a *modus operandi* and organise a joint command structure which shared out authority and responsibility agreeably among the nations.

The importance of this embryo phase in Washington deserves to be underlined several times. Not only did it achieve the obvious requirement to convene the force but it allowed the various key members of the staff to function together as an entity before the component units came under command and the force deployed to the desert. This was a great asset. The national contingents who arrived later were units who already had well-trying procedures to follow in the execution of their tasks. The force HQ had to devise a mutually acceptable operating style which took account of their differences in experience and attitude.

Geography

The geography of the Sinai was first recorded by Moses who found it "a great and terrible wilderness". Since the Exodus of the children of Israel, it has been a much disputed and fought over triangle of land. Apart from a few tarmac roads it has changed very little in appearance. The treaty divided the area into four zones, three of which were in Egypt and one in Sinai. The authorised force levels varied in each zone. Zone C, where the MFO deployed to, starts in the north at the Mediterranean coast. Moving southwards the zone crosses the broad margin of the coastal plain. Here the sand is white and has been blown into dunes which lie herring-bone fashion for mile after mile in