

failed. Such thinking leads to a large number of distortions of both tactical and strategic significance. By way of contrast, Soviet forces, correctly, are designed and trained precisely for the contingency that deterrence has failed and consequently war-fighting and war-winning, be that nuclear or non-nuclear, is their basic purpose. The principal type of illusion created in U.S. and NATO circles is that in the European Center Sector, war-fighting might break out "below the threshold of" strategic nuclear weapons, tactical nuclear weapons, or whatever the strategist's preference may be; combine this with talk of "partial failure of deterrence," limited "theater nuclear warfare," etc. and the whole illusory arsenal of Rand Corporation, Herman Kahn-type gadgetry has been unleashed, without, of course, adding an iota to real NATO capability, but instead undermining effective utilization even of existing, wholly inadequate forces.

Special reference must be made in this context to a still very influential 1974 Brookings Institution study, authored by Jeffrey Record, entitled *U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe*. Record has since then become a prominent spokesman for conventional build-up in Europe, arguing on the basis of the famous 3:1 formula, the advent of precision-guided munitions, etc. that a "conventional defense of Europe ... would appear to be actually within the capability of the (NATO) forces available at present on the continent."

Looking at the conventional forces facing each other in the Center Sector, this is indeed an extraordinary assertion, prompting a German commentator to cite—in desperation—Frederick the Great's famous dictum: "In the long term, God is always on the side of the larger battalions." He might also have made the further point that a Soviet commander would not be foolish enough to assume that NATO forces would stick to "conventional" means knowing full well that they would lose. The next step should then be obvious: The Soviet commander will use the entirety of his artillery power, including nuclear, before he makes any "conventional" advance. Thus, it will be the very idea of deterrence and more foolish yet, of "differential deterrence" which creates the greatest instability and lowest threshold of strategic war-avoidance.

Mr. Carter's plans for the Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf theater merely replicate Record's strategic follies. With the commitment of three aircraft carriers to the Indian Ocean—two of them over 20 years old—Mr. Carter has committed the entirety of available carrier-based naval forces of the United States. There is nothing else available. In the event of confrontation, Mr. Carter may order the carriers to retreat, or he may order nuclear war. He has no conventional option but defeat. He therefore gives the Soviet command no option but to assume that he will order nuclear war.

# General Purpose

by Dean Andromidas

Two decades ago the United States possessed clear superiority in the strategic nuclear category (see Figure page 24). The U.S. also prevailed in key sea and air categories, and in tactical ground and air forces.

Today's realities are different. The Soviets have reached nuclear parity with the U.S. The Soviets have also reached parity in strategic naval forces. In ground forces and tactical air support, the Soviets have an overwhelming superiority, of such magnitudes that the U.S. could not hope to assume the lead in the near future.

Beyond these figures, strategic numbers need not be discussed. All the static comparisons have been discussed in the SALT debates, and lead to the conclusion that rough parity exists. "Parity" does not represent war-fighting capability.

## Summary data on the NATO and Warsaw Pact balance

### Mainland deployed active forces in the center region<sup>1</sup> (thousands)

NATO	Manpower		Equipment	
	Ground	Air	Tanks	Aircraft
United States	193	35	2,000	335
Britain	58	9	575	145
Canada	3	2	30	50
Belgium	62	19	300	145
Germany	341	110	3,000	509
Netherlands	75	18	500	160
France	732	193	6,405	1,344
	50	—	325	—
<b>Total</b>	<b>782</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>6,730</b>	<b>1,344</b>
<b>Warsaw Pact</b>				
Soviet Union	475	60	9,250	1,300
Czechoslovakia	135	46	2,500	550
East Germany	105	36	1,550	375
Poland	220	62	2,900	850
<b>Total</b>	<b>935</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>16,200</b>	<b>3,075</b>

<sup>1</sup>Includes only French forces in the FRG, no NATO forces in Denmark, France, and the UK, and no Warsaw Pact forces in Hungary.

# Forces: The Soviets' superiority

Proper evaluation of war-fighting capabilities is not a mere counting game. It must take into consideration that the Soviet Union does not recognize the distinction between tactical nuclear and strategic nuclear war-fighting. Furthermore the momentum in the introduction of new weapons systems lies with the Soviet Union.

By comparison the U.S. in its adherence to the notion of "deterrence" has maintained an arsenal of weapons systems and technologies that came on line in the mid 1960s or were developed in the 1950s. With a 5-year lead-time between development and on-line positioning of a weapons system, the gutting of U.S. development in the 1960s means that 1985 would be the earliest that the U.S. could hope to realize any improvement.

The significant superiority overall of the Soviet

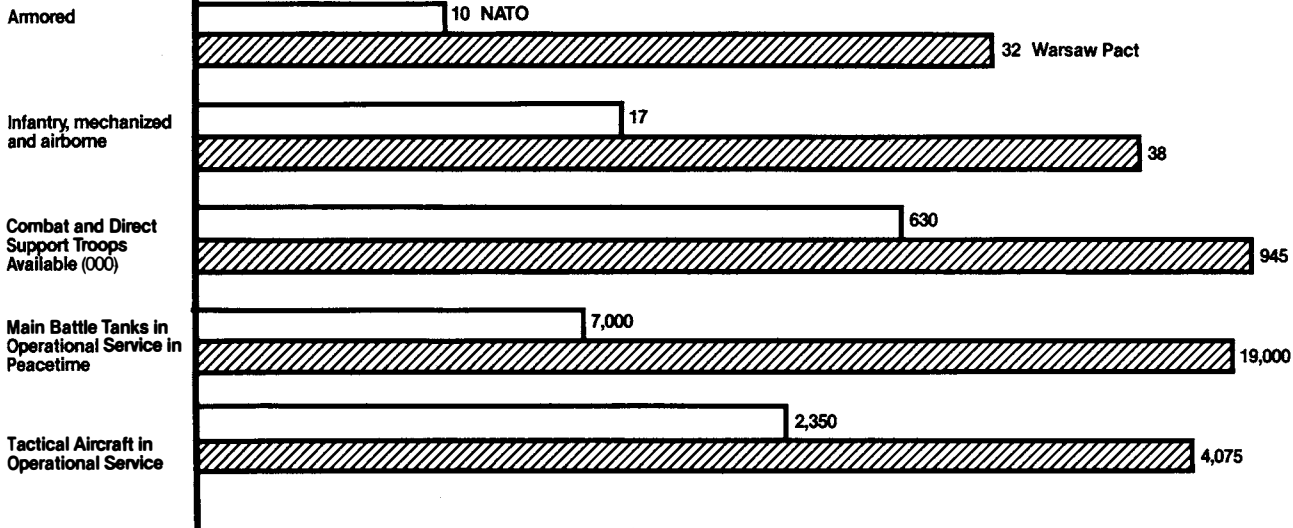
Union is enhanced by their tremendous civil defense and air defense capabilities. Since the post-war period, Soviet urban and industrial planning has made civil defense an integral part of all activity. Soviet air defense, ABM and SAM capabilities as well as their early warning systems are the most dense in the world, and optimally designed to shield the homeland from attack.

By contrast, since the 1960s, under policies introduced by Robert McNamara, strategic defense was deemed no longer "cost effective." All ABM and SAM capabilities were dismantled and early warning systems have been drastically reduced. The U.S. has ceased to maintain any credible North American defense except for 300 interceptors. The Soviets have 2,720. The Soviets anticipate a strategic war, because that is the only kind

## Total NATO and Warsaw Pact Forces (1977)

Northern and Central Europe

Ground Forces Available in Peacetime (division equivalents)



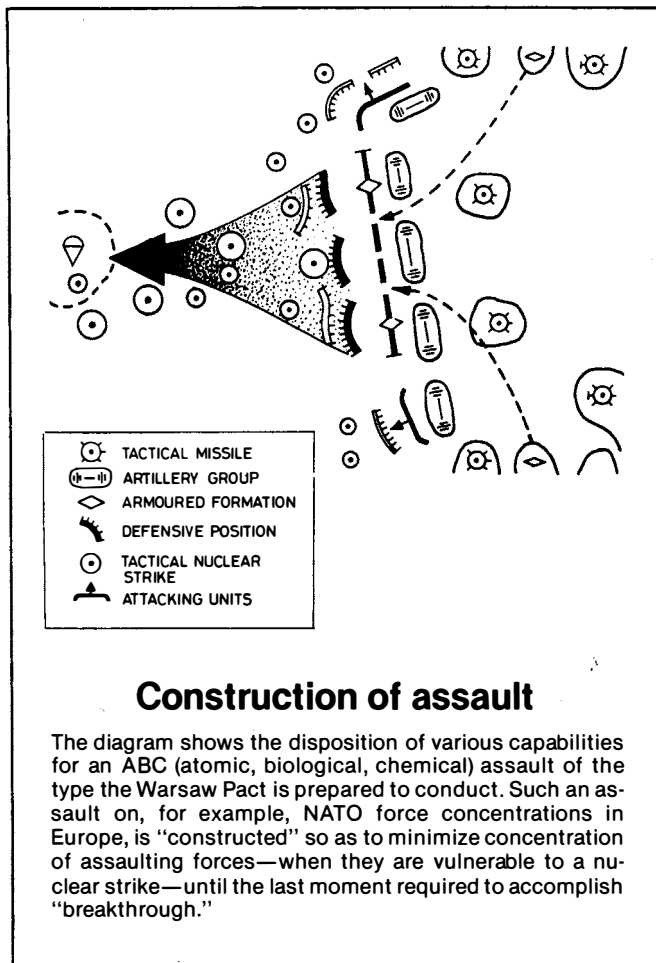
they will fight. The U.S. anticipates a tactical, "limited" war—and is not prepared to fight the war the adversary would unleash.

### NATO's Center Sector

Soviet in-depth war-fighting superiority is nowhere more evident than in NATO'S Center Sector in West Germany. The three natural avenues of approach represent the gateway to all of Europe. It is NATO and the west's most vital front and a point of access to all the key urban and industrial centers of the continent.

An initial glance at the theater balance of power reveals the overwhelming Soviet superiority. Against NATO's 782,000 men in 27 divisions stand 935,000 Warsaw Pact troops in 32 armored divisions; 38 Warsaw Pact mechanised rifle divisions face NATO's 17. The Soviets have 16,000 tanks compared with the allies' 6,780 and vast superiority in artillery. Soviet tanks and armored personnel carriers are designed to fight in atomic, biological and chemical warfare environments.

A glance at the map reveals that the Soviets possess advantages for strategic maneuver and internal lines of supply in the unlikely event of a retrograde action.



NATO, with non-member France to their backs, have their entire logistical rear-base capabilities in the southern half of West Germany in a corridor no more than 200 miles from the East German border. NATO's main center of logistical supply is Antwerp and Rotterdam, both of which are only a few hundred miles from the prospective front, and vulnerable to IRBM and aerial bombardment.

The Soviet order of battle is aimed at total victory, regardless of who starts the conflict. Notions of "limited war" are conspicuously absent from their doctrine. Tactical deployment of conventional and nuclear capabilities follow only after the unleashing of total strategic ABC (atomic, biological and chemical) capabilities.

Soviet deployment of forces takes advantage of three paths of approach (see map page 23). The North German plain leading to The Netherlands whose terrain is ready-made for tank warfare; the Fulda gap; and the Hof corridor flanking NATO's entire military establishment and industrial heartland.

Following initial ABC attack on Europe—plus total intercontinental bombardment of North America—tactical nuclear weapons would be used in an offensive capacity as part of a massive artillery barrage. The accompanying diagram demonstrates one method. The nuclear and conventional artillery move up behind forward troop positions. To their rear are the armored units intended to achieve breakthrough. Tanks and mechanised rifle units move forward, concentrated on the target sector. Smaller infantry units make diversionary attacks on NATO defensive positions all along the front, as tactical nuclear strikes clear a path through the enemy defenses and prevent counterattacks. Thoroughly ABC-trained armored units breach the defenses and advance en masse into the depth of enemy positions. Airborne and heliborne forces deploy in forward positions to capture key points in enemy territory.

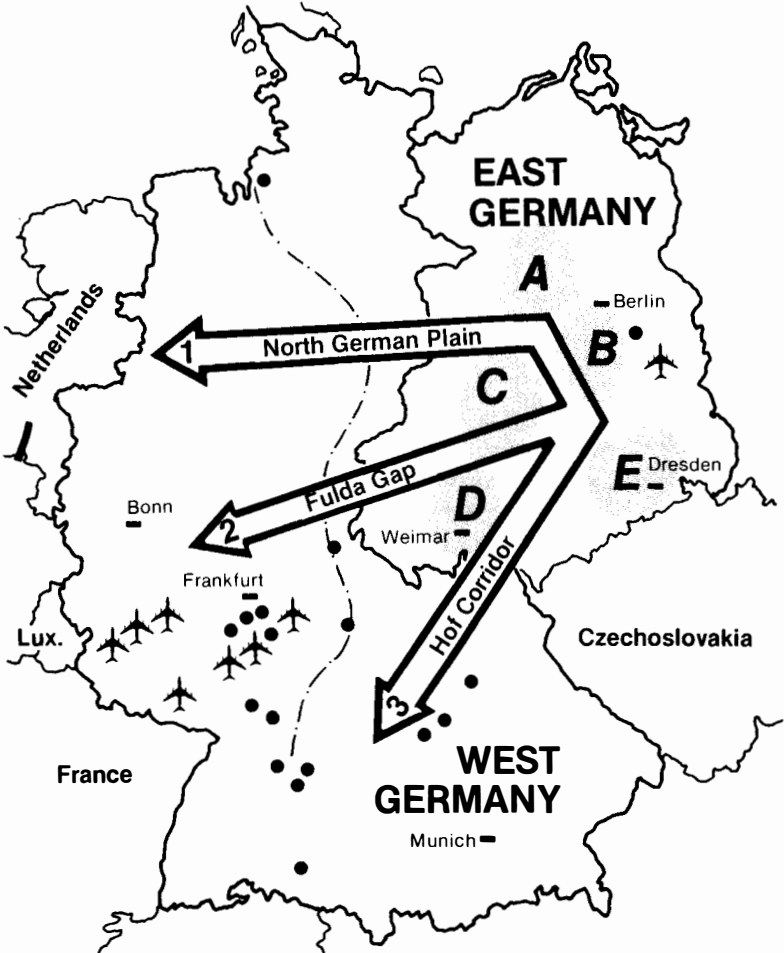
Some analysts believe Soviet forces could reach the Rhine within 48 hours.

Comparable force can be brought to bear on the Soviets' entire perimeter, including southern Europe, west Asia, south Asia, China, southeast Asia, northeast Asia. *The Soviets have more troops in each of the five military regions than the U.S. has in its entire army. And nearly every globally strategic region is within 1,000 miles of Soviet borders and internal lines of supply.*

For the U.S., any strategic point outside North America is many thousands of miles distant. Despite overseas bases and a substantial navy, the U.S. cannot carry out a major prolonged conventional military operation outside of Western Europe or North America.

The U.S. Army has 16 divisions of which four are deployed in Europe as part of NATO. Three more are held in reserve for ready deployment to Europe. Another

# NATO Center Sector Vulnerability



- A 2nd Guards Tank Army**  
9th Tank Division  
32nd Mechanized Rifle Division  
94th Guards Mechanized Rifle Division
- B 20th Guards Army**  
6th Guards Mechanized Rifle Division  
14th Guards Mechanized Rifle Division  
19th Mechanized Rifle Division
- C 3rd Shock Army**  
25th Tank Division  
12th Guards Tank Division  
10th Guards Tank Division  
47th Guards Tank Division  
207th Mechanized Rifle Division
- D 8th Guards Army**  
20th Guards Tank Division  
20th Guards Mechanized Rifle Division  
39th Guards Mechanized Rifle Division  
57th Guards Mechanized Rifle Division
- E 1st Guards Tank Army**  
6th Guards Tank Division  
7th Guards Tank Division  
9th Tank Division  
11th Guards Tank Division  
27th Guards Mechanized Rifle Division

- U.S.-NATO force concentrations
- Soviet-Warsaw Pact forward deployments
- Major line of communication



A thoroughly ABC (atomic, biological, chemical) trained Soviet division on maneuvers that simulate an assault on NATO Center Sector force concentrations.

division is stationed in South Korea and another in Hawaii. The remainder of the army is seven divisions, constituting a strategic reserve. In other words, the entire number of combat-ready army troops in the continental U.S. is seven divisions, or 115,000 men.

By contrast, the Soviet army of 1,825,000 is divided into 169 divisions; 31 in Eastern Europe as part of the Warsaw Pact contingent; 64 in the European U.S.S.R.; 6 in the Central U.S.S.R.; 24 in the south; and 44 on the Sino-Soviet Frontier. Unlike the U.S., whose entire continental force is considered theoretically deployable, Soviet divisions are ranked according to combat readiness: those at full strength to  $\frac{3}{4}$  strength (Category I) include all those in Eastern Europe and, most likely, half those in the European U.S.S.R. The Far East divisions are also Category I. Only the divisions of the central and south regions are in Categories II and III, from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  strength and  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  strength, respectively.

With only their NATO front and Far East front faced with a significant adversary-threat, the Soviets have been able to maintain a readily deployable reserve that is tremendous. If deployed along the perimeter of the U.S.S.R., Soviet logistics would entail moving forward their 'front' along totally internal lines of supply. If deployed overseas, troops from central or southern regions could be deployed without effectively weakening their already overdeployed critical fronts.

### The Afghan case

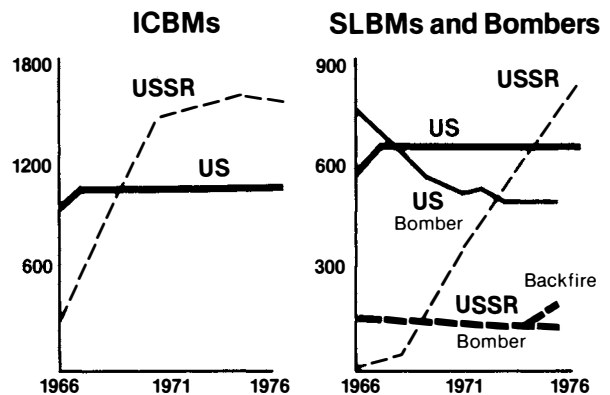
The Soviet deployment of 100,000 troops into Afghanistan took a scant few days. The movement of comparable U.S. forces would have taken the exercise of an entire strategic airlift capability over two weeks' time. The continued supply of such a force would place tremendous burdens on that airlift capability.

The Soviet Afghanistan operation is a case in point in other ways. Employing the considerable airlift capabilities of the AN 22 and AN 12, initial Soviet airborne divisions were flown in within 48 hours. Mechanized rifle divisions were able to swing in on roads, utilizing a fraction of the strength of the 24 divisions based in southern Soviet territory. Lines of supply are all internal, and a vigorous and continuous airlift is underway directly into Kabul.

The geography of Afghanistan puts it within a 300-mile radius of the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea and the Gulf states. Bases in southern Afghanistan can give air cover to a naval fleet of 24 ships in the region, air cover capable of negating the impact of the U.S. carrier task-forces.

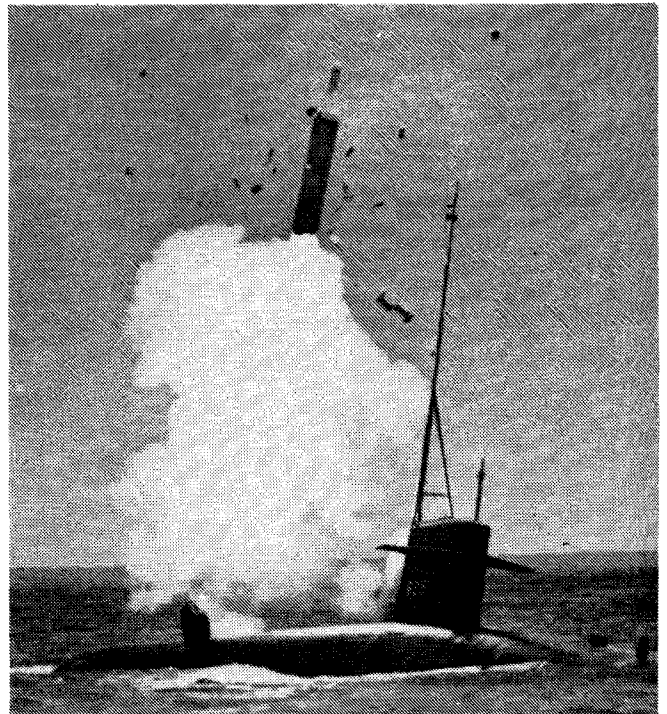
Such a deployment in no way stretches Soviet resources. An American counter move, even if bases in the region are granted, is a hideous logistical proposition from any rational military point of view.

## Changes in U.S./U.S.S.R. strategic force levels



Source: DOD Annual Report, FY 1978, p. 18

## The force-structures of the American and the Soviet armies



## Comparison of divisional establishments \*

	— U.S.S.R. —			U.S.		— U.S.S.R. —			U.S.
	1965	1970	1975	1975		1965	1970	1975	1975
<b>Armored divisions</b>					<b>Mechanized divisions</b>				
Manpower	8,500	9,000	9,500	16,500	Manpower	10,000	11,000	12,000	16,300
Tanks	316	316	325	324	Tanks	175	188	255	216
Lt. Tanks	17	17	19	54	Lt. Tanks	17	17	19	54
APCs	—	—	—	—	APCs	180	180	270	322
Antitank guns	9	9	105	370	Antitank guns	12	18	18	—
Antitank missiles	9	9	105	370	Antitank missiles	18	36	135	426
Med. Artillery	36	54	—	54	Med. Artillery	36	54	72-90	54
Heavy Artillery	—	—	—	12	Heavy Artillery	—	—	—	12
Multiple rocket launchers	12	18	—	—	Multiple rocket launchers	18	18	18	—

\* Composition of one division

The differences between Soviet and American divisional structure and strength are striking. The U.S. maintains a doctrine from World War II in which divisions are categorized as Armored, Mechanized, Infantry, Airborne, Airmobile, the last having been developed mostly out of the experience of the Vietnam War and the development of helicopters. Divisions are comparatively large with an average of about 16,000 men. Only armored and mechanized have eliminated the foot soldier.

This form of organization is to enhance the doctrine of "flexible response" and "forward defense" and is supposedly aimed at having a sufficiently flexible "mix" to carry out a variety of contingencies.

By contrast, the Soviet divisional structure is very much reflective of the offensive doctrine utilizing firepower, mobility and concentration of force. Divisions are categorized into Tank, Motor or Mechanized Rifle and Airborne divisions. Troop strengths range from 9,500 for tanks and 12,000 for Mechanized Rifle to 8,000 for Airborne. Tank divisions have 325 tanks, one more than the American armored division which has 7,000 more men. It has 150 armored personnel carriers which are enough to transport the remainder of the troops. It also has a complement of 80 artillery pieces, against 14 for the U.S. larger armored divisions. Though it has fewer anti-tank missiles by a

third, firepower is by no means lost, but absorbed by the tanks, APMs and artillery pieces.

The "footsoldier" no longer exists in the Red Army. Everyone rides. The Mechanized Rifle divisions, at 12,000 men, have 255 tanks and 375 APCs. This compares with the U.S. mechanized divisions of 270 tanks and 490 APCs for 4,000 more men. Soviet firepower is again superior with 110 artillery pieces compared with the U.S.'s 66.

Airborne Divisions, at 8,000 men, have no tanks but 100 APCs with 54 artillery pieces. The U.S. has also 54 pieces of artillery but no tanks or APCs.

Comparisons of weaponry reveal similar discrepancies. All Soviet tanks and APCs are capable of operating in an ABC environment. None of the U.S. arsenal has this capability. The main U.S. battle-tank, the M-60 series, and its updated variants' design, date back to 1961. The XM tanks have not even gone into production.

The main Soviet battle-tank is the T-72, designed in 1975 and fitted with a 122 mm gun outstripping most of the U.S. arsenal. Similarly the new Soviet APC, the BMP, carries a 73 mm gun; the U.S. model carries machine guns. Soviet artillery is generally of a larger caliber with greater range than the U.S. counterparts and many more self-propelled models are coming into the Soviet complement of weapons.