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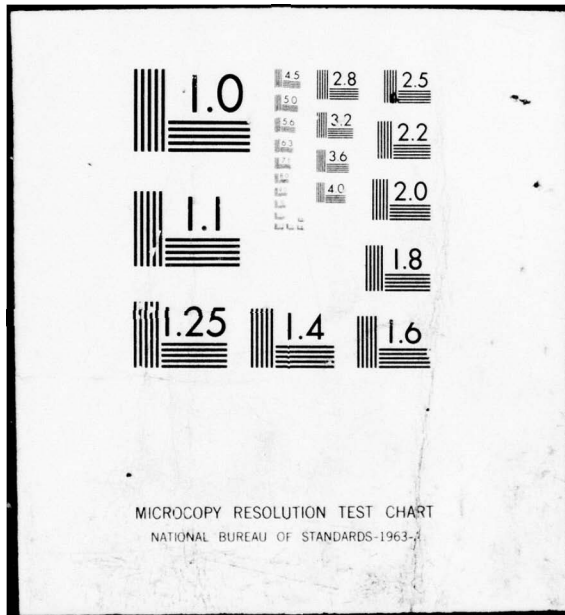
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PERCEPTIONS OF THE SUPERPOWER MILITARY BALANCES:  
CONSIDERATIONS AND EVIDENCE  
Donald C. Daniel  
February 1978  
Final Report for Period December 1977 - February 1978

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Prepared for:  
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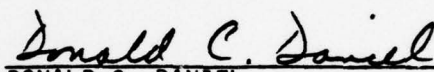
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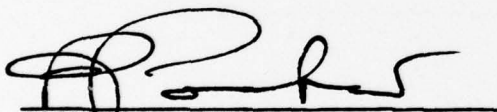


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## PREFACE

On December 9, 1977, a meeting was held under the auspices of the Department of National Security Affairs of the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California. The topic was "Perceptions of the U.S.-Soviet Military Balances," and the papers grouped together in this book were presented at that meeting. Some were originally sponsored by the Director of Net Assessment, Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense, and funded by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency.

This writer is pleased to acknowledge the support of Mr. Andrew W. Marshal, Director of Net Assessment for OSD, and of a number of individuals at the Naval Postgraduate School. These include Rear Admiral Isham Linder, Superintendent, Dr. Robert R. Fossum, former Dean of Research, the members of the Research Council, and Professor Patrick J. Parker, Chairman of the Department of National Security Affairs.

Donald C. Daniel

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## INTRODUCTION

Readers of international relations or "deterrence" literature are familiar with the proposition that the "actual amount" of power available to a state may not be as important in peacetime as its perceived military capability. If a state is viewed as being strong, then those views -- and not its "true" military strength -- may be decisive for reassuring allies and compelling or deterring foes. Conversely, if it is accepted as weak or weakening, then allies may become nervous and foes more bold.

American policy-makers have recently shown renewed interest in the significance of perceived power. Secretary of Defense Schlesinger, for example, in writing about the strategic nuclear balance called upon the United States to

maintain capabilities such that everyone -- friend, foe, and domestic audience alike -- will perceive that we are the equal of our strongest competitors. We should not take the chance that, in this most hazardous of areas, misperceptions could lead to miscalculation, confrontation, and crisis.

He reiterated the same theme again when writing about the naval balance:

...the naval forces of the Soviet Union and its allies are not generally superior to those of the United States and its allies, and ...this should be perceived by well-informed observers.<sup>1</sup>

This book accepts that perceptions are important in peacetime and that perceptions of U.S.-Soviet power are particularly worthy of investigation. It aims to make a contribution in two areas: (1) helping systematize the research field centering on these perceptions, and (2) offering empirically-based conclusions as to the comparative ranking of the superpowers in perceived strength, the factors which condition those views, and the policy consequences flowing from them in the minds of perceivers.

Part one is devoted to analytical, methodological, and overall policy considerations. The first chapter presents a "general map" of the research field as it raises and organizes questions and problems faced by an analyst. The second chapter provides the rationale for arguing that U.S. policy-makers should more consciously consider the perceptions impact of force development and deployment decisions, and the third recommends a procedure which builds upon the perceptions of experts to measure where countries stand in specific weapons systems balances.

Part two is substantive in nature, and its six chapters illustrate the use of different research methods and sources. The focus is on American, Soviet, British, French, German, Japanese, and Arab views of

various superpower balances with overall military and strategic capabilities most often being the objects of their views.

Part three has only one chapter. It highlights and draws together some of the findings presented in part two.

There are many books which describe the military capabilities of the United States or Soviet Union, but there are few which deal with how those capabilities are perceived. If any part of this book stimulates the reader to push further and develop more sophisticated research techniques or contribute to a cumulative base of evidence, then it will have served its purpose.

PART ONE

RESEARCH AND OVERALL  
POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

## CHAPTER ONE

### PERCEPTIONS OF THE U.S.-SOVIET BALANCE:

#### PROBLEMS OF ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH

by

Herbert Goldhamer

#### INTRODUCTION

This paper outlines some of the analytical and practical problems involved in work on perceptions of the U.S.-S.U. military balance. Since the aim is to raise and systematize questions and problems, the paper is singularly abstract and dataless. Like a blank check, its utility depends on being filled in; and, of course, this is the objective of ongoing empirical work. A general map of the area may seem a dispensable luxury. However, as interest and work grow, some systemization of the field is useful to bring order and economy into research programs.

#### SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF PERCEPTIONS

Let us begin by clarifying certain nonsubstantive characteristics of perceptions of the military balance.

'Perception' in the present context is used in a figurative sense. Technically, 'percepts' and 'perceptions' are central elaborations of sensory inputs. 'Perceptions' of the U.S.-S.U. balance do result from

reading or hearing something, but the sensory or perceptual input simply plays the role of a medium and is not the object of attention. A line in a newspaper is perceived, but its meaning is not a percept. In short, 'perception' of the military balance could just as well be called 'beliefs,' 'ideas,' 'impressions,' 'convictions' depending on the nuance one wishes to convey. This excursion into semantics probably should be unnecessary, but suggestions sometimes made that psychological theories of perception provide a useful background for analysis of perceptions of the military balance is, in my view, misleading. It transforms a figurative use of 'perception' into a literal or technical use. This area of study could equally well be called "Beliefs About the Military Balance." Presumably the "Psychology of Perception" would then be displaced by the "Psychology of Belief." This certainly would be more appropriate.

'Perception' of military power makes more literal sense in those cases where observers are at a military review or military maneuvers or are present on a battlefield or at a naval or air demonstration. Indeed interesting substantive questions revolve precisely around physical visible military demonstrations and concern the differential impact of a statement about military power and a physical perception of it. The substantial impact that a physical demonstration of a weapon often has results, no doubt, from the fact that this is a perception and not just a statement. Evidently, however, in most contexts in which one speaks of perceptions of military power, 'perception' is a figurative substitute for 'beliefs about.'

Any attempt to convey perceptions of the US-SU balance (either by the perceiver to an investigator or by the investigator to his readers) runs the danger of giving the description greater exactness and sharpness of contour than existed in the original perception. The exigencies of exposition and communication put a premium on reducing fuzziness or vagueness that may have existed in the original perception. This vagueness may be a more important characteristic of the perception than its substantive content. What is often required is an exact description of confusion. Confusion may lend itself much more than precise and well-ordered knowledge to manipulation and provide a richer field both in crises and in stable situations for the political use of military forces.

The question, what is the US-SU, strategic, naval, or NATO balance?, evokes an image of a balance and a needle moving along a scale and thus implies a quantitative answer in a single dimension, or, more briefly, a single number. Obviously, of course, perceptions of US-SU military power (even in a single sector, strategic, naval, etc.) may be more complex than this. The better informed a person is the more his perception of US, and Soviet military power is likely to be expressed by a set of statements not always reducible to a few summary propositions. That a person may agree with one or more propositions about the balance does not necessarily mean that they are an adequate account of his perception of the balance.

The breadth or narrowness of an individual's conception of the military balance may vary according to the amount of information he has; but it may also result from varying conceptions of what is relevant to an appreciation of the US-SU strategic, NATO, or naval balance.

Accounts of perceptions of the US-SU military balance should indicate, where at all possible, their degree of stability. This is particularly important in investigating the impact of a particular event on beliefs. Whether the effect endures for a day, a week, a month, or longer, is obviously of capital importance. Our interest in the stability of opinions will vary according to whether we are dealing with a crisis situation, a slowly evolving situation, or a quite stable international context. In crisis situations, knowledge of the perception of the balance may be important even though the perception may change radically during the course of the crisis or have little enduring effect after it. Both the special interest attaching to perceptions during a crisis and the difficulty that may exist in studying them at that time, raise questions concerning the feasibility of predicting changes in perception during crises from their pre-crisis status. Whether long-term swings in the perception of the military balance are the product of relatively stable perceptions undergoing slow evolution or are the product of a series of sharp shocks to beliefs is an empirical question of considerable theoretical and practical interest. The stability-instability of perceptions has, of course, to be related to the stability-instability of the underlying reality.

Instability of perceptions may not be related to changing political or military environments. Perception changes may represent instability in the data gathering process, but they may also -- and, of course, it is this that interests us -- reflect a low level of attention, conviction and clarity in the views of the people we are interviewing or observing. An elicited description of perceptions is sometimes a casual and unstable expression invented to provide an answer.

Perceptions of the military balance should be distinguished by the degree of confidence attached to them by the perceiver. Persons whose perceptions show considerable instability may nonetheless attach a high measure of confidence to them. The confidence or lack of confidence that the perceiver has in his perceptions may affect attention to and absorption of information on the balance.

Generally we do not include, in speaking about perceptions of the military balance, any emotion or affect attached to these beliefs; that is, we treat the perception of the balance as purely cognitive and not an affective event. The degree of confidence that a person has in his perception already moves us into areas that are not purely cognitive. Perception of the military balance may be accompanied in varying degrees by fear, pride, anger, or other affects. These aspects of the perception may not always be easy to observe, but they must be presumed to affect the character of present and future perceptions.

We often think of perceptions of the military balance as representing comparisons of capabilities at a given time point. In fact, when we examine newspaper and journal materials, we find that much of what is written about the balance of military power deals with who is gaining on whom. Thus an important component of perceptions of the military balance is the direction and rate of change in military capabilities. If one is behind, it is useful to keep emphasizing a greater rate of growth, and this, of course, is what the Soviets have done in making economic comparisons between themselves and the United States. In the military field, they were not inclined to use this type of presentation since they did not like, in the past, to acknowledge their great inferiority in strategic and naval capabilities. U.S. spokesmen, on the other hand, have been very free in providing statements concerning the Soviet Union catching up with the United States or surpassing it, so that a good deal of U.S. and world discussion has been in terms of rates of change. In any event, perception of the military balance may, for many perceivers, be essentially (a) a perception of impending changes in the balance, and (b) an imputation of superiority to the side with the greatest growth rate.

The relation of perceptions to reality is important in differentiating the perceptions of various groups, in judging their potential political consequences, and in considering means of bringing perceptions into closer (or more distant) alignment with reality. The correspondence of perceptions to reality or their deviations from it increase considerably in interest when we know the information sources to which the perceiver has been exposed and the correspondence of those sources to reality.

There are several difficulties in relating perceptions to reality. First of all, perceptions as noted earlier, are often so vague and complex that whether or not they correspond to reality is not easily assessed. Second, some aspects of perceptions (such as the affect that accompanies them) cannot be related to reality in the sense of being measured against it. Third, and more important, perceptions of the military balance are not always in the form of simple factual statements. That the Soviet Union has so many more missiles than the United States may be easily assessed against reality. However, many of the perceptions of military reality, as one meets them in articles, editorials, and other sources, do not correspond with any readily defined "reality." Perceptions of the balance, for instance, may take the form of predictions that the United States or Soviet Union could win an intercontinental strategic war or make a successful first strike, or could do a variety of other things more effectively than the other side if conditions so necessitated. Obviously, such statements cannot now

be verified against "reality." Even statements that have a past or present time reference can also provide the same difficulties. Statements that refer to the past or present military worth of, say, French nuclear capabilities are not statements on whose "reality status" there will be ready agreement.

When no clear understanding of "reality" exists in a given situation, the observation and discussion of people's perceptions are likely to be distorted because the investigator's own vague "reality" differs from the vague "reality" of his subjects and influences his perceptions of the subject's perceptions. Thus a psychiatrist who thought we were close to a nuclear war during the Cuban missile crisis viewed a calm attitude toward the crisis by his subjects as representing a psychiatrically alarming perception of the situation.

There are, of course, a substantial number of relatively clear-cut aspects of the military reality and the problems just indicated do not prevent us from analyzing how well perceptions of the military balance correspond with these more measurable aspects.

#### DIFFERING MILITARY BALANCES AS OBJECTS OF PERCEPTIONS

In inquiring into perceptions of (a) the strategic balance, (b) the NATO balance, (c) the naval balance, or (d) the global, overall balance, we must recognize that these divisions and their definitions are those of the investigator and do not necessarily preexist in the minds of our subjects. Presumably we can get our subjects, if we

interview them, to consider the balance separately in various military sectors and in the terms that we specify, but we should remember that these may be our constructions, not theirs. This consideration is also pertinent in describing perceptions reported in the various media. We may be able to sort out statements made in an editorial or in a political speech or in an article into several sectors (strategic, naval, etc.), but these divisions may not have had much independent existence in the mind of the writer. This, of course, does not mean it is unjustified to do the sorting out. It only means that the conclusions we draw may be different according to whether it is we or the writer who do the sorting. Thus, the statements of some subjects may reflect only a view concerning a vague, overall balance and may not be accompanied by any sense of or any conviction about individual sector balances, even though some statements may permit classification by the investigator into various military sectors.

The investigator's own definition of the military balance may also vary in different research contexts. Thus sector divisions and definitions appropriate for studying some types of subjects (mass, leaders; naive, sophisticated, etc.) may not be appropriate for others. Or the definition of the balance during a crisis may differ from one used in a steady-state period in order to emphasize certain components that have special relevance in particular confrontations.

#### The Strategic Balance

From the investigator's standpoint, the term "strategic balance" generally refers to capabilities for nuclear intercontinental war.

"Capabilities" may be characterized by number of bombs, warheads, and carriers, by accuracy and reliability, by active defenses, civil defense, and vulnerability to first-attack, by command and control, warning, and reconnaissance capabilities.

Evidently even a very summary account of these aspects of Soviet or US capabilities together with even the most simplified account of their dynamic interactions would take several rather substantial paragraphs or pages. The attempt to establish equivalences between categories for both the Soviet Union and the United States might require a good deal of further elaboration. Any serious attempt to reduce these multiform capabilities to a few abbreviated strategic "capability coefficients" would require a forbiddingly complex set of intellectual operations and justifications. Such comparisons might require inputting the same purpose to the strategic capabilities of the United States and the Soviet Union, an imputation which our subjects may or may not make. The investigator may not reduce the components of the strategic balance to a simple expression, but this does not mean that it is necessarily a difficult task for his subjects. Their lesser sophistication, more limited information or simply lesser preoccupation may make it possible for them to reduce a complex reality to a simple expression. Even specialists in military affairs may not integrate all relevant components of the balance into their 'perception.' This does not exclude them from having a rough weighting system and a 'coefficient' of strategic capability.

Two different accounts by subjects should be distinguished:

(i) that which the subject provides without constant prodding by the investigator, that is, what the subject provides more or less spontaneously; and (ii) statements elicited only under more detailed questioning. Whether the latter are to be viewed as part of the subject's 'perception' will depend on the uses to which their accounts are going to be put.

It is likely that for many persons military capabilities in the sense of materiel are less understandable or less interesting or relevant than notions concerning what each nation can do to the other. A view that the Russians have more ICBMs than the United States may be ignored, and if not ignored it may nonetheless be associated with the view that the Soviet Union would not dare to engage in a first-strike or risk other types of military undertakings. Particular beliefs concerning deterrence (or nondeterrence) may be associated with a wide range of capabilities imputed to the United States and the Soviet Union.

In addition to beliefs concerning what each country might be able to undertake are beliefs concerning the outcomes of such undertakings. Who would "win the war" if there were an intercontinental war, or who would suffer least damage may be the principal modes in which some subjects perceive the strategic balance. It may be possible to trace such beliefs to prior beliefs about weapon systems, but beliefs about 'who would win' may shape beliefs about the materiel balance and not the other way around. Ideas concerning what each nation

can or cannot do, in both military and political uses, with their capabilities may represent the real characterization of military strength that individuals carry around in their heads.

These considerations could lead us to include national will in perceptions of the military balance. Similarly, technological ingenuity and economic resources may be viewed as important components of military power, particularly when relative military power is viewed as a developing and changing status. The perceived direction of this change may affect the perception of the current strategic balance.

#### The NATO Central Front Balance

Compared with the strategic sector, the NATO Central Front balance probably involves a more complex set of capabilities, especially because of manpower and mobilization factors, political and alliance relations, troop and population morale, the longer time period over which, in the event of war, military capabilities would probably be exercised, and the numerous interactions over this longer period of time of all the complex strategical and tactical elements that compose warfare involving large numbers of troops with all their supporting arms and services. Room for the intervention of the unpredictable seems particularly great in NATO scenarios.

All these factors affect not only the definition of the central front balance but render extraordinarily difficult the task of arriving at a statement of the "real" or "true" balance with which perceptions are to be compared. This difficulty already existed in the strategic sector but is almost certainly magnified in the NATO case. Thus, for example, the "real" balance certainly is affected, on the NATO side,

by the reliability with which alliance forces would, in the event of war, perform their roles, and on the Soviet side, on whether the non-Soviet Warsaw Pact forces fight loyally with the Soviets, do not fight at all, or actively sabotage Soviet military action. Not only will the "real" balance be different according to the probability of these events, but the perceived balance will similarly vary as one or another perceiver attaches more or less importance or plausibility to this or that factor.

The tendency to use numerical indices (number of divisions, number of aircraft, number of tanks, etc.) may occur here just as it can and does occur in many perceptions of the strategic balance. But in the NATO case perceivers are more likely to give weight to factors such as morale and political forces. These may produce a perception of the balance that deviates markedly from a perception based largely on materiel and manpower, that is, on material forces.

Strategic balance is likely to be viewed by most perceivers in terms of its significance for an intercontinental nuclear war having relatively few major variants. The NATO balance may, on the contrary, be viewed through a greater range of possibilities -- a full tactical nuclear war on all NATO fronts down to a "border straightening" operation. In any event, perceptions of the NATO balance probably should be described relative to various strategic objectives of the two sides, and this will require investigating these objectives as they exist in the perceiver's mind (if their spontaneous statements are being examined) or perhaps imposing a specific definition of these objectives on the perceivers (if they are being interviewed).

It is possible, of course, to assess U.S. and Soviet forces in terms of some abstract definition of strength that ignores any particular use or application of them. The balance then is viewed as a function of certain characteristics (such as number, speed, accuracy, weight, reliability) whose goodness is a linear function of the size of the numbers and bears no specified relation to any objective or situation. This abstract, rather than war fighting, characterization of the forces is less likely to dominate perceptions of the NATO balance than it does perceptions of the strategic balance.

#### The Naval Balance

To some extent the naval balance is not easily separable from the strategic balance since the latter includes the sea-launched missile forces and capabilities for operating against them. Like the strategic and NATO balance, the naval balance may present itself to subjects not as a certain set of forces but rather in terms of who is capable of doing what to whom. The perceived relation between physical and functional capabilities may be far from simple.

People may carry around images of strategic intercontinental conflicts and NATO wars as independent forms of conflict, but are not so likely to think of naval warfare as occurring independently of either a NATO conflict or an overall strategic war. A limited naval warfare in some portion of the globe certainly is not to be excluded but it is an empirical question whether many people think of the naval balance in this way. On the other hand, naval forces are readily viewed as assisting in local interventions in various parts of the world. The strength of U.S. and Soviet strategic and European forces are

most readily viewed in terms of the outcome of a conflict between them, but the "goodness" or strength of U.S. and Soviet naval forces can easily be viewed in many circumstances in terms of each nation's relative ability to perform vis-a-vis a third party rather than against each other. In this sense U.S. and Soviet naval forces may be compared in the same way as one compares U.S. and Soviet airlift capabilities in contexts not implying an open conflict between the two countries.

#### The Global Balance

For the most part, military specialist may be most at home in speaking of a military balance in various sectors such as the strategic sector, the European (NATO) theater, or the naval sector. Other perceivers of the military scene may, however, have images or beliefs concerning some overall global military balance. This seems to be involved in various expressions concerning shifts in "global power," who can force the world to do its bidding, or who is riding the wave of the future. The "global balance," to the extent that it corresponds to a real image or idea in people's minds, is probably more of a compound of military, political and economic power than is true of the three individual sector balances considered so far. It probably has a heavy strategic component. Perceptions of "global power," where they exist, may be the product of perceptions of sector balances, but the inverse causality is not at all implausible.

## PERCEIVERS

The principal classes of subjects, that is, perceivers, in which we may be interested are:

Political leaders. How narrowly or broadly we define this group will depend on the political structure of the country with which we are dealing. We will generally want to include here the principal advisers, official and unofficial, of the political leaders. One must recognize that their public statements on the military balance will not necessarily represent their views.

Bureaucracy. Certain sectors of officialdom, especially in such areas as national defense and foreign affairs are clearly of interest, both because of their independent influence and their advice and information-giving functions to policy and decision-making levels.

Military. The military of a country are of interest for several reasons -- as advisers to the government and as planners and decision-makers whose decisions and policies may be influenced by their perceptions of the balance.

Parliamentarians. Parliamentarians are important because of their policy and legislative responsibilities and their influence on budgetary matters. Their accessibility through parliamentary debates and political speeches, and their possible predictive value for the perceptions of the less accessible political leaders give them considerable importance.

"The Literati." Here I include journalists, academicians, publicists, professional national security writers and analysts, and the like. This is probably an important group in influencing almost all other groups whose opinions are of interest. The effect of literati perceptions can hardly be understood simply by examining their opinions and the degree of agreement and disagreement among them. The influence of the literati requires fairly intensive investigation of the ways in which literati discussions, pronouncements, and debates affect each other and finally enter into other forms of literature and into the minds of the political classes, various special elites, and the public.

Because of their actual or potential influence, the sources of the perceptions of the literati is a subject of capital importance. The role of political figures and government officials in influencing literati perceptions of the balance is of particular importance, and probably varies substantially in different societies.

The Public. This residual term embraces anyone not included above, but more particularly it refers to the perceptions made available through public opinion polls, questionnaires, and academic studies of various major population sectors.

The value of studying more accessible groups may be substantial even though their perceptions of the military balance may be of less interest. One aim of perception studies is to understand the effect of particular types of events and information on perceptions. It is likely that dramatic events and announcements produce similar reactions in a wide variety of groups. The intrusion of nonrational factors in perceptions may very likely tend to uniformize the responses of different groups. Given the cost and difficulty of gaining accessibility to some groups, studies of reactions to certain classes of events in groups of lesser interest could still be worthwhile. Naturally, the value of one group as a predictor of the reactions of another group would be greatly increased if we could compare the reactions of the two groups in two or three instances.

The Russians do not seem to share our almost exclusive concern with high-level perceptions. They have considered it useful to influence the perceptions of their own and foreign publics on military affairs.

What countries are most relevant to study?

The answer to this question will depend on which objectives of perception studies are of primary interest. The perceptions of major allies and of potential antagonists are clearly of interest. But the policies of major allies are not independent of what lesser allies do. Thus the perceptions of the military balance in a small country may have repercussions in larger countries. In addition, in crisis situations, the position taken by a "minor" country may have crucial positive or negative consequences over a very wide political and military arena.

Similar considerations may apply to neutrals. The "one world" character of today's international affairs makes it hazardous to ignore "unimportant" countries. Some countries may deserve attention not because of their political significance, but because responses to certain types of events may be easier to study there. The ability to extrapolate results is, of course, important in these cases.

Substantial attention should be given to the perceptions of various sectors of the United States itself. It is almost certain that the perceptions of important sectors in the United States are a primary source for the perceptions of other countries. Besides, we are likely to understand better how perceptions in other countries arise if we are able to understand how the perceptions of U.S. elites and publics develop.

## SOURCES OF PERCEPTIONS

With this section we enter into topics that are predominantly empirical and require the clarification that only data can give. Nonetheless, a few relevant comments can be made.

A knowledge of the sources from which people draw their perceptions of the U.S.-S.U. balance would serve two principal purposes: First, it might enable us to infer the perceptions that people hold of the balance. Obviously this may be a risky type of inference. First, exposure to a source does not necessarily mean attention to what the source provides. Second, we cannot assume that people either believe or agree with the information or attitudes expressed by the sources. Third, not everyone using the same information will come to the same conclusion. However, for some population sectors of special interest, such as the political leadership, we may be able to specify sources in which confidence is high and thus be able to make less risky inferences concerning the perceptions of the group. Besides the mere preference by a perceiver for certain sources may in itself provide us with a good guess as to his views. Second, a knowledge of the sources from which people draw their information is indispensable for understanding how perceptions are formed and changed.

We often think of the sources of perception as information on the military balance conveyed either by the written or spoken word. However, perceptions of the balance can also be shaped by the political and military actions of countries. Anything from shoe-banging in the

United Nations to the invasion of Czechoslovakia (1968) may influence perceptions of the balance. Actions as a source of perceptions point up the fact that the same input may provide different people with rather different conceptions of the U.S.-S.U. balance. Aggressiveness may be viewed by some as an indication of superiority and by others as an expression of frustration and a sense of inferiority.

The effect of inputs on perception may be highly variable whenever information about the U.S.-S.U. balance is of an indirect character and leads to judgments of the military balance only by a process of inference. Thus we can distinguish media information on military capabilities from the media's influence through its presentations on political-military-economic events that influence judgments of the balance.

When information sources and perceptions of the balance coincide, we should not assume without further investigation that the information sources have produced the identity noted. The information sources may have been chosen largely because their statements agree with the judgments and attitudes of the subjects involved.

An important objective in studying sources of perceptions of the military balance is to understand not only the influence of sources on subjects but the influence of one source on another. We need some knowledge of how information and beliefs percolate from one source to another source and finally becomes available to this or that sector of the population. If we content ourselves only with the knowledge of the source that immediately provided the information to a subject, we have only a limited idea of what the information process is. We need

to trace out how the source in question got its own information and established its own perceptions. Relations among the media, between official and unofficial sources, public and private sources, foreign and native sources will presumably all be involved.

Research on sources of information should seek to establish their credibility for different audiences.

Some subjects acquire their perceptions by assimilating various bits of information on the balance which get integrated into a particular image of the military balance in their minds. Other subjects do not seek such information or even if they are exposed to it, do not assimilate it. What they assimilate are judgments enunciated by persons who are deemed reliable. Their perceptions of the military balance are essentially perceptions of the views of their "opinion leaders."

The political class often has to communicate its views on a subject to the country. They may have both a private perception of the balance and a public one. One should not discount the incentives they have to make private views of the balance accord with publicly expedient views.

#### PERCEPTIONS AND REALITY

The distribution of perceptions by their reality status, that is, by their coincidence with or deviation from reality is another empirical topic; here we only provide a few comments elaborating on those made earlier.

Difficulties in relating perceptions to reality may stem from decreased certainty about the reality, increased complexity of the

perception, decreased clarity in the perceptions, or the noncommensurability of perception and reality. If research is based on interviews, some matters concerning the perceptions can be made subject to clarification, although we may find that in asking for clarification we are leading the subject to express opinions on matters which he has not previously thought about or about which he has no conviction. Clarification may not be possible in the case of materials taken from printed sources.

If both reality and perceptions are expressed by a complex of statements, representation of deviations from reality is difficult. Often there is no way of establishing what elements have been put into a complex assessment and what weights have been attributed to them. Deviations of such perceptions from the reality assessment may represent differences with respect to what is viewed as relevant rather than disagreement on the facts.

The reality with which we wish to compare a perception is in fact another perception, ours, in which we have high confidence. On the other hand, the perceptions of our subjects may vary considerably with respect to the degree of confidence that the perceiver has in them. Thus we may find that certain perceptions accord with reality but the perceptions are held with a very low degree of confidence; this needs to be taken into account when we affirm the coincidence of reality (our perceptions) and the perceptions of others.

There are two different aspects to a statement concerning the deviation of perceptions from reality. Let us suppose that the

advantages or disadvantages in some aspect of the balance is expressed by ratios. A reality judgment may, for example, give the United States a 3:2 advantage. Perceiver X may express his perception as a 3:2 advantage for the Soviet Union, and perceiver Y may attribute an 8:1 advantage to the United States. On arithmetical grounds perceiver Y is further from reality than perceiver X. On the other hand, Y is closer to reality insofar as he views the advantage as lying with the United States, whereas perceiver X views it as lying with the Soviet Union. There is no contradiction involved here, but the example points to the need to distinguish deviations in amount and in direction.

One must suppose that if we study perceptions over a considerable range of perceivers, periods and military sectors, we will generally find that the deviations of perceptions from reality vary considerably in both amount and direction. There may be some aspects of the military balance that at particular periods are very highly classified and most perceptions may deviate substantially from reality, except in incidental cases where accordance with reality results more from an untutored guess than from any real knowledge or understanding. Assuming, however, that in most cases the deviations of perceptions from reality are distributed over a considerable range of values, we will want to account for these variations. Some rather obvious questions suggest themselves. Are the deviations associated with the class of perceivers? Thus do the perceptions of the "literati" accord more with reality than, say those of political leaders or parliamentarians or the public. Do perceptions of the balance accord better with reality

in strategic warfare than in the NATO area? Have perceptions of the military balance shown a greater tendency to accord with reality as time has gone on and information has increased? Do dramatic individual events (e.g. Czechoslovakia 1968) produce sharp changes in the deviations?

Charles Wolf has pointed out that at a given moment perceptions may deviate from reality but correspond with reality if the deviation is measured consistently with either a lead or a lag. It seems reasonable to suppose that for relatively well-informed subjects interested in military affairs the lead hypothesis is likely to apply, whereas for ill-informed persons and those relatively uninterested in military affairs the lag hypothesis is more relevant. For an informed and interested person the prospective picture is probably just as interesting or even more interesting than current or past situations. He may thus assimilate information concerning rates of change which may lead him to develop a perception of the present situation which anticipates the future. The disinterested person is more likely to ignore the future and the present, and it may take some time for changes to make an impression on him thus producing a lag. One difficulty with the foregoing is that if in fact an individual is very interested in, and very well-informed about, military affairs and the military balance, one might suppose that he would be able to avoid the tendency to predate the future that produces a lead deviation. The hypothesis seems more applicable to those who are moderately interested and informed.

Perceptions may show an inverse relationship to reality over a substantial period. This might occur in a situation in which a country with low capabilities makes strenuous efforts to persuade the world to the contrary and succeeds in so doing. This seems to be what in fact the Soviet Union did during the postwar period up to 1961-1962. The Soviet Union, very sensitive to any imputation of weakness, expended a great deal of effort to convince the world that it was making enormous progress in nuclear weapons, manned bombers, and missiles. The Soviet Union's attempts to conceal military weakness did in fact lead substantial parts of the world to view the military balance over a number of years as quite the reverse of what it was.

A thorough account of the perceptions of the military balance would try to explain certain aspects of perceptions already reviewed: the degree of confidence in one's judgment; the stability of perception; the affect attached to perception; the complexity or simplicity of perceptions (which is not the same as deviation or accordance with reality); the tendency to view the balance in terms of rates of change rather than comparisons of the current status; variations in preferred information sources on the balance; interactions among sources; tendencies for perceptions to lag or lead; the variability of perceptions with respect to clarity and fuzziness; and variations in the elements incorporated in perceptions, to mention only some.

In preceding sections we have necessarily touched on various mechanisms which bear on the explanation of perceptions of the military balance: the amount and nature of information available, the class of

perceivers involved, the sources available, the tendency for perceptions to be formulated in terms of materiel or in terms of warfighting capabilities, the effect of crises on perception, the impact of first-hand visual perception of military materiel and operations, to mention only a few.

#### THE IMPACT OF PERCEPTIONS

It is generally assumed, and quite correctly, that the military forces available to nations have played an enormous role in shaping political as well as military history. It is evident that until such time as they are actually brought into play, the effect of these forces on the behavior of nations is completely dependent on the perceptions of them. When they are brought into play, the consequences of the real as distinguished from the perceived balance of forces show themselves. But even during war itself, the perception of the forces as distinct from the forces themselves continue to play an important role.

The impact of perceptions of the military balance might be better understood if we examined how such perceptions in the past influenced political and military behavior. In earlier ages the fate of a king or a great noble not infrequently rested on the outcome of a single battle. Wars were often periods of mobilization and transportation of troops, leading to a single big confrontation with the enemy in a decisive battle, often with disastrous consequences for one side. Since the outcome of a single battle was a chancy matter, subject to many

unpredictable occurrences, the outcome of war itself became almost equally chancy. Political advisers especially and some rulers from ancient China through to the 16th century in the West continually stressed the dangers of wars in which one's fate depended on the outcome of a single -- and therefore unpredictable -- battle. To avoid serious fullscale battles that in one day could lose him a kingdom, Louis XI developed forces whose perception by his enemies, rather than whose action in battle, would gain him his objectives. Awe-inspiring fortifications, troops in a ready status, and forces of substantial size were intended not so much to win battles as to make them unnecessary. Such situations have an interesting resemblance to the position of the major nuclear powers. Strategic nuclear war by becoming, relatively speaking, a war with one big battle reduces war again to the point where one's fate rests on the uncertainties of a single event. Possibly a nuclear power might believe that a one-battle nuclear war is more calculable and less chancy than the one-battle wars of the past; but given the stakes in a strategic nuclear conflict, it would not take much caution to realize that this increased calculability, if it exists, is offset by the greatly increased losses if the calculations go wrong. In short, then, the aggressive nuclear power of today is perhaps in the position of Louis XI who feared to risk all on one battle but nonetheless used his military forces to gain his ends. Perceptions together with sparing military use substituted for fullscale military action.

In democracies the perceptions of the public have considerable importance because they affect both the freedom of leaders to expend funds for military purposes and may limit their freedom to utilize forces in being for various political or military purposes. The morale of forces themselves is not unrelated to how they perceive their relation of strength to those whom they may or are going to meet in battle. The Soviets have consistently acted as if they believed that the perceptions of masses in the democracies concerning the military balance have a significant political effect. And it seems evident that indeed it does. Within the Soviet Union itself the Party takes steps to ensure that the Soviet peoples have a firm conviction that their military forces are superior to those of any other nation. U.S. efforts in this direction used to rely largely on the efforts of certain patriotic societies and on July 4th oratory. Nowadays the exigencies of funding and congressional debate and the freer flow of information often mean that the images disseminated of U.S. military forces relative to other military forces are hardly those that July 4th orators would prefer. The varying consequences of overly optimistic and overly pessimistic perceptions need to be determined and distinguished.

Because of their influence on budgetary action and political and military planning, the perceptions of political leaders and parliamentarians are obviously of great importance. There are several problems of first-rate importance here. Do parliamentarians provide greater

support for a military force that they feel is inferior to that of a potential enemy or are they more inclined to take supportive action if they feel that past expenditures in the military sector have given their nation forces superior to anyone who might challenge them? May not a conviction that past expenditures have led to military inferiority inspire defeatist budgetary and political action whereas a conviction of military superiority may stimulate further interest in maintaining this superiority (rather than a do-nothing attitude as is sometimes supposed)?

One aspect of perceptions of the military balance that is of particular interest is the fear of one's own strength. This seems to be a contemporary phenomenon. There has probably not been in the past a period in which a nation or some prominent sector of it has shown great anxiety because of its own military strength. Today, a significant strain of thought sees great nuclear or in general military strength of one's own nation as leading to irresponsible or immoral behavior on the international scene. Thus perceptions of actual or potential superiority in the United States have in some sectors led to demands for reducing this superiority. Perceptions of military inferiority may not, in these groups, stimulate apprehension but rather a sense of relief and satisfaction that the political and military freedom of national leaders has been constrained by this inferiority.

#### CONCLUSION

This paper has sought to raise and systematize questions and

problems relative to research in the area of military balance perceptions. As stated in the introduction, it is no more than a general map of what as yet remains a vague and amorphous area of research. As work progresses in the field, it will be possible both to refine the map and to revise it. Considering the need of defense policy-makers to have a better understanding of the perceptions element surrounding the development and use of military forces, it is hoped that refinements and revisions will not be too long in coming.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE MISSING DIMENSION OF U.S. DEFENSE POLICY: FORCE, PERCEPTIONS AND POWER

by

Edward N. Luttwak

#### THE PROBLEM

In comparing the overall strategic conduct of the United States with that of the Soviet Union, a sharp contrast emerges between the obvious Russian emphasis on the psychological dimension of military policy, and the equally obvious neglect of this dimension in the military policy of the United States.

The essentially psychological concept of deterrence has been prominent in U.S. defense planning for many years, and yet force-structure and weapon-system decisions are still made without explicit consideration of the impact of these decisions on others' perceptions of U.S. military power. For example, the entire structure of the Soviet armed forces reveals the intention to capitalize systematically on the widespread tendency to evaluate military power in simple numerical terms; American force planners by contrast, tend to be guided by organizational preferences for high unit-quality, and tend to discount numbers per se. In the strategic-nuclear sector, for example, it has been U.S. policy to remove weapons from the inventory

as soon as they failed to meet the most exacting criteria of modernity. As against this, it has been Russian policy to retain any weapon which could still be represented as serviceable. As a result, some 980 ICBMs and 322 B.52 bombers have been withdrawn from U.S. operational forces over the last decade and a half, while the Soviet Union has with a few exceptions, retained in service virtually every strategic weapon it had ever deployed.

There were sound strategic, economic and technical reasons for withdrawing weapons such as the Atlas ICBMs from the operational inventory. By the time the SAL negotiations were in progress there were no Atlas ICBMs in the inventory to keep or withdraw. But the Minuteman I force was still intact. At a time when it was obvious that the force-ceilings of a SAL accord would reflect primarily the numerical status quo, U.S. decision-makers nevertheless chose to remove them to make way for the Minuteman 3s, instead of merely adding the new weapons to the old, as the Russians were doing with SS-11s and SS-9s.

There was a critical inconsistency in U.S. policy, which denied all importance to purely numerical factors in the context of force-structure decisions, and which then proceeded to give full diplomatic recognition to "mere numbers" in the context of international negotiations. The immediate effect of the policy was to set the stage for the advent of Russian numerical superiority in ICBMs -- a superiority formally recognized in the SAL-1 accords. The broader impact of the decision was manifest in the transformation of third-party perceptions of the strategic balance.

While there were a good many disparate factors at work in the Minuteman I decision, there can be little doubt that a major common denominator was the general tendency to ignore or at least discount the importance of perceptual factors. The notion that numbers alone, or any other "visible" indices, had a certain definite value in themselves could hardly have influenced decision-making since the perceptual dimension of deployment policy is refractory to quantitative evaluation -- unlike the engineering or financial dimensions -- and indeed it would have to rest on vague and unsystematic propositions about what others may or may not think about American strategic power. In a decision-making process that became increasingly mechanistic, particularly after 1961, in which greater and greater emphasis was placed on comparisons of variables that are easily quantifiable, wholly unquantifiable notions could hardly play a significant role. Even if admitted into the decision-process, which rarely happened, unsubstantiated contentions about the psychological (and therefore political) repercussions of force-structure or weapon-system decisions were thereafter discounted to the point of insignificance.

It is important to recognize the generality of the phenomenon. With a consistency that would be remarkable if it were accidental, Russian force-structure decisions have tended to maximize the perceptible manifestations of Soviet military power, while an equally consistent neglect of perceptual factors is evident from the character of American force structures. Far from being an isolated exception, the contrast

between the unilateral withdrawal of the Minuteman I force and the retention of the Soviet SS-7s and SS-8s is reproduced in virtually every sector of military power, from the number of army divisions to the armament of surface combatants.

Under present plans for example, the U.S. Army is to have a total of 16 active divisions, while at the last count the Soviet Army had more than ten times as many, 168. The overall manpower ratio, by contrast, is of the order of 2.15 to 1. It is known that only about one-third of the Russian divisions are deployed continuously at full strength, so that a direct comparison would have to include American reserve and National Guard forces also. Moreover, U.S. Army divisions are, of course, much larger than their Russian counterparts. If reorganized on Russian lines, with smaller divisions and still smaller division-slices (i.e. with diminished manpower in support and service forces outside divisions), and with the same proportion of under-strength units, the U.S. Army could deploy roughly 78 "divisions" with its present manpower level, thus reducing very considerably the apparent numerical imbalance between the two armies.

While some have advocated such a Soviet-style organization for purely military reasons, there is no reason to believe a priori that the ground-force organization of the Soviet armed forces is in fact strategically and tactically superior to the American. In particular, it has not been demonstrated convincingly that the Russian emphasis on ready combat power as opposed to sustained combat capability, or Russian methods of whole-unit replacement and in-unit training are

preferable to American priorities and methods. There is thus a prima facie case against the great strains and costs of such a reorganization -- if strategic and tactical effectiveness are the only "outputs" to be maximized.

But if the comparison includes the perceptual-political dimension, it is no longer possible to reserve judgment on which of the two force-structures is "better": it is abundantly clear that ever since 1945 the Soviet Union has gained great political net benefits from the perceived superiority of its ground forces over those of the United States in Europe and those of NATO as a whole. And it is equally obvious that these images of a superior Russian army have derived from, and have reflected the superior number of Russian divisions more than any other single index of ground-force capability.<sup>1</sup>

In countless official statements reference has been made to the threat posed by the "160 Soviet divisions" or "200 Warsaw Pact divisions."<sup>2</sup> These were, of course, Western statements, in almost every instance aimed at domestic audiences in conjunction with the annual budgetary struggle over defense expenditure. But the Russians for their part have also used their information channels to amplify and project images of a war-winning Soviet army.

In the 1950s, these images of Russian predominance on the ground served to counteract equally prevalent images of American superiority in air power and technological superiority in general. In the 1960s, such images served to counteract perceptions of American

superiority in strategic-nuclear forces of the two sides, images of a vastly superior Soviet ground force capable of overrunning Western Europe still persist.

There is no need to summarize here the post-1945 history of East-West relations in Europe in order to demonstrate that the Soviet Union has gained more than a mere psychological satisfaction from the widespread impression that its ground forces were vastly superior -- by orders of magnitude -- to those of the West. By translating what was at most a small measure of actual tactical superiority into the appearance of overwhelming strength, the Soviet Union has made tangible gains in the diplomatic arena, and continues to do so.

In the absence of conflict, the political shadow cast by European perceptions of Russian superiority on the ground sufficed to induce Western governments to make important concessions to the Soviet Union, accommodating Soviet demands that would otherwise have been rejected out of hand, or worse, ignored. The impact of this perceptual advantage has been manifest across the full range of East-West interactions in Europe, from the status-of-Berlin negotiations to the conduct of West European trade relations with the Soviet Union. It is of course difficult to disentangle the multiple factors involved in the conduct of such relations. But neither is it essential for the argument to do so: the central fact that should never be lost sight of is that the Soviet Union remains much less important than, say, Italy. As a source of raw materials, it is quite outclassed in the energy sector

by any one of several Persian Gulf oil exporters, and in the food and fibre sector, by the United States. As a source of investment capital and technological know-how for Europe, the Soviet Union ranks with Liechtenstein rather than with, say, Austria. Hence the unique importance of military power as a constituent of overall national power for the Soviet Union.

The great factor which the leaders of Western Europe have had to contend with is the purely military strength of the Soviet Union, and they have done so by a mixture of deterrence and conciliation. In the latter lay the payoff as far as the Russians were concerned.

It may be argued that in making concessions to the Soviet Union -- the concessions which translated Russian military strength into actual political leverage -- the leaders of Western Europe were not being deluded by false images of Russian superiority on the ground, but were rather motivated by realistic appreciations of the "true" balance of military power. According to this line of argument, the fact that the Russians deployed their ground troops into many divisions while U.S. and NATO forces were organized in fewer and larger divisions, was quite irrelevant, for policy-level appreciations of the balance of power were not based on misleading divisional counts but rather on "actual" Russian capabilities, as well as on the imputed propensity of the Soviet Union to initiate a conflict.

Common sense would suggest that the national leaders of sophisticated European nations could hardly make an error so crude as to

compare units that were quite unequal. But against this presumption there is a mountain of evidence which demonstrates beyond doubt that the terms of the comparison are almost always much closer to those suggested by simple divisional counts than, say, manpower counts.<sup>3</sup>

Comparisons of NATO and Warsaw Pact ground capabilities based on the single index of, say, the actual troop strengths available to the two sides would be grossly inadequate, but at least they would be meaningful, if only partially so. By contrast, comparisons of divisional counts alone, strictly speaking, are quite meaningless, given the order-of-magnitude inequality between the units thus being counted. And yet Western perceptions of Russian superiority on the ground do not correlate with the fractional advantages yielded by manpower comparisons but rather with much wider margins of advantage, which correspond quite closely to the meaningless comparisons of divisional counts. The consistency of this pattern of perceptions is much too great to make the correlation coincidental.

Further evidence of the saliency of purely numerical indices is provided by another popular token of Russian superiority: the greater number of Russian battle tanks as compared to those of NATO in Europe. It is of course true that the Russian inventory of battle tanks has always exceeded by far that of the NATO forces in Europe, or indeed of NATO worldwide. But it is also true that in comparing the strength of a defensive alliance with that of a force poised for the offensive, a straight comparison of the number of battle tanks on each side is a

very poor guide to the relative capabilities on the defense and the offense respectively. It would be more useful, for example, to compare Warsaw Pact tank capabilities with NATO anti-tank capabilities (in which tanks do play an important role). As another approximation, it would also be less misleading to evaluate Russian mobility forces as against NATO firepower, air support, and mine warfare capabilities. But in fact, such comparisons are hardly ever found in statements of "the military balance" in Europe. Instead, great prominence is given to the "40,000 tanks of the Russian Army," or to the "20,000 tanks" of the Warsaw Pact in Central Europe as opposed to the "7,000 tanks" of NATO in the central sector.<sup>4</sup>

Quite apart from the tactical-operational considerations which invalidate the comparison, and aside from the inherent inadequacy of any comparison which excludes the "software" of morale, leadership and planning in counting the hardware, there is also the fact that Russian tanks have lost their former qualitative superiority, and are now on average considerably inferior to their British, West German and American counterparts. In spite of all these reasons for rejecting out of hand the simple tank count as an index of military power, numerical tank comparisons are still featured as key indices of ground force capabilities.

Much the same state of affairs prevails in the naval sector of the super-power competition. From small beginnings, and in particular from a grossly inferior qualitative base, the Soviet Navy has grown in quantity and apparent quality to the point where it can no longer be

dismissed as an antagonist to the US Navy. Indeed there have already been the first suggestions that the proper goal of US naval policy should now be to attain some form of "parity" with the Soviet Navy, or at any rate to concede some semblance of parity in the framework of bilateral naval limitation accords.

Given the utter superiority of the US Navy when the naval competition first began in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, and given the heavy investment in naval power made by the United States since then, the success of Russian naval planners has been spectacular, in some ways more striking than Russian achievements in other sectors of the arms' competition. Without for the moment questioning the capabilities of the Soviet Navy under realistic politico-military assumptions, it must be recognized that in the eyes of the world the Russian Navy has achieved some sort of rough parity with the US Navy.

Once again, the perceptual factors that have served to form the impression in men's minds that the two navies have become somehow equivalent in power are denoted by their simple character: straightforward ship counts, and equally simple visual imagery, pseudo-qualitative in character. (Soviet warships are commonly described as "bristling with weapons.") It is ironic that the numerical parity between the two fleets was not brought about so much by the Soviets themselves as it was by the deliberate policy of American naval planners. Between 1969 and 1975 the number of US Navy vessels was

reduced from 976 to 483 through the accelerated retirement of older and less capable warships. This drastic cut in the size of the fleet may or may not have been justified (the post-decision increases in operating costs certainly strengthens the argument in its favor), but right or wrong, the decision implied a very strong preference for unit quality as opposed to mere numbers, and a strong preference for a fleet of fully operational warships over a much larger fleet kept at a lower level of readiness. These preferences presumably reflected strategic calculations about the respective worth of quality versus quantity--and not merely bureaucratic tastes and traditional preferences.

It is therefore noteworthy that at the very time when the decision to opt for quality was being implemented, official Navy spokesmen, and prominent retired officers, began to popularize comparisons of the US and Soviet fleets cast in terms of the total number of warships deployed, and even in terms of "ship-days" in particular areas of deployment.<sup>5</sup> (Considerable currency was for example given to assessments of the naval balance in the Eastern Mediterranean on the occasion of the October 1973 crisis which were stated exclusively in numerical terms.) Thus the very people who decided to reduce the numerical strength of the Navy in order to upgrade present and future quality, immediately proceeded to neglect qualitative factors altogether in popularizing straight numerical comparisons between the Soviet and US navies.<sup>6</sup>

It is, or should be, perfectly clear that the US and Soviet navies cannot be usefully compared by simple ship-counts, or for that

matter in terms of gross tonnage -- in which the US Navy remains superior by far. Given the profound structural differences between the two navies, not even detailed and sophisticated materiel comparisons are of any use. For example, the US Navy has a variety of offensive air capabilities as well as an opposed-landing capability of major proportions, while Soviet capabilities in these respects are still embryonic.

Nor can comparisons between the two fleets be made on the basis of the presumed outcome of naval battles. For one thing, the outcome of combat scenarios is predetermined by their tactical and strategic assumptions to a degree unique to naval warfare. More important, the utility of the two fleets is not determined only by what they could do to each other in the event of all-out warfare between the Soviet Union and the United States, but also by what they could do to others, in less improbable circumstances. For example, in the context of a "normal" Middle East crisis, the ability of the Soviet fleet to destroy the Sixth Fleet in an all-out "splendid" missile strike is simply irrelevant: in realistic political terms what matters is that the Sixth Fleet could land troops and provide air support (or air defense) for American clients in the area, while the Soviet Navy would have the sole option of launching an all-out attack against the Sixth Fleet or else doing nothing of substance (unless the shipping of local powers is a worthwhile target for attack or defense).

All such considerations are now obscured by the prevalence of simplistic numerical comparisons. Reiterated endlessly in official statements before Congress, in speeches widely diffused by the media, these ship-counts have created images that have become international political realities, with manifest consequences on the attitudes of political leaders the world over. While from the Soviet Union there issues a steady stream of glorification of the Soviet Navy the message relayed by American media stresses the inadequacies of the US Navy and the loss of its former superiority; almost always the prime emphasis is on the ship counts. Whatever the pressures of the Congressional appropriations process, the public relations' stance of the Navy should come under close scrutiny, for these comparisons of U.S. and Soviet naval power though aimed at domestic opinion in fact shape third-party perceptions of the naval segment of the overall balance of military power. As such, these comparisons play a significant part in determining the respective standing of the two superpowers, and therefore their influence on the world scene.

#### PERCEPTIONS AND THE POLITICAL UTILITY OF ARMED FORCES

The political utility and military effectiveness of a given structure of armed forces exist in different worlds, one the world of appearances, impressions and culturally-determined value-judgments of international politics; the other, the world of physical reality in actual warfare. This fundamental difference, that is the difference

between force and power, has only been clearly analyzed quite recently in the literature of political science. Without delving into the complexities of the distinction, some of the more salient differences may be noted: force is definitive, its operation being physical, unambiguous and direct. Power, on the other hand, is indirect since it is a function of what others are willing to do in response to the tacit or explicit demands of the powerful. Power must be recognized by others if it is to function whereas force functions in of itself. Hence the centrality of perceptions in the working of power, and their crucial role in determining the political utility of armed forces.

If "true" combat capabilities were always perceived correctly, then all distinctions between power and force, or between political utility and military effectiveness, would not matter at all from the viewpoint of defense planning. If there were perfect information, and if the assumptions under which forces are evaluated by all parties were identical, actual and perceived capabilities would always have to be identical also. But in reality there are many factors which tend to make for a significant and sometimes gross divergence between the two.

First and most obvious is the simple problem of information. Only a handful of the 142 governments now represented in the U.N. have independent means of intelligence collection with which to establish what weapons and what forces are deployed by the United States, the Soviet Union and any other power not immediately adjacent to them.

Second, there is the problem of evaluation. Even with perfect data on all the tangible aspects of military power, it remains impossible to arrive at uniform assessments of power balances, which convert materiel and human inputs into true potential combat capabilities, by taking due account of the intangibles of training, managerial efficiency, morale and leadership. Hardware comparisons are not merely inadequate on their own, but worse than useless. They do not so much convey only a part of reality as obscure reality altogether. On the other hand, as soon as evaluations go beyond the tangibles, they must include subjective assessments of genuine imponderables, such as leadership and morale. And when this is done--as it must be done -- evaluations will cease to be uniform even if all evaluators have access to identical data on the tangible components of military power.

Third, there is the problem of salience. The relevance of different types of combat capability differs sharply according to the roster of antagonists. The extensive anti-submarine capabilities of the U.S. Navy may be an important segment of the deterrent spectrum vis a vis the Soviet Union with its large submarine force. But the same anti-submarine capabilities would not count for much in deterring, say, Syria, which has no real submarine force at all. Even where the contrast is less extreme, it will readily be appreciated that the salience of a given array of capabilities differs from context to context, and specifically, that the physical reality of U.S. military capabilities breaks down into many separate perceived realities vis a vis as many separate antagonists.

For these reasons, the images of military capabilities perceived by others may differ greatly as between different perceivers. In general, perceptions will not be an accurate reflection of the "objective" reality of physical capabilities as revealed from time to time by the test of actual warfare. It follows that the optimization of combat capabilities will not ensure simultaneously the optimization of the "power" projected by any given force-structure. Hence if the overall politico-military "output" of the nation's investment in its military establishment is to be maximized, explicit consideration must be given to the perceptual factor. Indeed the latter must be elevated into a major criterion of force-planning and deployment decision-making. In other words, in order to extract maximum benefits from U.S. military forces, their structure and modes of operation must be deliberately aimed at projecting images of power, in ways that are readily absorbed by the world-wide "audience" of political actors and opinion-makers.

#### THE MODALITIES OF PERCEPTION

Complex though they are, the data which describe physical weapon capabilities will at least be uni-dimensional: if the range of a missile is stated at 5,000 miles, this will be so whether the audience for the statement is the high command of the RAF or an Indian peasant. By contrast, for the reasons listed above, perceptions of military power will differ as between different classes of perceivers.

We can distinguish between at least three classes: (a) policy-makers and inner elite members with access to privileged information

(and technical advice), and with a strong professional interest in politico-military issues; (b) media operatives and other opinion-makers with access to large information flows, not necessarily detailed and with a less concentrated interest in politico-military issues; (c) the general public, with access only to the data conveyed by mass media, and whose level of attention to politico-military issues varies from the very intense (e.g. in countries at war) to the very low, the latter being altogether more common.

A second distinction can be made a priori as between different types of national systems. For practical purposes, at least four categories of countries may be usefully distinguished:

Type I systems: economically-developed modern societies, with democratic forms of government. In these, the perceptions of all three classes have an impact on the total policy process. This group includes the United States, most NATO members, the Dominions, Israel and a few other countries.

Type II systems: highly centralized totalitarian societies. In these, only the perceptions of Class A (policy-makers and inner elite) will have an impact on policy-formation over the short-and medium term. This category includes the USSR and the CPR, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea.

Type III: under-developed, modernizing larger states whose governance is authoritarian but not totalitarian. In these,

the perceptions of classes A and B (opinion-makers), both count, but not the perceptions of class C (mass publics). This category includes Brazil, Egypt, India, and Iran.

Type IV: under-developed small states with ruling micro-elites which have no access to worthwhile privileged information. In these class A and class B perceivers cannot be usefully separated: both rely on imported mass-media information which is usually of Western origin. This category includes most of the 142 members of the U.N.

From the above categorization it can be deduced directly that the following groups of perceivers are of practical significance:

<u>Type I</u>	<u>Type II</u>	<u>Type III</u>	<u>Type IV</u>
A	A	A	None
B		B	
C			

The omission of class C perceivers in Type III countries follows by definition: even if their opinions counted for something in the policy-making process, there is no practical way of reaching this group. Radio media may convey facts and figures to this audience, but in the absence of the necessary context such facts and figures are bound to be virtually meaningless. The omission of all classes under Type IV is explained by the dependence of the one relevant group (the small ruling elite) on out-of-country information sources, i.e., the general Western -- or more rarely Soviet -- media: while the former are

already covered under Type I, Soviet media are in any case beyond reach. No matter what steps could be taken to enhance the visibility and perceptual impact of American power, controlled outlets such as TASS would process the information unfavorably.

It is obvious that the perceptions of class A observers in Type I and Type II countries are of central importance: they collectively determine those balances of perceived power which govern the external conduct of the most important states on the world scene. Nevertheless it is by no means self-evident that these two groups ought to be the principal targets of perceptual manipulation addressed specifically at these groups as opposed to all other groups. This because class A observers in Type I and Type II countries are likely to be refractory to such perceptual manipulation: while a shift in the perceptions of such groups would count for much more than a similar shift in the perceptions of any other groups, it is also likely to be very much more difficult to achieve. For one thing, it is to be expected that data derived from U.S. actions would reach class A observers in both types of countries through the medium of sophisticated channels of information with a high technical content. Such channels ought to filter out factors that distort perceptions of military power, and the technical analysis of the incoming data will normally resist manipulation.

It remains to define -- a least conceptually -- what military-force characteristics are liable to be salient in the perception of non-technical observers. What follows is a brief review of propositions which seem most plausible.

(1) Time is discounted. The general tendency is to anticipate future changes in military capabilities. An obvious example is the public reaction to such events as the Soviet test of a fission device in 1949. The reaction was not that the Soviet Union would become more "powerful" in X years, when it would deploy operational forces equipped with fission bombs; it was rather that the Soviet Union had become more powerful, as of the time word of the fission test was released. Even though this foreshortening of time was based on error (i.e. the failure to take deployment lags into account), the impact was real nevertheless: the Soviet Union did become more powerful, in that its ability to deter or compel -- a function of others' reactions to its presumed capabilities -- increased as soon as the news of the fission test were released, by the United States.

Time is also discounted in a more subtle sense: there is a general tendency to aggregate military capabilities, economic resources and technical ingenuity into a common perception of power. While defense planners must contend with the fact that in a central conflict it will probably be impossible to convert economic resources into deployed military capabilities in a timely manner, it appears that even class B perceivers in Type I countries continue to treat the mobilization potential of societies as part of their current strength on the world scene.

The most direct consequence of the discounting of time is that in determining perceptions of military capabilities, especially in comparative terms, the impact of perceived rates of change may equal or

outweigh the impact of current capabilities. A statement such as "in 1985 the Soviet air force will become more 'powerful' than the USAF unless . . ." is not perceived primarily as meaning that the USAF is more "powerful" now; instead it will tend to enhance perceptions of Soviet air power in the present. The common practice of U.S. spokesmen, official and otherwise, of stressing Russian progress in this or that sector of the competition therefore has a particularly negative impact on third-party perceptions of the balance of power.

(2) There are sharp differences in the perceptual impact of different kinds of information about military capabilities, at any rate as far as non-technical observers are concerned. Initial guidance on the relative ease of absorption of different forms of information can be provided by the content of commercial advertising (correcting for cultural bias); this is particularly useful because of the objective feedback that guides its content (i.e. sales figures). By inference from the practices of commercial advertising, the following propositions may be derived:

a) Force-level figures are readily absorbed because numbers are conceptually simple in themselves, (as opposed to non-trivial qualitative information). However, if numerical descriptions of military forces are to have a strong perceptual impact, the units involved must be vividly meaningful to the audience.

For example, "divisions," "tanks" and -- to a lesser extent -- "ICBMs" are meaningful units, in the sense that non-technical observers believe that they understand what these terms describe. This is so even if in fact the meaning of these units is being misunderstood -- which is especially likely to be the case in comparisons of different national forces, where combat formations are often unequal in substance even if their nomenclature is identical.

b) Further if numbers are to have an impact, context must be supplied, usually by means of comparisons. For example, the statement that the Soviet Union has 1,618 ICBMs may be interpreted to mean that the Soviet Union is weak, since a good many non-technical observers seem to think that the super-powers have "thousands" of ICBMs. By contrast, the statement that the Soviet Union has 1,618 ICBMs viz. 1,054 for the United States is readily understood in a broadly correct sense, (i.e. the Soviet Union has "more").

c) While numbers are readily absorbed, they are not computed easily. Hence the perceptual impact

of multiple numerical statements is actually likely to be degraded, unless the implication of the numbers is cumulative, (e.g. "The Soviet Union has 600 more ICBMs, and 200 more SLBMs . . . " viz. "The Soviet Union has 600 more ICBMs but 250 fewer bombers, 200 more SLBMs but 300 fewer cruise missiles . . . etc.")

d) Performance data is not readily absorbed unless a clearly understood index of normality is provided. In describing the constituents of military power this will usually be a maximal benchmark, (e.g. the "world's fastest aircraft" viz. "aircraft flown at Mach 3.8").

e) Qualitative information may be readily absorbed also, if it can be conveyed in visual terms, or at least in vivid verbal imagery. Non-technical observers can see an aircraft carrier, in life or photography. Past exposure to either will enable such observers to visualize aircraft carriers on the basis of non-visual information. By contrast, non-technical observers cannot visualize radar or sonar equipment. The same consideration applies to the generally higher-impact information on capabilities-in-use. Again, non-technical observers can visualize the meaning of "three tank divisions advancing . . . " but they cannot visualize the (possibly much more striking)

performance of radar, sonar, or other such systems. Verbal imagery may be vivid and perceptually effective even when the operations described cannot be seen at all, as in the case of a successful ballistic-missile intercept ("Like hitting a fly in outer space; like hitting a bullet with a bullet . . .").

f) Actual personal exposure to the reality of on-going military activities can have a wholly disproportionate impact on perceptions of military capabilities. An observer exposed to the sights and sounds of flight-operations on board an aircraft-carrier may thereafter discount all kinds of less vivid information that would counteract his own personal impressions of formidable power (e.g. data on Soviet anti-carrier capabilities).

g) Non-technical observers tend to be over-impressed by technologically-advanced qualitative features of military equipments, regardless of their actual contribution to force-effectiveness. Hence "nuclear aircraft-carrier" has a greater impact on non-technical perceptions than "aircraft carriers". Similarly, the importance of bombers may be discounted because of a tendency to regard

them as "old-fashioned," as compared to ballistic missiles. (Given enough exposure, the cruise missiles may in turn displace the ballistic missile as the advanced strategic weapon par excellence.)

As some of the above will have shown, perceptions find their place in frames of reference which are themselves the cumulative residue of earlier perceptions. The perceivers are "educated" progressively through exposure to successive layers of information. Most of the world's supply of data on military power emanates from the U.S. Department of Defense. The remainder largely originates from specialized publications with good access to U.S. defense officials and defense contractors. Soviet and other adversary primary sources provide only a small fraction of the military data, and hardly any numerical data at all.

Similarly, information on military capabilities world-wide reaches the global audience -- elite or otherwise -- primarily through American media channels, notably the weekly newsmagazines, the major newspapers, news-agency reports and technical journals. Non-American Western media convey a distinctly smaller amount of data on military capabilities. Non-Western media, including Soviet media, convey very little original data; in fact even specialized Soviet military publications rely almost exclusively on data quoted from Western media in covering U.S., Soviet and Chinese military capabilities.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. DEFENSE POLICY

The propositions set out above are no more than hypotheses; they need to be elaborated in much greater detail and then tested through opinion research, especially elite-opinion research. But it is not premature to consider the possible implications for U.S. defense policy. Three broad policy approaches to the problem present themselves. The first would be to formulate and implement a purposeful information policy for the Department of Defense on the lines of institutional advertising. The idea would be to augment the political "output" by existing force-structures and modes of deployment by enhancing the images of power they generate, and by overcoming their perceptually negative features. Elements of such a policy would range from, say, detailed and repeated explanations of the vast difference between Soviet and U.S. Army divisions, to the systematic exposure of elite observers to suitable U.S. capabilities in action (e.g. many more visits to aircraft carriers especially when engaged in flight operations), to the upward redesignation of combat formations. This cosmetic approach would require no actual changes in force-structures and modes of deployment. The recent redesignation of U.S. Navy warships -- whatever its motives -- is an example of such a cosmetic policy in action: Large destroyers have become cruisers, the patrol frigate has become a guided-missile frigate, and so on.

The second approach would seek to change the reality, rather than to attempt to present an unchanged reality differently. An example of this more drastic approach -- which may entail more military-organizational

costs than political benefits -- would be to restructure the ground formations of the U.S. Army so as to yield 32 smaller divisions instead of the planned 16, or even to produce 160 "combat groups" (=battalions). Another kind of structural change would be to change the configuration of USN warships so as to augment their visible armament (presumably at the expense of invisible but more useful capabilities). A non-structural change in the mode of operation of current forces, would be to increase the exposure of USN attack submarines. (Their capabilities are usually overlooked in the semi-official estimates of Soviet and US Naval capabilities in Mediterranean conflict scenarios which are now in circulation.) It is evident that if taken to extremes, this approach would lead to the deployment of "cardboard" military forces, on the lines of the Italian army and navy of the inter-war period, which were used in effect as theatrical props, to support an activist foreign policy.

But in a less extreme form, this approach is not to be dismissed. There are for example a good many tactical analysts who already advocate the abandonment of the large-division Army (and Marine) force-structure for purely military reasons, without regard to the (greater) perceptual impact of more units, albeit smaller ones. Similarly, there are a good many naval analysts who question the wisdom of continued investment in small numbers of very large hulls in the presence of the single-shot ship-killing missile. Again, such analysts argue the merits of more and smaller hulls independently of the possible impact on world-wide perceptions of US naval power that a larger fleet might have. Much

the same line of argument is followed in regard to tactical aircraft and battle tank design. (The investment cost of a 35-ton tank with simple fire-control and other ancillaries might be not much more than a third of the expected XM-1 cost.) With regard to each of these questions controversy continues. In circumstances where the merits of the case are evenly divided on cost and military-effectiveness grounds, introduction of the perceptual factor under this second approach might legitimately swing the balance.

There is finally a third approach to the problem, one which would avoid the extremes of the minimalist "cosmetic" approach on the one hand, and of the maximalist approach of perceptual-optimization on the other. This third approach would legitimize the perceptual dimension of defense policy, making it an accepted component of the overall problem of maximizing the political-military utility of the defense effort as a whole. Under this approach, estimates of the perceptual impact of the various alternatives under consideration would be taken into account in the decision-making process, along with the established variables of cost, technical performance, tactical effectiveness, strategic suitability and so on.

In practice, this would entail the development of "perceptual impact analyses" that would be injected on a routine basis into the decision process on weapon-system procurement, force-planning and peacetime force-deployment. Detailed guidelines for the conduct of such "perceptual-impact analyses" cannot be developed in the abstract, but would require ad hoc formulation, consistent with the particular

nature of the audience, the salient forms of communication and the major features of the pre-existing perceptual-political context. For example, a perceptual-impact analysis of a small augmentation (or reduction) of the US ground forces in West Germany would entail a different "audience" than a perceptual-impact analysis of the B.1 bomber program, and it would also entail different forms of communication and a different pre-existing context.

In the former case, it might be determined for example that the primary audiences are West German and other NATO class A and class B groups, as well as the Chinese and Russian class A audience, more or less in that order of priority. The primary forms of communication are liable to be indirect, with the German mass public receiving the data through German media -- which are apt to transmit the information without the qualifications and mention of countervailing factors that the original official release is liable to include, and which American media are more likely to include. Salient features of the pre-existing perceptual-political context might include the high profile of Soviet ground capabilities, and the residual uncertainties that still attend the American commitment to European defense. In the second case on the other hand, the primary audience for the B.1 bomber program is the Russian class A group; the forms of communication will include internal Soviet intelligence channels, and the pre-existing perceptual-political context may include notions of manned bomber effectiveness -- a residue of Backfire advocacy -- while the notion that bombers are generally "old-fashioned" is much

more likely to be prevalent among secondary audiences such as those of Western Europe.

Having determined what are the relevant audiences and forms of communication, and having defined the salient features of the pre-existing perceptual-political context, the next step would be to formulate tentative guidelines for the perceptual dimension of the decision. At this stage all sorts of questions would arise: Does the German public know how many US troops are in Germany? Or rather, what proportion of the public has a generally accurate notion of the number of troops? To what extent is the number of troops regarded by class A and B audiences as important per se in NATO deterrence? How does this square with the seemingly still prevalent idea that NATO strategy is primarily strategic-nuclear, with a tripwire ground force component? Or is this idea no longer current? and so on. The hypothetical guidelines themselves (generally based on the propositions set out in Part III above), and such subordinate questions would next have to be defined precisely so that they can be tested through actual opinion research, primarily elite-opinion research. Finally on the basis of tested theories a reasoned and documented perceptual input would be made into the decision process, alongside with the cost analysis, tactical strategic and branch-preference inputs. While never as exact as inputs based on actual (not planned) costs and actual (not expected) performance, the perceptual inputs thus developed should not entail conspicuously greater uncertainties than many of the established criteria which now govern defense decision-making. Politics

and perceptual analysis are not exact sciences, but then neither is the study of war.

Especially in regard to the first example given above, it may be objected that the perceptual-political variables are already introduced into defense policy, for example, through State Department interventions on such issues as US troop deployments in Europe and Korea, and the deployment of the Sixth Fleet. (In regard to the latter, the degree of detailed attention is such that consideration of the possibility of withdrawing one of the two carriers in the Fleet suffices to evoke strong State Department objections.) It is true that in these established practices there are the rudiments of a perceptual-political input for defense policy, but it is clear that this is a very inadequate for it is confined to a very few issues, notably deployment decisions of particularly high visibility. There are no such inputs for force-structure planning or weapon-system procurement decisions, and neither does it seem likely that agencies such as State or the International Security Affairs Office of the Defense Department would be qualified to provide detailed and continuing guidance on the perceptual-political dimension of these areas of decision.

#### CONCLUSION

It was argued above that it is not possible to extract the maximum politico-military benefit from the nation's expenditure on its military forces, unless explicit consideration is given to the perceptual effects of their configuration, structure and modes of

deployment. It was further argued that it is well within the scope of the relevant disciplines and methods to evaluate such perceptual effects in a manner sufficiently unambiguous to allow the resulting data to be introduced in the decision-making processes of the Department of Defense. (This last proposition may be tested through case studies of perceptual-impact analyses of major decision alternatives.) It remains to devise procedures whereby the perceptual dimension of defense policy can be integrated within the established processes of decision. This last problem fortunately transcends the scope of the present study.

#### NOTES

1. Virtually every press article touching on the issue includes a comparison of Warsaw Pact and NATO military strength case in terms of divisional counts; few articles proceed to mention other indices (e.g. manpower totals or quality). Hardly any compare aggregate troop quantity and force quality.
2. E.g. successive British Defence White Papers and U.S. "posture statements."
3. See R. J. Vincent, Military Power and Political Influence: The Soviet Union and Western Europe (London: IISS, 1975) and Ken Booth, The Military Instrument in Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1972 (London: Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, 1974).

4. These particular figures come from the 1974-1975 edition of the Military Balance (London: IISS, 1974) p. 93. As the present writer has pointed out elsewhere [The US-USSR Nuclear Weapons Balance (Beverly Hills: SAGE, 1974), pp. 1-6.] most published assessments of the military balance are cast in terms of materiel or human inputs, and not in terms of the capability outputs. It is understood that output comparisons require the complex and uncertain evaluation of actual combat capabilities, while input comparisons are conceptually simple and may ever be definitive. This does not alter the fact that input comparisons are sometimes quite meaningless, and almost always grossly misleading.

5. Detailed reference would be pointless. Among countless examples official and otherwise, a recent ship-count statement is quite remarkable. In the Philadelphia Enquirer, October 30, 1975 (p.2B), RADM Wycliffe D. Toole, Jr. is reported as follows: "Our Navy, today, has only 483 ships . . . . The Soviets now have about 1,700 ships . . . that is gray-painted ships . . . Some experts have put the real strength of the Soviet Navy at closer to 2,200 ships."

6. As a bureaucratic tactic, the quality-quantity switch may of course make ample sense. In terms of world-wide perceptions of US naval power, it has been a disaster.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE MEASUREMENT OF WEAPONS SYSTEMS BALANCES: BUILDING UPON THE PERCEPTIONS OF EXPERTS

by

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and

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#### INTRODUCTION

This chapter is concerned with the problem of how one measures the capabilities of different countries relative to specific weapons systems (such as fighter aircraft or diesel attack submarines). After introducing and critiquing some methods currently employed, the writers suggest and illustrate the use of an alternative technique entailing multiple attribute utility (MAU) measurements. The technique explicitly incorporates the perceptions of relevant experts in assessing how different countries rank relative to a particular weapons systems balance.

#### CURRENT METHODS OF EVALUATING MILITARY BALANCES

We will briefly review current methods employed in evaluating military capability in order to establish a baseline from which to

assess the utility of any new methods. One of the most commonly used measures is overall production costs,<sup>1</sup> the inference being that capability is related to these costs. A second method involves assigning dollar values to specific technical capabilities. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) utilizes such a method which values weapons systems by taking into account technological factors such as speed, pay load, and technological innovation, as well as production costs.<sup>2</sup> This method recognizes that the military capability of weapons - and the role they play in international relations - is not reflected in economic value alone.

A third approach which we call the inventory approach involves counting types of equipment such as tanks, fighter aircraft, or submarines in order to create a balance sheet. Those who construct such balance sheets often proceed to a somewhat higher level of measurement, incorporating in some way the performance characteristics of the weapons systems on the balance sheet. John Collins' Library of Congress Study<sup>3</sup> provides a good example of this phenomenon. Referring to the disparity in the tactical airlift balance favoring the Soviet Union, he states that "this disparity is disproportionate, because nothing in the Soviet inventory matches the performance characteristics of the U.S. C-130 fleet, which is easily the world's best."<sup>4</sup>

A fourth approach is the formal aggregation of performance characteristics in order to assign quantitative values to specific weapons systems. This approach can employ the statistical technique

of factor analysis, in which the characteristics of a weapons system such as an aircraft (speed, turning radius, thrust-to-weight ratio, maximum payload) are statistically combined to produce factors such as air superiority and ground support.<sup>5</sup> In another variant of this approach, ratio measures of capability are created by the simple product of speed, payload and combat radius.<sup>6</sup> In a third variant, the Defense Intelligence Agency has developed a Theoretical Weapons Effectiveness score, a multiplicative index combining lethality (yield x rate of fire), accuracy (1/CEP) and survivability (reliability x mobility x vulnerability). Scores have been developed for over 200 Soviet weapons systems.<sup>7</sup>

#### CRITIQUE OF CURRENT METHODS

Although the above survey of current weapons capability assessment techniques was necessarily brief,<sup>8</sup> it is complete enough to demonstrate some basic methodological weaknesses. First, there is very little attention paid to the validity and reliability of indicators. For example, SIPRI's valuation technique does not indicate the coding rules for assigning scores to weapons systems. The research cannot be replicated and hence lacks validity. A second problem involves the assumption in all of the methods that the indicators of military capability are linear. It is more likely that a weapons system will reach the "no value" point long before the indicators used reach zero. Also,

the current methods do not take into account the law of diminishing returns or any other curvilinear function. A third weakness is the lack of attention paid to aggregation rules when multiple indicators of military capability are employed. Does one add or multiply? A fourth issue can be termed the "balance for what purpose" problem. Most of the methods are not region or mission-specific. Despite the wide variety of methods, most can still be categorized as "the baseball statistician's approach." It provides the decision-maker and analyst with a set of numbers but provides little guidance as to how to use them to solve specific problems. "Because the decision maker cannot understand or assimilate thousands of numbers, all only indirectly related to the question at hand, he has no choice but to select out a few, combine them with a large dose of intuition and political savvy, and make a seat-of-the-pants decision."<sup>9</sup>

Perhaps the most basic weakness of these methods is the total lack of attention paid to the role of perceptions in evaluating military capability. Analysts seek to explain deterrence and arms races using dollar valuation techniques without first demonstrating that nation-states in fact react to money spent by their rivals and/or enemies. Speed, payload and combat radius are assumed to be the performance characteristics which nation-states key on in making national security decisions. Much of this inadequacy is due to confusing actual combat experience with quite different phenomena such as deterrence or arms racing. Detailed analysis of battle outcomes may reveal the importance

of characteristics which might not be important when used to explain an arms race. For example, U.S. analysts assessing Latin American fighter aircraft needs would probably conclude that slow aircraft with maximum payloads would be most useful in likely combat scenarios. Yet the Latin American preference is clearly for fast, sleek fighters. What is needed is some method which can incorporate into this evaluation of capability what the Latin American air forces perceive as important. Only then can we hope to understand and forecast the development, production, or acquisition of military capability.

#### MULTIPLE ATTRIBUTE UTILITY MEASUREMENT: A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Faced with the above problems, particularly the problem of incorporating perceptions, we have applied multiple attribute utility measurement (MAU) to measuring weapons system capability. The basic idea of MAU measurement is that every outcome of an action (in our case, the production or acquisition of military equipment) has a value on a number of different dimensions. The technique involves discovering these values, one dimension at a time, and then aggregating them across dimensions using a suitable aggregation rule and weighting procedure. Judges or experts are used to determine both values and weights.<sup>10</sup> The technique involves a clearly defined set of steps:

##### Step 1. Identify Issue for Study

For the purposes of demonstrating the method, we have selected for assessment the sea denial capability of attack submarines. Two different

scenarios were used. First: guerilla-type attacks by submarines against either merchant ships or non-missile surface combatants. Second: a war-at-sea scenario. In both scenarios it was assumed that the surface unit was alert to the possibility of attack but lacked airborne ASW (antisubmarine warfare) support. The main point in spelling out these scenarios is to make the evaluation of weapons systems realistic by relating their capability to a particular scenario, but selecting scenarios that are not only typical but also of most interest to the user of the evaluation.

#### Step 2: Identify Entities to be Evaluated

Torpedo-firing diesel submarines are the entities being evaluated.

#### Step 3: Identify the Relevant Dimensions of Value for Evaluation of the Entities

What are the components of sea denial (submarines) which define their military worth? U.S. naval experts agreed on the following list of dimensions for submarines.<sup>11</sup>

Submerged Displacement	Number of Torpedos
Submerged Speed	Torpedo Guidance Systems
Submerged Endurance	Acquistion Techniques
Number of Torpedo Tubes	ESM (electronic support measures) Capability

Torpedo Speed

SLAM (submarine launched anti-ship missile) Capability

Effective Range of Torpedo

Capability of County to Operate Equipment

#### Step 4: Weight Dimension

Using Delphi or any other aggregating technique,<sup>12</sup> agreement must be reached regarding the rank and weight of the above components in contribution to the total military worth of the system. This is the heart of the MAU approach.

Arguments over public policy typically turn out to hinge on disagreements about values. Normally such disagreements are fought out in the context of specific decisions, over and over again, at enormous social cost each time a decision must be made. Multiple-attribute utility measurement can spell out explicitly what the values of each participant (decision-maker, expert, pressure group, government, etc.) are, show how and how much they differ. By explicitly negotiating about, agreeing on and (if appropriate) publicizing a set of values, a decision-making organization can, in effect, inform those affected by its decisions about its ground rules.<sup>13</sup>

The dimensions must be weighted preserving ratios. The least important characteristic is assigned a score of 1, with subsequent characteristics weighted by asking how much more important (if at all)

is it than the least important? The mean importance weight for each characteristic is then calculated. Some examples from the sea denial study are listed below. They represent submarine weightings for scenario #1.

<u>Dimension</u>	<u>Average Weighting</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
Submerged Displacement	3.3	2.80
Submerged Speed	4.7	1.51
Number of Torpedo Tubes	4.0	3.63
Torpedo Speed	6.3	1.97
Effective Range of Torpedo	6.2	2.14
Acquistion Techniques	7.3	1.75

These weightings point out several of the characteristics of MAU. First, it is apparent that you can get judges (in this case N=6) to discriminate among dimensions. Second, the level of agreement varies considerably, as evidenced by the standard deviations.

#### Step 5: Judges Construct Utility Curves for Each Dimension

The judges are now asked to draw a graph. (Figure 3.1) The X-axis of each graph represents the plausible range of performance values for the dimension/characteristic under consideration. The Y-axis represents the utilities (1-10) associated with the corresponding X values. This is the second crucial aspect of MAU. Recall that one of the major problems with current measurement schemes is the assumption of linearity.

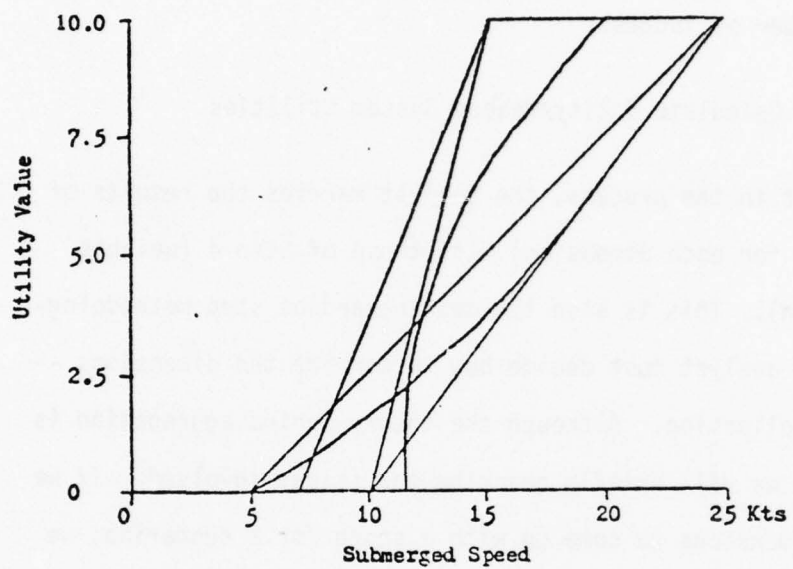
At this step in the MAU procedure, the researcher has an opportunity to determine empirically the shape of the characteristic's contribution to the military worth of the entity/weapons system being evaluated. Shown below (Figure 3.1) is a curve submitted by judges for the characteristic "Submerged Speed" in evaluating its contribution to the sea denial capability of a submarine.

There are two aspects of this curve-drawing procedure which need elaboration. First, there is the point of zero utility. It is obviously possible either to force a consensus using a Delphi approach, or report the lack of consensus in terms of a mean and standard deviation. If the above curve was the first iteration, a new consensus curve with the mean speed of 8.1 knots representing zero utility would be suggested as the group solution. The second part of the curve of interest is the maximum utility point. Here you ask the judge at what point will more of a certain characteristic not add any more capability for the scenario under discussion.

#### Step 6: Aggregate Utility Curves

Edwards et al. reviewed the literature concerning the problems involved in aggregating individual utilities into group utility functions. They concluded that averaging presented an acceptable method for resolving disagreement among judges.<sup>14</sup> Given this conclusion, there are two ways to average the curves. First, as previously mentioned, some sort of Delphi technique can be used to produce one consensus curve for each characteristic.

FIGURE 3.1  
SUBMERGED SPEED (SCENARIO #1)



The second approach includes using the judges' utility curves directly to average the values for each dimension. In the "Submerged Speed" curve previously shown, a submarine with a submerged speed of 10 knots would receive a utility score of  $(0+0+0+1.5+2.5+3.8)/6 = 1.3$ . It was necessary to take six individual utility readings, sum them, and divide by the number of judges.

#### Step 7: Calculate Entity/Weapon System Utilities

At this point in the process, the analyst marries the results of Step 6 (utilities for each dimension) with those of Step 4 (weights for each dimension). This is also the most hazardous step methodologically, since the analyst must decide how to combine the dimensions -- addition or multiplication. Although the theory behind aggregation is rather complex,<sup>15</sup> we will briefly describe the issues involved. If we simply add the dimensions to come up with a score for a submarine, we assume that if one of the dimensions is zero (e.g. for submarines, torpedo speed), it can be compensated for by a high value on another dimension. In a theoretical sense, therefore, very few weapons systems could be evaluated using the additive rule. In reality, however, weapons systems rarely are produced with a total lack of value on a dimension, allowing us to use the additive rule in most cases. For the submarine study, the weighted utilities of all the sea denial components of submarines were added, producing the following selected results. (Maximum score is 20.00).

<u>Scenario #1</u>		<u>Scenario #2</u>	
Guppy III SS	20.00	Type 209 SS	19.75
Foxtrot SS	15.42	Oberon SS	18.18
Type 209 SS	15.38	Foxtrot SS	17.44
Oberon	14.78	Guppy III SS	17.23
Tiburon	10.24	Tiburon SS	9.59

Note that the judges have been able to discriminate between scenarios. A Guppy III SS in the sneak attack scenario has a maximum amount of capability but is definitely less capable against more opposition. The opposite is true of the German 209, which fares much better in an open sea environment.

#### Step 8: Integrate Human Factors

Probably the most frequent criticism of quantitative approaches to valuating weapons systems is that the system's value will depend on terrain, tactics and operator proficiency. Hence the effort at combat modeling. However, it is the assumption of this research that decision-makers key on a few basic variables. One of these

is **the** ability of a nation to operate the equipment. It became quickly apparent that the MAU technique could not be applied in this case, since there were no indicators such as speed, turning radius, etc. which could be applied to questions of competence of operator, maintenance proficiency, logistics, etc.

The search for an alternative method was constrained by the fact that it had to produce ratio level data which could be mathematically combined with the platform utility scores developed in Step 8.

The method selected was the constant sum method.<sup>16</sup> The method calls upon the judge to consider every possible pair of instances. Within each pair, the judge is asked to divide 100 points between the two instances in accordance with the absolute ratio of the greater to the lesser. The judges in the sea denial study were asked to evaluate a specific country's capability to successfully operate torpedo-firing diesel submarines in an open sea denial mission. The instructions suggested that evaluations might be based in part on a demonstrated capability to perform the open ocean mission, the presence of the technology and training necessary for successful accomplishment of the mission, and the ability of a particular nation to man the platforms with competent crews. The purpose of the suggestions was to focus the judge's attention on an evaluation of the personnel factors.

A judge who evaluated Egypt and Syria with a 50-50 score is saying that their personnel capability is equal. If another judge rates Israel-Tunisia 30-20, he is saying that Israel's navy personnel are four times as capable as Tunisia's. The aggregation technique used to go from the individual splits to a ratio scale is straight-forward, but lengthy, so the reader is referred to Torgerson's Theory and Methods of Scaling. Some examples of the scores produced by this method are listed below. They have been transformed to a scale of 0-20 to match the previously shown submarine scale.

Israel	20.00	North Korea	10.59
PRC	15.34	South Korea	8.33
Iran	14.26	Iraq	5.87
South Africa	12.34	Saudi Arabia	5.03
Egypt	12.28	Tunisia	2.82
India	11.56	Ivory Coast	1.50

The judges have one final task, that of assessing the relative importance of human versus equipment factors for each of the scenarios. In the case of the diesel submarines, the factors were judged to be roughly equivalent. The total score, therefore, for an Iranian 209 SS in scenario 2 =  $14.26 + 19.75 = 34.01$ . The same submarine in Iraqi hands has a value of  $5.87 + 19.75 = 25.62$ .

#### Step 9: Assign Country Capability Score

The final step in the process is to produce a country score. In our above example, the value of 34.01 calculated for an Iranian 209 SS submarine is multiplied times the number in service. It is here that the value of creating ratio-level data is appreciated, since this final step can only be taken with ratio data. Excerpted below are some examples of country scores for scenario 2 sea denial capability, evaluating only submarines.

Turkey	3297	Greece	1511
North Korea	3006	South Korea	0
Israel	294	Egypt	2935

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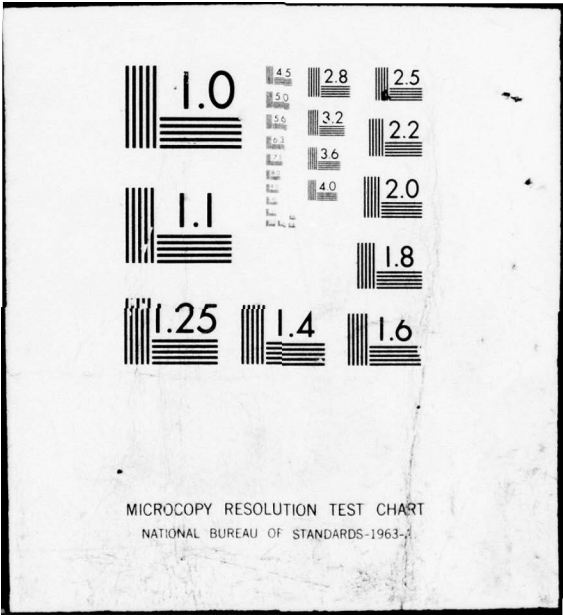
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Peru	1394	Chile	433
India	2111	Pakistan	600
PRC	16466	Taiwan	459

#### AN ASSESSMENT OF THE MAU APPROACH

As the reader has most likely concluded, there is much more to the MAU technique than has been summarized here. However, assuming that this brief introduction to MAU has been sufficient, we now return to our original set of problems in order to assess whether in fact MAU is a step in the right direction.

Briefly reviewing our critique of current methods, we can see that MAU directly addresses the questions of data validity and reliability. An indicator of military capability is said to be valid if it is an "adequate measure of what it is supposed to represent." We are also told that "concepts are judged not by their truth or falsity, but by their theoretical utility." It is apparent that this "validity" is greatly influenced by the perceptions of those using it. Data reliability is even more related to perceptions, since it concerns whether or not an indicator of military balance "yields results that are consistent in successive measurements of the same case." Do successive observers looking at the same phenomenon all see the same thing? By explicitly involving the decision-maker (or his analysts) in the construction of the indicators of capability, valid and reliable indicators are much more likely to emerge.

The second problem of linearity is overcome in that MAU gives the judges an opportunity to depict curvilinear relationships if they exist. Third, although we did not go into it in great detail in this paper, MAU quite explicitly addresses the problem of how to aggregate the dimensions of military capability. And fourth, the technique clearly focuses on the balance associated with the use of a specific type of hardware in a mission-oriented scenario. It does not focus on general balances such as the overall naval balance.

By far the biggest contribution MAU has made to the process of evaluating military capability is its explicit incorporation of perceptions. To highlight these contributions, we refer to Luttwak's chapter in this book in which he outlines several problems encountered when non-technical observers assess military balances. In essence, these problems result from not considering perceptions. Does the MAU technique alleviate any of these problems?

Luttwak points out that force-level figures are readily absorbed because numbers are conceptually simple in themselves. MAU is particularly susceptible to misuse on this account. Numbers have a way of being locked in once calculated. For example, will the personnel score for Saudi Arabia be changed as their performance improves? Only if the judges' opinions are tapped on a systematic basis. It is also prudent to build into any data analysis system based on MAU a range of values, so that the analyst can conduct sensitivity tests with his indicators.

Luttwak also talks about numbers requiring a context. The scenario-specific aspect of our example confronts this problem directly. A third issue raised concerns the fact that individual numbers are readily absorbed but an accumulation of numbers may not be. This is a problem that can be readily solved with a data retrieval/display system capable of taking basic MAU findings, storing them, and trending the balances over time. The fourth issue is that performance data are readily absorbed, but only if a clearly understood index of normality is provided. MAU specifically provides an opportunity for the decision-maker (or his analysts) charged with computing capability to provide such an index, i.e. during the construction of the weights and utility curves. The judges are specifically asked to show at what point a weapons system has zero utility. More importantly, this is a psychic baseline reflecting the multitude of variables being processed by the human brain.

Luttwak also refers to the problem of qualitative information being absorbed only if it can be conveyed in visual terms or in verbal imagery. The constant sum approach used to calculate country personnel scores in our study relies heavily on verbal imagery. In many cases the judge will have worked with foreign navies, read intelligence reports, etc., all of which contribute to the image he has of a country's naval personnel. It was the one step in the process where the components of the attribute could not be disaggregated, and the total image was relied on.

Luttwak's last two observations are the most relevant to MAU. He hypothesizes that personal experience of the reality of on-going military activities may have a wholly disproportionate impact on perceptions of military capabilities. This is clearly a danger for MAU in that judges may be biased in this regard. On the other hand, MAU forces the judge to look at all of the components of a particular system, one at a time, thereby increasing the probability that a U.S. naval pilot judge will not underestimate Soviet anti-carrier capabilities. And finally, there is the problem of non-technical observers giving greater value to technologically advanced features in military equipments than is warranted by their actual contribution to force-effectiveness. In a sense, the MAU technique is neutral regarding this problem, since all the technique can do is make clear the preferences of the judges. If Peruvian Air Force officer judges heavily weight speed and sleekness in evaluating fighter aircraft capability, so be it. The advantage is that these biases are in the open and can be taken into account.

Overall, the MAU technique appears to solve many of the problems involved when perceptions are not considered. In addition, the technique explicitly recognizes that human experience and analytical capabilities cannot be duplicated by a machine. MAU builds on these human judgements. On a related point, human analysts who serve as experts constantly update their knowledge. Any data system which periodically taps this

knowledge automatically updates itself in a fashion impossible to duplicate. The flexibility of the technique should also be mentioned. If your judgement-based balance proves to be in error (e.g. your calculated imbalance caused you to react in a fashion that was counter-productive) you have an explicit record of how the faulty balance was calculated. Such a system forces the decision-maker to look at which analysts were on the mark and for what reasons. It tells you how much of a consensus you have amongst your experts regarding a specific balance. MAU allows the decision-maker to close the feedback loop. Do perceptions match reality? For example, did the increase in sea denial capability of country X really force rival country Y to acquire the same, as your experts predicted?

#### PROBLEM AREAS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

There are certain questions that have been raised in regard to applying the MAU technique to the evaluation of military capabilities, the answers to which serve to highlight the strengths, weaknesses and potential of the method. First, there are a host of technical questions, particularly regarding the aggregation rules. The key problem for those using the method are those weapons systems with extreme values on a particular dimension. To this point, MAU has been used for the sea denial and air superiority missions. Further work on other missions and weapons systems will be required before these technical problems are solved.

A second set of questions revolve around the selection and availability of experts. If a method relies totally on expert judgment, such a problem is not trivial. If one is concerned with an objective, technical statement of the military balance, the problem indeed exists. However, if we assume that balances are constructed and utilized by policymaking organizations, the MAU approach is more useful. The guiding principle here is that the policymaker will task a clearly defined group of experts, normally from his organization. One only has to look at the varying estimates of the Soviet Navy within the U.S. government to see this phenomenon at work. This approach is obviously well-suited to the bureaucratic politics model of policymaking. There is no "objective" version of the balance, only various "organizational" versions. Therefore, the problem of using the best judges is much easier to solve.

A third aspect of the MAU technique which some have questioned is the idea that the overall capability of a weapons system cannot be evaluated in a rigorous sense without disaggregating it into capability dimensions. We have conducted a significant amount of tests which show that experts can reliably rank-order specific aircraft and ships as to capability. However, the multi-dimensional aspect of modern weapons systems does not allow the expert to evaluate how much more capable one system is than another. There are methods available to translate rank-order data into interval level data. But as we have seen, the key to calculating country capability scores is creating a ratio score for

a weapons system which can then be multiplied by the number in the inventory. In a sense, there is a dilemma. On one hand, MAU assumes that the whole is equal to the sum of its parts, an assumption which does not completely capture the essence of a weapons system. On the other hand, a weapons system is too complex to evaluate it holistically without running into the perceptual biases mentioned earlier.

Finally, it must be stated that MAU is a method reserved for specific weapons balances. In no way should the method be used to construct a total military capability score for a country. The most we can expect from such a method is a series of balances analogous to the various dials and meters on an aircraft. Each dial, in our case a mission-specific balance, represents an accurate reading, but only the pilot or the policymaker can combine them for a net assessment of the overall situation. The fact that such a new assessment may be fraught with errors and biases does not detract from the necessity to construct valid and reliable weapons balance estimates which incorporate perceptions.

#### NOTES

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9. Ward Edwards et. al., "A Decision-Theoretic Approach to Evaluation Research," in Elmer Struening and Marcia Guttenteg (Eds). Handbook of Evaluation Research, Volume I (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1975), p. 147.

10. See ibid. for the basic methodology. Also see Ward Edwards, How to Use Multi-Attribute Utility Measurement for Social Decision-Making (Los Angeles: Social Science Research Institute, University of Southern California, August 1976).

11. The actual data on submarines are extracted from Lowell Jacoby, Quantitative Assessment of Third World Sea Denial Capabilities, (Unpublished Master's Thesis. Naval Postgraduate School, March 1977).

12. Delphi is a method in which judges estimate values as individuals, the responses are collated and summarized, and then sent back to the judges. The judges again estimate values. Iterations continue until either a consensus value or a well-described split emerges. For a good summary and critique of the method, see Morgenstern, Knorr and Heiss, Long Term Projections of Power: Political, Economic and Military Forecasting. (Cambridge: Ballinger, 1973).

13. See Edwards, op. cit., and Laurance, op. cit.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Warren S. Torgerson, Theory and Methods of Scaling (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1958).

PART TWO

EVIDENCE AND  
CASE STUDIES

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE STATUS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SUPERPOWER STRATEGIC BALANCE: DIFFERING AMERICAN VIEWS\*

*Senator John Culver and twenty-two other senators of both parties sponsored a unique gathering of some of the well-known participants in the ongoing debate over U.S. security policies. The congressional conference was held on May 11-12, 1977 in the Caucus Room of the U.S. Senate. The Honorable Stuart Symington returned to the Senate for the first time since his retirement to moderate a wide-ranging discussion that focused on defense priorities and prescriptions for the next quarter-century. The twenty-three panelists, not all of whom are quoted here, represented a thorough mix of professional experiences and points of view. Their opening remarks, in which they assess the superpower balance as well as what they see as important strategic trends, are excerpted below.*

#### SENATOR JOHN CULVER:

Seldom in our history has the United States faced such crucial decisions about national security policy, decisions with such far-reaching consequences. We have emerged from one war in Southeast Asia with no clear national consensus other than to avoid a repetition of that particular kind of conflict. We are facing a rapidly changing world in which many of our long-established ideas and approaches are being challenged by new constellations of problems and forces.

In assembling this distinguished panel, every effort has been made to get the best exposition possible of differing opinions in the wide spectrum of national defense philosophy. Only by considering all sides of these issues can we hope to attain insight and overview.

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\*Originally published as "Documentation: U.S. National Security--1977-2001," International Security, II, 2 (Fall, 1977), pp. 171-183. Excerpted here with the permission of the President and Fellows of Harvard College.

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PAUL NITZE (Chairman of Policy Studies of the Committee on the Present Danger; former Under Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Navy, and U.S. SALT Delegate):

It seems to me that one must look at the <sup>(of national defense)</sup> ~~problem as being~~ twofold—what one can achieve through arms control and then what is necessary to add through our own defense program. The intention is that the total of what one gets through arms control, plus one's own weapon development program, results in balance and in a maintenance of crisis stability. I think this is important to the peace of the world and important to our defense—simply an important foundation for the conduct of U.S. foreign policy.

The question has been asked, "What is the status of the United States' ability to defend itself against attack in the 1977-1985 period?" I would consider that to be a misformulation of the problem. I do not believe that the Soviet Union wants war. I believe they intend to accomplish their objectives without war, if possible. I think it is important that there be a balance and that we maintain crisis stability through the combination of arms control and of the defenses which we ourselves deploy.

RAY CLINE (Executive Director of Studies at Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies; former Deputy Director of the CIA and Director of Intelligence and Research at the State Department): I think Secretary Nitze is correct in saying that the danger that confronts this country in the period we are talking about is not that the USSR will decide to rain nuclear bombs on this country or even on our allies in Western Europe. The danger is that the Soviet Union intends to continue to change the global balance of power—military, economic, and political—in a direction unfavorable to the United States. It seems to me that they have been fairly successful in starting trends in that direction which, if continued into the 1985 period, will leave us in a much diminished position of power and influence. In a sense, we are like decaying gentility, facing adverse circumstances without deciding what to do about them.

I think the real dilemma that confronts this country is that we had a period of exceptional strategic good fortune in which our political, economic and military links to important nations around the world—nations that wanted our friendship, wanted our cooperation, and above all, did not wish to be dominated by any totalitarian power, particularly not by the Soviet Union—chose to work with us and strengthened our influence in diplomatic and strategic affairs. The alliance system is what is threatened today, because of the growing feeling that the Soviet Union is on a dynamic upward course in all of the aspects of national power—not just the military aspect—and that the United States is not very clear about what it should do in the face of that kind of challenge.

It seems clear to me that the key factors in international power and influence have to do with the intangibles more than with the concrete military and economic facts of life. Those intangibles are a sense of clear and coherent national purpose, a strategy for the country in its interests and national affairs and, above all, a coherence of political will—a political determination to protect the nation and to carry out its strategy, whatever it may be.

HERBERT SCOVILLE (Secretary of the Arms Control Association; former Deputy Director of the CIA): I do not believe that the strategic balance is as delicate at the moment as some would have us believe. In fact, I think both superpowers have such large strategic forces that any changes that can occur in a short period of time will not seriously alter that balance at all. Secondly, I think that the strategic balance is very stable at the moment. There is no threat that either side can destroy a significant portion of the deterrents of the other side.

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On the other hand, this situation may not last very long—not that the deterrent as a whole is going to be eroded, because there is no visible threat to the submarine—for there is an increasing threat to the land-based ICBM part of our force. It is the new weapon programs on the part of both the Soviet Union and ourselves which, over a period of time, will decrease this stability. The development of MIRV, heavy ICBMs with improved accuracies on the part of the Soviet Union, the MX, and the Mark 12-A warhead for the Minute Man III are all examples of destabilizing technology.

I think we are much stronger than perhaps the general public has any concept of. I do not agree with Ray Cline that the trend is all that disturbingly against us. Not only have we in the last five years increased the sizes of our strategic forces at a more rapid rate than has the Soviet Union, but I do not see any sign that that is particularly changing.

It is true that we are now finishing our MIRV programs while the Soviet Union is just starting theirs. But we have programs for a whole series of new generation strategic weapons which will still further increase the war-making potential of our strategic forces. So I see nothing to indicate that we won't continue to have an advantage, although I find this advantage somewhat mythical and not very practical since neither side can use these forces anyway.

The security of all of us would be much better off if instead of these buildups on both sides, we went to arms control measures, particularly those arms control measures which would affect the qualitative race. Numbers don't make much difference anymore; the real threat is with new types of weapons.

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FRED WARNER NEAL (Chairman of the International Relations Faculty at Claremont Graduate School; Chairman of the Executive Committee on U.S.-Soviet Relations): It seems to me that our discussion can only be meaningful if it is placed in the overall American foreign policy context, especially with reference to overall American policy towards the Soviet Union.

So far as the hardware is concerned and so far as the Soviet military buildup is concerned, there is, of course, a wide opinion in the United States that the Soviet Union is ahead of us in certain categories. What is more significant, I think, is what the perception is in Moscow. I don't think the perception in Moscow is like that at all. The Soviet Union for a great many years has very much been behind the United States in all weapon categories. What it has been doing for a decade, at least as used to be said in trotting races, is coming up fast on the outside. They won't stop—short of some kind of international agreement—and perhaps not even then, because of a suspicion that the Americans will keep going ahead. And the Americans will not refrain from going ahead because of a suspicion that if the Russians do achieve what they think is equality, they won't stop.

EARL RAVENAL (Adjunct Professor of American Foreign Policy, SAIS, Johns Hopkins; former Department of Defense official): I would agree with Paul Nitze's statement that we should consider in conjunction the question of arms control and the question of the unilateral policies that we apply to the design of our forces. To a large extent the objectives of arms control are the same as the objectives toward which we design our strategic forces.

I don't have any doubt that some kind of a mutually agreeable arrangement will be worked out between the United States and the Soviet Union, roughly within the time limits of the present interim agreement and roughly within the parameters of the October 1976 version of the accords of November 1974—that is, the modifications of numbers and the possible remedies for the current stalemate over the Soviet Backfire bomber and the American cruise missile programs.

But I think it ought to be recognized that such an agreement will not satisfy nearly all American strategic thinkers on the issue of strategic stability. There will still be contention and arguments that the Soviets will be capable within these negotiated limits of building the kinds of forces that might be, in a crisis, capable of destabilizing the strategic balance. And I think that the arguments of those who take this pessimistic view should not be ignored. I think they have to be countered, and they have to be countered not only in words, but by a program of supplementary American moves, unilateral if necessary, to reestablish the balance.

We can tailor our forces in the direction of reestablishing and ensuring strategic stability, but we can do it on the down side. We can do it with fewer weapons and less of a force. In the case of strategic arms competition, less is not less, less can be more. But less certainly can be enough.

WILLIAM E. COLBY (Former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency): I think the subject of our strategic power must be looked at without a myopia. This is a problem that our country has had in many situations where we focus on only one problem of the

strategic situation. The most outrageous example of that was when we focused on the military aspect of the Vietnam War and made a mistake of ignoring for many years the political and guerrilla aspects. When we look at the strategic balance in the world today, we should not only look at the large weapons systems that we and the Soviets confront each other with, but we also need to look at the conventional weapons and the many other problems that we have. Our most serious threats today probably are in Western Europe on the conventional level—conventional threats which we for years have thought to meet by going to nuclear warfare on the tactical level.

Furthermore, I believe that there are real strategic problems ahead, and that we have to put the fact of the imbalance of economics and of social good in the world into our equation when we think of strategic security. Indeed we can spend great sums of money matching large Soviet weapons, and ignore the sums that would be necessary to match Soviet conventional force. But expenditures must also be used to conduct positive political and economic programs with respect to that three-quarters of the earth's humanity that lives in the third world so that we can get these peoples of the world to be our friends instead of our enemies. Indeed such underdevelopment is the most dangerous problem we have. We cannot look upon our own budgetary problems as an argument to support how little we are spending on economic programs and assistance and trade relations with these parts of the world. By worrying only about strategic weapons we will indeed be fighting the wrong war. We need to avoid another myopia in which we focus on a numbers balance in weapons, and instead turn to a consideration of what is sufficient to meet the threat—the threat in the super weapons, the threat in the conventional weapons, but also the threat in terms of economic and political chaos around the world.

CHARLES YOST (Aspen Institute Program in Communication and Society; former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations): I am happy to note that there seems to be general agreement that the Soviet Union is unlikely to initiate a direct attack upon us. As Mr. Scoville has pointed out, the size and character of our arsenal is such that strategic deterrence cannot be eroded or shortened in a space of time, particularly our submarine based deterrent.

Well, if this is so, what is the major threat? I don't always agree with Henry Kissinger, but I would like to read one sentence from a statement he made just before he left the State Department. He said, "I would say that if there is a conflict between the Soviet Union and us, it is much less likely to occur as a result of a Soviet attack than as a result of a conflict that maybe neither of us foresaw, under which we were drawn through a series of escalating moves."

In other words, I think World War I is a better guide to our current dangers than World War II. If that is correct, I would suspect that our major danger is one that has been referred to by several of the speakers, competition in the third world; these 100 new states where the escalating, competitive moves by both superpowers could lead us into a war that neither has planned nor wanted. One of our central security concerns should be to find means of restraining and controlling this competition. The danger arises from the Soviets attempting to upset in some of these critical third world areas what they see

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as an unfavorable situation. And there I feel that we should engage in a much more serious negotiation with them in order to avoid this eventuality. As Mr. Colby suggests, we should concentrate on putting more of our resources on strengthening countries themselves so that they are much less susceptible to foreign exploitation.

REAR ADMIRAL GENE LA ROCQUE, USN, Ret. (Director, Center for Defense Information): Several times the term "military balance" has come up. I don't think that there is such a thing as a military balance. It is the military imbalance, and it is disequilibrium, it is instability; the military on both sides cannot live with a balance. The job of the military is to win, and I think we ought to take that into account as we deliberate. Unfortunately, though, if you use the term "military balance," and it is current today, you can persuade the American people that if you just put a little more weight on our side it will bring things into our favor, and then we are all going to be safe. But the U.S. has been ahead of the Soviet Union by at least five years in the development of every major strategic weapons system.

Appropos of the SALT talks, I think if we look realistically at the ones that have taken place, none of them have really significantly increased our national defense or our national security. That is not to say that we ought not to continue them, but basically we are less secure after the SALT agreements than we were before we started. We are less secure today with the more money we spend and the more weapons systems we develop than we were before we undertook them.

I think we could take some very positive initiatives, and sober initiatives, in recognition of the fact that we can destroy all life on this planet. Just about three months ago China tested one nuclear weapon, and the people in Philadelphia and Baltimore were told to stay inside and wash their vegetables. One nuclear weapon. We are talking about unleashing some 20,000 strategic nuclear weapons, and if we use all of our tactical force as well, as are talking of 50,000 nuclear weapons, so that it is not a matter of hiding in the ground for a little while; we are talking about destroying all life on this planet.

I think the United States ought to suggest and agree to stop testing nuclear weapons for a period of two years. It wouldn't hurt us a bit. I think we ought to stop building more nuclear weapons for a period of two years. Simply stop spending more each year for our military budget.

LT. GEN. ROYAL ALLISON, USAF, Ret. (Consultant on oil and energy; former United States SALT Delegate): When we were engaged in the SALT negotiations, I was asked rather frequently during the period that we were here in Washington as to why I thought the Soviets wish to negotiate with us on strategic arms. After the first and second sessions, it seems to me that the Soviets wanted to negotiate a position that would be publicly looked upon as one of strategic equality with the United States. That kind of strategic equality is purely a matter of perception. We must be sure that we perceive our own strengths correctly, that we perceive the Soviet strengths as correctly as we can, and when we consider our own strength we do not do it by counting comparative weapon systems and fatalities. Those kinds of evaluations can be very misleading.

I want to make some more specific comments on weapons and negotiations. I will do it in the reverse order, because I think we are strong. The United States should not fear

to negotiate at any time at any place with anyone. When we started the SALT negotiations we considered—I considered, and I believe those of us with whom I was working considered—it a first step in a long, long haul. We were going to have to have patience. We should not expect an immediate solution. There were no quick answers to these things. Sometimes as I read what is written these days, I wonder if these commentators remember how difficult it was to get the negotiations started, and that when they were started we were saying to ourselves just what I am saying now, that we are in this for a very long haul.

Now the second thing on weapons—numbers are not the sole answer. I believe very deeply, however, that one of the most important offsetting factors for the United States is our technology, our scientific ability, our research and development—essentially the ability that we have proved over the years to do the very nearly impossible. We have had men walk on the moon, for example, and no one else has. So when we talk about weaponry and numbers, I suggest that we should always reserve to ourselves the right to let the minds of men create what the minds of men will create. We don't stand the chance of a snowball in a hot place of verifying qualitative controls on technology. This being the case, we should think long and hard before we forego the right to develop ourselves the things that we know we can, and we believe the other fellow might develop if he had time.

JOHN STEINBRUNER (Associate Professor of Political Science, Yale University; Editorial Board Member, *International Security*): Let me underline a few things which I think are going to become of great importance over the period we have been talking about. We live in a world in which political crisis appears to be academic. It will require different conceptual ideas to master the many issues in this area having to do with command and control. Exercising intelligent military command over far-flung, very extensive military forces with peculiar vulnerabilities requires far more study. We really have got to put this at the center of our defense planning and we have not done so.

The second point I would try to underline is that I think we ought to recognize that we have a very bad history in interpreting the Soviet Union. We have been wrong about them in their strategic programs and in important respects since the mid 1960s. These errors come about for honest reasons. The Soviets are very difficult to read. They don't tell us as much as we would like to know. Yet it is becoming increasingly important that we get it right.

So I believe that one of the most important strategic problems of the future is simply better intelligence analysis of the enemy. We have been very casual and somewhat ideological in this respect for a number of years, and I think we have to get much more sophisticated about understanding the enemy that we definitely have.

COL. JOHN COLLINS, USA, Ret. (Senior Specialist in National Defense, Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress): It is pretty clear to me that increasing Soviet capabilities across the board, not just strategic nuclear capabilities, leave the United States less secure than it was a few years ago. I would suggest to you all, as an example, that essential equivalence is the poorest possible force structure standard that the United States could use in approaching the SALT table. It clouds our true requirements. It

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causes us to react to Soviet holdings rather than to our own needs. It causes us to buy things we don't need and at the same time to slight the things we do.

I can guarantee to you that there is no way to reverse that trend until we find some way to identify our true requirements. That is not going to happen until we can relate all of these forces and funds to an agreed foreign policy, which we do not have today, and until we can relate all of these forces and funds to a sound military strategy, which we do not have today—in fact, we don't even have an effective way to formulate conceptual strategy in the United States. It is certainly not being done in the Department of Defense. It is not being done in the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It is not being done in any of the military services. You think perhaps that the National Security Council is going to pull all this together, that this is where the conceptual planning takes place. I can tell you that that is false.

The National Security Council is geared to crisis management, not to conceptual planning. I would like to tell everybody that will listen to me that strategy is like research and development. It has two pieces. One piece is called basic scientific research, and the other is called applied technology. In the field of strategy, there isn't anybody in the United States, to my knowledge, who is really on the basic scientific research side. Everybody who thinks he is playing strategy in this country is on the applied technology side, and as a result the decisionmakers at the top levels of your government are playing with strategic concepts that were put together 10 or 15 years ago to satisfy requirements which have long since disappeared.

You can spend this Treasury dry without insuring better security unless you find some effective way to relate forces and funds back to strategy and foreign policy. That is my message.

LT. GEN. DANIEL GRAHAM, USA, Ret. (Professor of Advanced International Studies, University of Miami; former Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency): Those who believe that strategic equivalence and parity is a reasonable point of view for the United States forget one thing, and that is that our society demands that in all of our military planning we yield the initiative to our adversary, because we cannot base our forces on the proposition that we will attack or launch aggression against our major adversary. Any military man can tell you that parity plus initiative is superiority.

In the last six or eight years the curve for the United States has been generally downward. I would take it that Dr. Scoville was talking about having more individual warheads or something. But if you take the general trends in those same capabilities that have been downward for the United States, upward for the Soviet Union, at some point the lines either have crossed, are crossing, or will cross. That is the important matter, not what the precision of the balance is today.

DEREK LEEBAERT (Research Fellow, Harvard University; Managing Editor, *International Security*): Discussion of military power and the superpower balance—or imbalance—could not be more timely. This administration has brought a new dynamic to the development and deployment of nuclear as well as conventional weapons. But what remains to be considered for the coming quarter century is how this power will be translated into international influence in a time of decreasing military utility.

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We not only have to question what we actually mean by "security," but we must appreciate that traditional global military assessments are becoming increasingly anachronistic. One thinks of NATO as it approaches its thirtieth anniversary. In this case alliance cohesion is far less threatened by external military aggression than by internal disarray. Economic, political, and sociological concerns have become integral parts of any defense calculus.

Perhaps the most provocative part of any security-related prognosis is the new distribution of both defense expenditures and the proclivities to use force. According to ACDA, military outlays for NATO, the Warsaw Pact, and the less developed countries rose 23, 29, and 100 percent respectively. Other indicators, such as defense spending as a proportion of GNP and expansion of military manpower, also greatly favored the underdeveloped rather than the developed world. What is even more distressing is that "gunboat diplomacy" is becoming vastly more commonplace in the third world as it is shunned as valueless by the Western democracies. The examples can be easily recounted.

New influences in a new context, then, must be central to our discussion.

PHILIP KARBER (Vice President of BDM, Inc.; Consultant to the Office of the Secretary of Defense): What we need to point out today—and here I disagree with General Graham—is that in the last few years, granting a trail-off following the Vietnam War, the trend in U.S. defense expenditures is decidedly upwards. There are not two curves crossing someplace out on the horizon; rather there are two curves going up. And in the case of the United States, let's be very specific in overall dollar terms. I have the budget figures in front of me. The fiscal budget 1976 in total obligational authority for the United States was \$110.8 billion. The estimate for 1977 is \$116.9 billion, an increase of 5 percent. Furthermore, even in the slight reductions that Harold Brown has made in the budget proposed by the Republican Administration, this Administration is proposing an increase this year in real dollar terms of 3.5 percent. So the U.S. trend is up.

I would also raise an issue that we haven't discussed here before—that of nuclear proliferation. I would hope that somehow we might bring the arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union a little bit more under control through negotiation so that we can devote more of our diplomatic and political resources to being concerned about the problem of the future—other countries getting the bomb.

I think in that area it would be in our interest to cooperate with and to get further agreements with the Soviet Union, to end now the friction that is clearly occurring between the two countries so that we can look to the important problems of the future, one of them certainly being proliferation.

SENATOR CULVER: If I understand the tenor of the discussion today, it essentially discounts the likelihood of an active nuclear exchange with the Soviet Union. But it seems to me that one of the most likely scenarios one might envision, given nuclear proliferation, is not only the more obvious possibility of introduction of nuclear weapons in war because of the proliferation of "scorpions," but the more likely problem posed by sub-government action, terrorists, and civil war. Here certain elements of even less stability possess a nuclear capability and wish to employ it in scenarios of terrorism or sabotage or blackmail.

More specifically, given the relative ease of attaining a crude nuclear weapons capability—a capability with nevertheless devastating intimations—I am thinking more in terms of someone in New York who calls President Carter and indicates he has the bomb and is going to blow up New York if certain demands are not met.

What is the capability of the United States in its current defense posture or intelligence determination to cope and deal with that kind of situation? I would suggest for the sake of our discussion that it may well be a far more realistic threat to our survival and political, economic, and social stability.

Secondly, what actually are the most important components of strategic power? But I think that this more specifically raises questions as to what are the elements over and above the simplistic arithmetic of the military balance, which everyone has also agreed has had limitations in effecting an accurate assessment and evaluation of the balance. What about the larger questions that necessarily should be part and parcel of an appropriate evaluation of the strategic balance as distinguished from the military balance?

Again, the qualities and strength of the economic system that is enjoyed by the major powers, the political confidence in their institutions, the morale and the welfare of their people, and most importantly, the reliance of potential allies on the respective sides are all parts of any assessment of the balance. It has been suggested that the Russians are 8 or 12 feet tall, and what not. But the Soviet Union is the only nation in the world that currently is not only surrounded by forward positions—even tactical and strategic nuclear threats. But it is also the only communist country that is surrounded by hostile communist powers.

In the event of a conventional initiation of war what are the implications of the political reliability or unreliability of allies? How does that impact on the balance and relative military strength? I have thrown out a couple of things, but I think we should really focus on two issues here—one is the larger strategic general balance and its equilibrium (including the elements and factors that should be addressed in such an assessment), and secondly this more likely contingent threat to our security and survival posed by the nuclear capabilities of subnational groups and terrorists.

HERBERT YORK (Professor of Physics, University of California-San Diego; former Director of DDR&E at the Defense Department): I want to comment on the question of terrorism whether by individuals or small groups. I think that nuclear terrorism has been considerably exaggerated—exaggerated on several grounds. The great terrorists of history have all been chiefs of state, not private individuals who have somehow gone and gathered and stolen some plutonium or some other kind of dangerous material at the time. The prime danger is proliferation of nuclear weapons to other states, and their possible use by those states in some uncontrolled way. I also think that the stories about how easy it is to build atomic bombs, while not literally false in the strict technical sense, have always been greatly exaggerated. It is nowhere near as easy as people have suggested. The probability of being caught is much higher than has been allowed for, as is the probability of failure in a dangerous mode. So I don't agree with the implication that I believe I heard here—the possibility that the use of nuclear weapons may be more common to terrorists than to states. It is quite the reverse.

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MAJ. GEN. GEORGE KEEGAN, USAF, Ret. (Former Air Force Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence): I am glad to report that for the first time in 20 years Dr. York and I have something to agree on. Talk of economic, psychological, subversive, terrorist acts and so forth, I think, have obscured the strategic and tactical questions.

The point I would like to make is this: there is a remarkable body of Soviet evidence that is widely available but seldom read and examined in the free world on questions of military balance, on the questions of total conflict, and how they view and treat surprise. There are not only strategic, tactical, and psychological implications, but also discussions of how these factors are involved in negotiations. That evidence is available. There is a great breadth of translated material on the subject.

With regard to the central character of those materials, it has been my observation that the Soviets have an absolute obsession with strategic power in its broadest dimension whether involving economics, the arts of diplomacy, or trade negotiations. They must come out ahead. This is all a part of the entire dimension of Soviet power with which we must cope. But I think where I enter the picture is at the baseline of all of this—the strategic questions—and there the merits are important.

The Soviets are determined to hold the high ground of strategic superiority because their doctrine, unlike ours, is not focused at avoidance of war. They instead focus on being able to prevail in war and conflict in all of its dimensions—nuclear, conventional, tactical, scientific, and technical.

What you see today is 60 years of crushing their peasantry, bleeding their economy, and disregarding the legitimate needs of society in order that they could advance in this power calculus. Such military advancement is what they seek.

WILLIAM WHITSON (Chief, Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division, Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress): I would like to address myself to Senator Culver's second question.

We all, I think, have correctly identified almost every factor by which people gain strategic and tactical power. But I believe his second question is really how do we measure the trade-off between military power versus economic and political power—particularly when we have to translate that measurement into budgets, into legislation, into forces and programs, et cetera. This really relates to John Collins' comment in terms of that kind of calculus. We really have no adequate bureaucratic procedure today. We have taught ourselves to handle military strategy separately. But in search for the trade-off, I am reminded really of the central question: Should we structure our forces in terms of what makes us feel more secure, quite apart from what others may perceive, or should we structure our forces in order to make the Soviets stay more worried, or the Chinese? And we get different answers on the questions if we focus on one part of the question versus the other.

The Chinese—really as late as the end of the Vietnam War, according to their documents—believed that the United States had, considering everything, superiority over the Soviets. They didn't believe this solely because of our material power but instead because of our flexibility, our ability to move and project power.

Chinese observers worry now about one thing, I think, that has perhaps not yet been discussed by this group. They worry about our national will, our consensus, our ability

to achieve national agreement. And they call that the fear of Munich, a lack of firmness which others have raised at this table.

SEN. EDWARD KENNEDY: I believe that it is totally appropriate to think now of what national security really means in terms of the American people, as well as to our allies overseas and to those who depend upon American will and its capacity to respond in strategic as well as conventional warfare.

I think security means many entirely different things to people in other parts of the world. In fact, someone just came back from the World Health Conference this weekend. He stated that there are 80 million children that are born every year. Ten million of them are being immunized yet many millions of them are dying, despite all the petitions of those ministers of health and social welfare. Global instability will certainly come from parents that see the more affluent and wealthier countries—whether they be the Soviet Union, the United States, or the countries of Western Europe—able to deal effectively with the most basic and fundamental issues of human compassion while they are unable to deal with such needs themselves.

The fact is that over the next 25 years the world population will double and that anywhere from 75 to 80 percent of those are going to be brown and yellow and red citizens. What, then, are going to be the real matters of issue that are going to be before us? As we look to security requirements in the year 2000, would we not be wise to begin to anticipate the issues of population and food production and the various other basic and fundamental questions of social justice? How are we going to deal effectively with third world countries?

Finally, the issue of basic political stability, as we talk in terms today about the West and the alliance, will depend on many new factors, such as European communism, all of which will have the broadest implications for future U.S. relations with the Soviets and the Chinese.

*Senator Symington then encouraged the participants to present specific policy options for enhancing U.S. security in the remaining decades of the century. Despite the differences in perception indicated by the preceding statements, the later discussions revealed several areas of general agreement: deep concern over a not-too-distant world of many nuclear powers, an acceptance of the likelihood of increased uses of economic coercion, and an appreciation for the inseparability of third world development and international stability. Questions surrounding the superpower strategic balance are of course especially timely. Yet much of the ensuing discussion expanded on the new influences that were noted in the opening statements, such as terrorism, increased defense spending, conflict over scarce resources, third world despair, population, revolutionary technologies, and so forth. This reflected the concerns of nearly all of the sponsoring senators that a popular preoccupation with the strategic debate tended to obscure these equally complex, and potentially more dangerous, problems that will affect U.S. security for at least the next twenty-five years.*

CHAPTER FIVE

SOVIET PERCEPTIONS OF THE MILITARY FACTOR  
IN THE "CORRELATION OF WORLD FORCES"

by

Michael J. Deane

INTRODUCTION

When analyzing the relative alignment between communism and capitalism, Soviet spokesmen have, since 1917, contended that the "correlation of world forces" is constantly shifting in favor of communism. Yet explanations of the underlying reasons for this shift have differed considerably over this time span. In view of the Soviet Union's obvious inferiority in concrete areas such as the military or economics, Lenin generally avoided discussion of individual factors in the "correlation of world forces" calculation, preferring to treat it as a whole or as an assessment of amorphous "class" forces. When Stalin shifted priorities from "world revolution" to "socialism in one country," this was reflected in a change in emphasis in the "correlation of world forces" assessment so that the impact of conflicts within and between capitalist states, rather than between the two systems, was cited as the reason for the further shift in the world alignment. One major exception to this rule was the importance attached to the defeat

of Nazi Germany, which led to the creation of the "socialist community" in Eastern Europe.

Only with Stalin's successors did it again become common to assess the "correlation of world forces" in terms of a direct capitalist-communist dichotomy. To a significant degree, this derived from the need to explain why intersystemic war was "no longer inevitable," despite the West's military superiority.<sup>1</sup> Thus, in the interpretation of the "correlation of world forces," Khrushchev was able to justify a premise, which otherwise defied communist ideology. As in the case of Lenin, Khrushchev was deliberately vague in defining the dominant element(s) of the "correlation of forces" assessment, often changing emphasis to meet immediate requirements. Sometimes, as a corollary of the new stress on "peaceful coexistence" between the two systems, the economic factor was accented. Frequently, in conjunction with the revision of the Stalin-Zhdanov "two-camp" thesis, the role of the newly emerging states, that is, those former colonies which adopted pro-socialist policies, was highlighted.

At other times, especially when seeking to wring concessions from the West or to deter the West from some course of action (as during the Suez crisis of 1956, the Berlin crisis of 1958, and the Cuban missile crisis of 1962), Khrushchev focused upon the military component in the "correlation of world forces." Indeed, Khrushchev frequently sought to deceive Western leaders with boasts of Soviet military superiority. On occasion, he asserted that the Soviet Union possessed "the absolute weapon" so that an intersystemic war would end "with the destruction of

capitalism."<sup>2</sup> Again, during a 1960 visit to Austria, Khrushchev claimed that the Soviet Union was militarily the world's most powerful country.<sup>3</sup> In essence, Khrushchev tried to create uncertainties in the West with regard to the strategic balance, with the intent that such uncertainties would constrain Western foreign policy activity.

To whatever extent this approach was successful, it was offset in the early 1960s as the United States gained a better satellite surveillance and U-2 overflight capability. Thus, the "missile gap" myth that Khrushchev had worked so hard to create soon dissipated under improved U.S. reconnaissance techniques. It was at this juncture that Khrushchev made the decision to install strategic weapons in Cuba as a quick and cheap method of countering U.S. strategic superiority. Detected before they became operational, however, the missiles were withdrawn under U.S. pressures. At the time, Khrushchev threatened to use the missiles and planes in Cuba against U.S. territory and to employ Soviet submarines against American ships, but by far the most ominous warning came from Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister V.V. Kuznetsov, who assured one U.S. official: "Never will we be caught like this again."<sup>4</sup>

In essence, the "correlation of world forces" concept began as an amorphous idea of "class" relations. It proved to be a handy tool for Lenin and later Stalin to justify or oppose certain courses of action insofar as the assessment was not independently verifiable through the calculation of any concrete indices. Under Khrushchev, "correlation of world forces" became an instrument not only to formulate Soviet foreign

policy, but also to constrain Western freedom of action. In this respect, Khrushchev found that emphasis on the economic factor or newly emerging states had some propaganda appeal, but turning these into direct foreign policy gains vis-a-vis the West was difficult. Conversely, he believed that, if he could convince the West of a shift in the "correlation of military forces," significant gains might follow. Khrushchev's problem, however, was that his assertions of military superiority were grounded on deception, not fact. Once this deception was revealed, the former constraints on the West disappeared. The prime example of this change in attitude was the determination of the U.S. during the Cuban missile crisis.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the current leadership's concept of the "correlation of world forces" and to assess the role and importance that the leadership attaches to the military factor within the overall concept.

#### THE CURRENT LEADERSHIP'S VIEW OF THE "CORRELATION OF WORLD FORCES"

In the current Soviet literature, the "correlation of world forces" concept is defined as the aggregation of all domestic and international indices and factors which impact on the relative alignment of capitalism and communism. Indeed, Soviet commentators describe the "correlation of world forces" as a multi-dimensional concept, which encompasses "the correlation of class forces and the struggle of classes both in individual countries and in the international arena, taking into account those real

forces -- economic, political, moral, and others -- which stand behind these classes."<sup>5</sup>(Emphasis in original.) In fact, the number of factors which may be included in the "correlation of world forces" assessment is open-ended and limited only by objective circumstances. As one Soviet spokesman has explained, "the mobility, dynamism, and changeability" of the "correlation of world forces" is a reflection of the "complexity and multitudinous aspects" of the concept wherein "the part played by some factors is growing, that of others is diminishing; they interact and sometimes cancel out one another."<sup>6</sup>

According to their nature, the elements within the "correlation of world forces" fall into two categories: (1) the material component, which includes the economic and military factors, and (2) the non-material component, which covers the socio-political and ideological factors. One major reason for this distinction in Soviet literature is the fact that the material component is capable of a quantifiable calculation on the whole, whereas the non-material component has to be qualitatively evaluated for the most part. Quite obviously, qualitative assessments present certain problems for the determination of a foreign policy which is to be "scientifically substantiated." However, Soviet spokesmen are adamant that both components must be weighed because the non-material factors "are inseparably linked with the material factors; it is often difficult to separate one from the other."<sup>7</sup>

Despite this problem, "correlation of world forces" assessments are said to serve three functions. First, they provide not only a

historical background but also an accurate description of the state of international affairs at any particular moment. Second, since clashes in the international arena are ultimately determined by the "correlation of world forces," these assessments provide a long-range historical view of the prospects of world development. Third and perhaps most importantly, they provide the scientific framework in which critical choices are made from among a wide range of foreign policy strategic and tactical options.<sup>8</sup>

As a long-term analysis of historical trends, the "correlation of world forces" assessments appraise the "aggregate of events" within an extended "epoch." Thus, while individual successes and failures will affect the "correlation of world forces" at any given moment, qualitative changes have been few. Indeed, to this point contemporary Soviet commentators identify only three major stages in the historical development of the "correlation of world forces." The first stage began with the Bolshevik Revolution, when the first socialist state emerged as a counterweight to the "imperialist-capitalist states." The second stage started with the defeat of Nazi Germany, the appearance of communist-controlled states in Eastern Europe, and the breakup of the old colonial empires. The third and most recent stage is dated from the period 1969-70 and is closely connected with the "fundamental restructuring" of international relations allegedly occurring as a result of the onset of strategic nuclear parity between the two super-powers. While the first two represented relative

changes in the "correlation of world forces" during which the Soviet Union made significant gains vis-a-vis the United States, the third change was characterized as an absolute change in the capitalist-communist alignment such that the Soviet Union was no longer inferior to the United States. As it will be shown later, the distinguishing factor here was the public recognition given to the 1969-70 shift by the Western leadership. In this sense, the third shift in the "correlation of world forces" marks an especially important milestone in the historical development of world communism.

Yet, three caveats must herein be noted.<sup>9</sup> First, the East-West relationship is viewed from the perspective of a "zero-sum" situation. Every loss by the capitalist side is seen as a positive gain from the communist side, and every communist achievement is considered a net loss for capitalism. Therefore, while qualitative changes are said to transpire only infrequently, Soviet analysts are quite sensitive to specific events and indices, which may have great accumulative affect for the overall trend in historical development.

Secondly, it is noted that, while the "correlation of world forces" is a multi-dimensional concept, the objective international situation precludes the uniform development of all factors. Insofar as the Soviet Union is only one of many actors in international affairs, the Soviets are not always in a position to manipulate the various elements to the fullest extent desired. Consequently, the importance of individual factors will be uneven and may tend to fluctuate over time.

Thirdly, on the subjective level, there is no requirement that all elements of struggle must be actively and equally pursued by the Soviets or their opponents at any given time. Indeed, it is pointed out that states will emphasize those forms and methods which, in their opinion, are most effective in a given situation. While there are no "neutral areas," the degree of competition enjoined in any individual area is dictated by such notions as feasibility, opportunity, and necessity, as well as the staunchness of the opponent to assume the struggle. This also means, therefore, that the importance attached to individual factors in the "correlation of world forces" will not remain constant. Such importance will change as foreign policy potentials and tactics change.

As a result some Soviet spokesmen have discussed the relative importance of the various factors within the "correlation of world forces" assessment. Some have suggested that the military element is the most significant, others the economic element, while others still stress the interdependence and interation of all elements.<sup>10</sup> A closer examination, undertaken directly below, of Soviet views on the third historical stage in the correlation will reveal, however, that the leadership accepts the military element as the decisive factor in the fundamental restructuring of the correlation characterizing the third stage.

THE SOVIET VIEW OF THE THIRD STAGE IN THE  
"CORRELATION OF WORLD FORCES:" ORIGINS AND IMPACT

In the Soviet world view, the Western capitalist states are, by

definition, aggressive, militarist, and the source of all wars. Moreover, it is claimed that they are feverishly making military preparations to attack and destroy the communist camp.<sup>11</sup> Lest anyone should mistakenly surmise that the nature of "imperialism" has changed in the era of detente, CPSU General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev set forth the line that "although the possibilities of aggressive imperialist actions are now significantly reduced, its nature remains as before."<sup>12</sup>

However, the Soviets contend that a countervailing trend has been gaining in importance and influence over recent years. It is based on the so-called "realistic forces" or "sober-minded circles" in the West, who have come "to an understanding of the limited role of military force in the contemporary world and the hopelessness of converting military might into a fetish to which economic and domestic political interests are sacrificed."<sup>13</sup> Still, it is pointed out that even this stratum of the bourgeoisie has not ceased to be the "class" and ideological opponent of communism. This stratum is "realistic" not because it has undergone an essential change in nature, but rather because it was "forced" by objective external circumstances to adopt a new position.<sup>14</sup> It differs from the "reactionary" stratum only by the fact that it perceives an external constraint on its ability to pursue an aggressive and militarist foreign policy.

While the "reactionary forces of the U.S. military-industrial complex" are never depicted as defeated and powerless, it is claimed that President Nixon's election represented a triumph for the "realistic forces."<sup>15</sup> In essence, it is claimed that the Nixon administration was

"forced" by a new "correlation of world forces" to dispense with its postwar policy of acting "from a position of strength," to acknowledge the Soviet Union as an equal participant in international affairs, to accept peaceful coexistence as the guiding principle of international relations, and to enter to a detente or "relaxation of tensions" with the communist states. Such a change, it has been stressed on numerous occasions, was not the result of U.S. "goodwill" or morality, but a realistic assessment of the fact that the Soviet Union had attained strategic nuclear parity with the United States. Commenting on this point, one Soviet spokesman observed that "recognition of Soviet-U.S. parity in strategic armaments was a special factor behind the realization by Western ruling circles of the new realities of our day and the corresponding correction of their political line."<sup>16</sup> The new situation of military parity "forced U.S. ruling circles to revise their foreign policy and military concepts," declared an authoritative study of Soviet foreign policy.<sup>17</sup> In sum, it is maintained that the new military balance had and continues to have "a sobering influence on sensible circles in the capitalist world."<sup>18</sup>

From the Soviet standpoint, an objective "proof" of real strategic nuclear parity is not the issue at hand. Soviet public sources have never demonstrated an interest in concrete comparisons of the numbers and qualities of the two superpowers' weapons. Indeed, the Soviet leadership has traditionally avoided any public acknowledgement of even the most rudimentary military information either for its own people or for discussion at arms control and disarmament negotiations. Proof

of the parity situation is drawn from statements by American government officials and academics and other authoritative Western publications. The important factor, then, was the perception and public admission by Western decision-makers that strategic nuclear parity had occurred and that this situation was cause for a reexamination and modification of U.S. foreign policy.

As noted earlier, it was this factor of Western perception which distinguishes the third shift in the "correlation of world forces" from the previous two. While the first two represented significant gains for the proponents of communism, only the third was recognized by U.S. leaders to be of sufficient magnitude that it required the U.S. to re-examine and, subsequently, modify its foreign policy.

Also important was the fact that the military component was the decisive component which forced the U.S. to its new perception of the "correlation of world forces." In essence, therefore, despite occasional statements to the contrary, it becomes evident that the Soviet leadership recognizes the overriding significance of the military component for all of the other areas of competition. In other words, Soviet military might, particularly its strategic nuclear capability, is the foundation for the attainment of success in all other areas of struggle. Such emphasis on strategic nuclear weapons does not infer that the Soviets have been little concerned with tactical and theater war-fighting capabilities. Indeed, Soviet motorized combat vehicles and artillery -- to name but two items -- have been significantly improved. It only means that in the "correlation of world forces" calculation primary concern is attached to strategic nuclear weapons.

Given this general background, it is now necessary to turn attention to the more specific utility attached to military power, as well as Soviet attempts to increase this power as a means to further shift the "correlation of world forces."

#### SOVIET VIEWS ON THE UTILITY OF WAR AND THE ARMED FORCES

Historically, the tendency among American leaders has been to view the use of military forces or the threat of the use of military force as a means of last resort and, then, only to restore the status quo. It is employed only when all other avenues have proven inadequate. In such instances, as events following World Wars I and II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War illustrate, the cessation of hostilities has been cause for the rapid dismantling of wartime capabilities.

The Soviets, on the other hand, have looked upon military might and the threat of military might as an integral part of Soviet foreign policy. As one Soviet observer pointed out:

Unquestionably, military force plays a great role in relations among states. The status and size of the actual armed forces and the military-economic potential of states are factors, which to a significant degree determine the part played by a state or group of states in the development of contemporary international processes.<sup>19</sup>

From the Soviet perspective, military power creates certain political and military advantages which can be, and indeed must be, exploited to the detriment of the opponent.

On the political side, the Soviet leadership views military power as a vital instrument. This derives from the fact that "imperialism normally retreats when faced by a superior force."<sup>20</sup> It is only the existence of a powerful Soviet military instrument that "restrains the ardor of the most aggressive imperialist circles and blocks the path of their aggressive intentions."<sup>21</sup> Indeed, it is constantly emphasized in Soviet literature that "the gains of the toilers of the USSR and the other fraternal countries would undoubtedly have been threatened if the military might of the socialist community, primarily the Soviet Union, had not protected them from the aggressive imperialist forces."<sup>22</sup> In other words, despite continuous assertions of overtaking the West economically, it is the military component which is accepted as the key element from among the various elements that can be brought to bear against the West.

Even outside of the direct Soviet-American relationship, Soviet commentators claim that the decisive factor in the postwar success of "national liberation" movements was the existence of a strong Soviet military. It is maintained that the Soviet armed forces prevent the Western states from effectively dealing with pro-communist factions in the Third World.<sup>23</sup>

On the military side, the Soviet leadership rejects the contention that nuclear weapons have made wars inconceivable. Following the last Nixon-Brezhnev Summit, for example, Brezhnev observed that "it would be completely dangerous if the opinion became firmly established in public

circles that everything is now completely in order and that the threat of war has become illusory." <sup>24</sup> Thus, Soviet commentators continuously declare that "the danger of war continues to be a grim reality of our day."<sup>25</sup> This means that, as first espoused by Clausewitz and later adopted by Lenin, war continues to be a weapon and instrument of politics, a fact which will be nullified only with the demise of capitalism and is in no way linked with the improvement of weapons. As one Soviet political officer explained:

The thesis of Marxism-Leninism on war as a continuation of politics by military means remains true under conditions of radical changes in military affairs. The attempt of some bourgeois ideologues to prove that nuclear missile weapons remove war outside the framework of politics and that nuclear war is outside the control of politics, has ceased to serve as a weapon of politics, and will not be its continuation is incorrect in a theoretical respect and reactionary in a political respect.<sup>26</sup>

The corollary of the possibility of war, from the Soviet perspective, is the necessity to develop and maintain a military capability not merely to repel an enemy but to attain victory over him. Commentators frequently invoke Lenin's dictum that "victory is won by he who has the best equipment, organization, discipline, and the finest hardware."<sup>27</sup>

While such statements appear to reflect the dominant line, they must be balanced with the observation that some dissent has been recently

registered in the Soviet press. For example, several high ranking Soviet officials have suggested that a new world war between the two superpowers "could turn into the destruction of civilization."<sup>28</sup> Even Brezhnev has declared that "if the presently accumulated supply of weapons were launched, mankind could be completely destroyed."<sup>29</sup> Indeed, the Director of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations Under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has gone so far as to proclaim that mutual assured destruction is a fact of life. Accordingly, he observed:

The military-technical revolution has led to the creation of the most destructive means of war, which surpass by many times anything that was used in previous wars. A situation has arisen in which the belligerents can not only destroy each other but also severely damage the very conditions of mankind's existence. Nuclear-missile war can no longer be a rational means of attaining political aims in international relations. From this standpoint, war ceases to be a continuation of politics, as it was defined in his time by Clausewitz.<sup>30</sup>

In sum, since a world nuclear war would destroy civilization, including the superpower combatants, neither can reasonably use it to achieve political aims. Consequent to this view is the premise that pursuit of military superiority over the opponent will not provide any appreciable advantage. The prominent Soviet military analyst, General Major R. Simonyan, doctor of military science and frequent commentator

on military matters in Krasnaya zvezda, maintained in June 1977 that "indeed, with the equality of strategic forces and when both sides possess weapons capable of destroying all life on earth many times over, neither the addition of new batches of weapons nor the raising of their destructive force can yield any substantial military and, still less, political advantage."<sup>31</sup>

These dissenters may be representative of a certain deviant segment of the Soviet leadership. Conversely, as many Western observers contend, they may be espousing merely a propaganda line for Western consumption. The task here is not to judge between these two possibilities. It is sufficient for present purposes only to note that, while such viewpoints are not new in the Soviet Union, they are not characteristic of the prevailing Soviet position. The dominant (that is, the official) line posits that military power retains both political and military utility in the nuclear era. It is necessary, therefore, to examine Soviet attempts to shift the "correlation of military forces" in its favor.

#### SOVIET ATTEMPTS TO SHIFT

#### "THE CORRELATION OF MILITARY FORCES"

As noted earlier, the Soviets view the "correlation of world forces" from the perspective of a zero-sum game. This equally applies to the correlation of individual elements in the overall alignment. In concrete terms, this means that the "correlation of military forces"

is considered to be a dual process, wherein it is important not only to buildup Soviet forces but also to inhibit U.S./NATO buildup as much as possible.

The Soviets seek to portray the arms race as Western-inspired, especially by the U.S. military-industrial complex which derives "huge profits" from the constant improvement of weapons and the further development of new systems. Especially dangerous, charged one Soviet political analyst, is the Pentagon's preparation of "a broad program for the development of new systems of mass destruction weapons."<sup>32</sup> In this connection, Soviet spokesmen severely condemn specific U.S. weapons systems, such as the B-1 bomber, the Trident submarine, the cruise missile, and the neutron bomb, as well as more esoteric types utilizing binary gases, anti-matter, genetic weapons, nerve gases, lasers, and geophysical properties.<sup>33</sup> The Soviets argue that unless such weapons and systems are banned the Soviet Union will be "forced" to respond to their development by creating systems which it would otherwise never consider producing.

Indeed, to this end the Soviets have introduced a United Nations proposal for a world disarmament conference to reach a ban on further qualitative improvements leading to "new types and new systems of weapons of mass destruction."<sup>34</sup> The rationale for the proposal was first voiced by Brezhnev, who spoke in mid-1975 on the urgency to conclude an agreement on the ban on manufacturing new categories of mass destruction weapons, and new systems

of such weapons. At the level of present-day science and technology there arises a grave danger that an even more terrible weapon will be created. The common sense and conscience of mankind impose the necessity of erecting an insurmountable barrier to the appearance of such a weapon.<sup>35</sup>

Since that time, Soviet publications have consistently maintained that the Soviet Union is fully prepared to conclude such an agreement, but is prevented from doing so only by the intransigence of U.S. "reactionary" forces. In light of past experience in trying to get basic quantitative data on military manpower and equipment from the Soviets, it is quite obvious that the Soviet proposal for banning "new weapons" serves nothing but a propaganda function. If the Soviets have refused basic quantitative data, it is unrealistic to expect that they would supply the extensive information on Soviet research and development capabilities to verify any agreement on banning "new weapons." In advancing a proposal that has great popular appeal in the abstract, the Soviets are not in the least concerned with simultaneously advancing the specifics which would make an agreement feasible.

Similarly, the Soviets proposed to the U.N. in September 1973 that all Security Council members reduce their military expenditures by ten percent and use part of the savings to aid the developing countries. Again, a proposal with worthwhile intent in the abstract had no possibility in practice. It was impossible not only because the PRC, a Security

Council member, would assuredly have vetoed it, but also because the Soviets absolutely refuse to acknowledge the true level of Soviet military expenditures. In the Soviet budget, defense spending is given as a single, one-line figure of approximately 17 billion rubles or about 23 to 25 billion dollars.<sup>36</sup> Thus, while the proposal may have had some propaganda appeal among Third World elites or Western arms control and disarmament advocates, its real objective was to portray the U.S. as the "imperialist" leader which prefers the arms race to disarmament and Third World development.

Consistent with this image-making is the Soviet depiction of U.S. initiatives in the arms control and disarmament arena. Those proposals that the Soviet Union wants to accept are presented as having been "forced" on the United States. For example, two Soviet commentators noted:

Despite obvious reluctance of the Western countries to enter into genuine disarmament, the radical change in the correlation of forces in the international arena in favor of socialism, the transformation of the world socialist system into the leading force of the present day, and the acknowledgment by the capitalist countries of the nuclear parity between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. produced a new atmosphere for negotiations that let the problem of disarmament gradually move into the area of the possible.<sup>37</sup>

Those proposals that the Soviet Union wants to reject are chastized as U.S. attempts to achieve unilateral advantage. According to the Soviet formulation, there presently exists an "essential balance" between Soviet and American strategic nuclear capabilities as well as between U.S.S.R./Warsaw Pact and U.S./NATO forces in Central Europe.<sup>38</sup> When the Soviets refused even to consider President Carter's March 1977 proposal to the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT), which aimed not only at the limitation but the actual reduction of some weapons, they did so on the basis that "the U.S.A. is striving to revise the Vladivostok agreement on strategic arms limitation, to gain for itself a one-sided military advantage, and to undermine the Soviet Union's security."<sup>39</sup> Likewise, in refusing to give up the numerical imbalance created by past Soviet/Warsaw Pact buildups, Soviet spokesmen have characterized Western proposals for assymetric disarmament in Central Europe as an attempt "to change the correlation of forces in Central Europe in favor of the West."<sup>40</sup>

Complementary with this diplomatic offensive is the Soviet program of military construction, encompassing "the aggregate of economic, socio-political, and specifically military measures and efforts of the state, which are carried out in the interests of preparing and waging wars and in the interests of strengthening its military power."<sup>41</sup> As a writer explained in Krasnaya zvezda, "V. I. Lenin regarded the defense potential of a state as the organized unity of economic, moral-political, and specifically military potential."<sup>42</sup>

In the moral-political sphere, the Soviet armed forces have created a parallel political structure, the Main Political Administration (MPA) of the Soviet Army and Navy, among whose responsibilities are the indoctrination of soldiers in the norms of "communist morality." Each year Soviet officers and soldiers are required to partake in a system of political training in the form of lectures, independent study, and seminars. Officers undergo fifty hours of indoctrination training annually, about half of which is given to seminar lessons. Training of non-officers is more frequent, as much as two hour sessions twice a week. In addition, the MPA supplements the indoctrination with "socialist competition" and "criticism and self-criticism" campaigns for the purpose of whipping up and checking on the ideological conditioning of troops. The ultimate sanction against defects in this sphere is the fact that political and moral qualities are taken into consideration in the selection, placement, and promotion of soldiers. As the Chief of the MPA has noted, "the selection and placement of cadres is a political question, not a technical one."<sup>43</sup>

In the economic sphere, Soviet spokesmen frequently observe that there exists a close connection between Soviet economic and military development, because "the economy serves as the foundation of defense might."<sup>44</sup> Accordingly, one Soviet military officer and doctor of economic science stated:

Our defense might directly depends on the utmost growth of the USSR's economic might. This dependence is becoming closer

and closer as a measure of the interrelationship between war and the economy and the growing demands of the army and navy for material resources.<sup>45</sup>

Moreover, Soviet commentators openly acknowledge that the 10th Five-Year Plan adopted in 1976 will emphasize those areas which are most beneficial for weapons development and, therefore, "will be the foundation of new increases in the Soviet Union's economic and defense might."<sup>46</sup>

While it is not possible to determine what the Soviets will spend on military development in the 10th Five-Year Plan, there is every reason to believe that the previous trend will continue. In a dollar comparison of U.S. and Soviet defense programs, the Central Intelligence Agency pointed out that the costs of Soviet defense programs exceeded U.S. authorizations in every year since 1970. In 1974 prices, Soviet programs in 1975 (less pension expenditures) cost 50% more than U.S. programs. In terms of constant U.S. prices, which measure growth in real terms, there has been a continuous growth during the period 1965-1975 of about 3 percent per year (as compared to the United States whose authorizations in constant dollar terms have declined continuously since 1968 and since 1973 have fallen below the 1965 level).<sup>47</sup>

In the military sphere proper, Soviet efforts appear to affirm the Kuznetsov "never again" warning of 1962. Since that time, the Soviets have undertaken a military development program that has not only overcome the former U.S. superiority but also created a capability

beyond what many Western military experts consider necessary for Soviet defensive purposes. Soviet active-duty manpower is more than double the U.S.'s and the Soviet Ground Forces alone outnumber all active U.S. forces by about 400 thousand men. Since 1962, the U.S. has deployed only four new intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) systems, while the Soviets have deployed ten. Subsequent to the latest U.S. deployment in 1970, the Soviets have introduced five new systems. Similarly, the U.S. has deployed only three new submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) systems since 1962, whereas the Soviets have deployed four, of which three of the Soviet's were introduced later than 1964 but only one of the U.S.'s. Moreover, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown revealed in September 1977 that "the Soviets have four new ICBM's under development, they are continuing work on the SS-16, their mobile ICBM, and they are modifying four other missiles."<sup>48</sup>

Quite obviously present limitations do not allow for a total assessment of Soviet military programs, but the point to be stressed here is that such programs underscore the complete Soviet rejection of any concept to limit plans for military development. In this respect, Soviet military thinking is devoid of any concept akin to the U.S. idea of "sufficiency" in military construction. In their formulation, it is asserted that every achievement "must be considered only as the next step in turn for the further raising of the armed forces' combat might."<sup>49</sup> This is particularly true insofar as the East-West military

competition has switched "from the plane of a numerical buildup of 'big battalions' into the plane of qualitatively improving new hardware."<sup>50</sup>

According to the late Marshal of the Soviet Union I. I. Yakubovskiy, there are two basic trends in Soviet weapons development: (1) the development of current arms and systems, and (2) the development and creation of fundamentally new systems.<sup>51</sup> For many years, greater practical emphasis was placed on a steady improvement in current weapons instead of waiting for qualitative improvements that require some time lag to design and produce. More recently, Soviet open literature has begun to stress the need for developing fundamentally new systems. As one Soviet expert explained:

Inasmuch as there are no limits to understanding natural laws, so there can be no limits to the application of these laws in technical designs. From this point of view, the most terrible weapon cannot be called absolute since in its stead can come a still more powerful one based on the newest scientific-technical achievements.<sup>52</sup>

Given this view, the Soviets maintain that the quest for S&T superiority is mandated not only for the contemporary advantages it may give vis-a-vis a potential opponent, but also because superiority, once attained, is not necessarily permanent. With this in mind, Grechko wrote in The Armed Forces of the Soviet State that Soviet military-

technical policy must orient research not only toward the solution of "current" problems, but also toward "the solution of various long-term problems whose results might find wide application in military affairs in the future," especially "basic research directed toward the discovery of yet unknown characteristics of matter, phenomena, and laws of nature, and the development of new methods of studying and utilizing them for strengthening the state's defense capability."<sup>53</sup>

SOVIET VIEW OF THE IMPACT OF THE "CORRELATION OF MILITARY FORCES"  
ON U.S. MILITARY DOCTRINE AND STRATEGY

In the Soviet view, foreign policy is not formulated in the abstract. It is determined by the interests and goals of the dominant class. Since Soviet foreign policy supposedly reflects the interests and goals of the "workers and toilers," it is claimed to be "peaceloving." It follows that the military doctrine and strategy selected to implement this policy would be "peaceloving" and "defensive." Conversely, since U.S. foreign policy is allegedly a manifestation of the interests and goals of "exploiters and oppressors," it is defined as "imperialist." Thus, the military doctrine and strategy of the United States is "imperialist" and "aggressive." Although specific elements of military doctrine and strategy may change over time, their nature is constant. Hence, the Soviet Union will always be the "defender" and the U.S. will always be the "aggressor." In the words of one Soviet analyst:

V. I. Lenin taught that the real nature of war is determined not by who attacked first, on whose territory war is being

conducted, or whether the fighting is offensive or defensive. It is important to consider "what class nature the war bears, for what reasons the war has broken out, what class is waging it, and what historic and historical-economic conditions provoked it."<sup>54</sup>

Consequently, the nature of U.S. doctrine and strategy remains constant, but its content has undergone significant change.

The Soviets divide post-World War II U.S. military doctrine and strategy into three stages, with changes occurring "roughly every decade in connection with radical shifts in the correlation of forces in the world and the development of the means of armed struggle."<sup>55</sup> The first period from 1945 to 1960 was based upon the policy of containment, which gave rise to the strategy of "massive retaliation." According to the Soviets, massive retaliation "envisioned the preparation and the conduct of a 'preventive' nuclear war, which was considered in imperialist strategy as a unilateral act of nuclear assault, against the countries of the socialist community."<sup>56</sup> However, by the end of the 1950's the U.S. was "forced" to re-evaluate its position because "in all decisive areas of military affairs the Soviet Union was not behind the USA and in a number of areas passed ahead of it."<sup>57</sup>

This reassessment led to the development of a new strategy, namely, flexible response, which dominated between 1961 and 1971. While still espousing to deal "from a position of strength," the new strategy considered a growing "balance" of U.S. and Soviet strategic capabilities,

say Soviet commentators. Now nuclear war would not be unilateral, but a mutual exchange of nuclear strikes. Further refinements of flexible response included the concepts of escalation and two-and-a-half wars.

At the beginning of the 1970s, strategic nuclear parity again "forced" the United States to re-evaluate its military strategy. This stage began with the enunciation of the "realistic deterrence" strategy, relying on the concepts of strategic sufficiency, one-and-a-half wars, strategic mobility, and limited strategic war. While acknowledging that U.S. military power continues to grow, the Soviets stress that the devolution of U.S. strategy reflects a decreasing utility of this power as a consequence of the "objective changes in the correlation of forces in favor of socialism"<sup>58</sup>-- which in this case means the growth of Soviet military might.

In essence, therefore, the trends in U.S. doctrine and strategy are significant not only for what it reveals concerning U.S. war-fighting concepts, but also for its implications for the "correlation of military forces" in particular and the "correlation of world forces" in general. From the Soviet perspective, the reexamination and subsequent modification of U.S. military doctrine and strategy roughly "every decade" transpired because of the shifting "correlation of world forces." Yet, beyond this, the changes in U.S. military doctrine and strategy are, in a sense, a measure of the shift in the "correlation of world forces" and a confirmation of the utility of Soviet military development.

Within this context, however, it is necessary to note that Soviet analysts do find certain elements of the current U.S. military strategy to be quite unsettling. Given the overall trend that U.S. military might was being effectively constrained, the Soviets reacted quite vehemently to the U.S. announcement of new positions on the use of limited nuclear war and selective targeting. Whereas previously American strategy made an attack on Soviet territory very unlikely, the new concepts heightened the possibility that Soviet territory would now be more vulnerable to attack if conflict should occur. Soviet analysts overlooked the proposition that the U.S. first-use of nuclear weapons against selected targets would be a response to Soviet tactical, conventional gains in Central Europe. They equated first-use with preemption and charged the United States was seeking to blur the distinction between nuclear and conventional warfare.

In sum, therefore, the credibility of Soviet nuclear deterrence has been somewhat eroded insofar as the U.S. appears to no longer accept the Soviet contention that an attack on the USSR's territory will in all likelihood escalate to total nuclear war. Since nuclear parity "forced" the U.S. to give up acting "from a position of strength" and to accept peaceful coexistence, it is disconcerting in that a rejection of U.S. unilateral military constraint may lead to the U.S. rejection of political constraint. Indeed, since it is not the "goodwill" or "rationality" of the West which restrains it, but rather Soviet military power, any policy which alleviates U.S. restraint is -- in a zero-sum calculation -- a policy which inhibits Soviet freedom of action.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

In summary, contemporary Soviet spokesmen maintain that the overall trend in the "correlation of world forces" is constantly shifting in favor of communism. According to the Soviet definition, "correlation of world forces" is an aggregate of all factors and indices that affect the relative alignment between the two opposing systems. In actual fact, the Soviet leadership's calculation of the "correlation of world forces" relies heavily upon an assessment of the military component. This is the fundamental element not only because Soviet military strength is the single index that allows the Soviet Union to claim superpower status but also because Western political decision-makers have officially acknowledged the Soviet's attainment of strategic nuclear parity, and, therewith, have modified their approaches to foreign policy.

Given the importance of the military factor, the Soviets have utilized several methods to shift the "correlation of military forces" further in their favor. On the one hand, they have tried diplomatic and propagandistic moves with the aim of halting or at least retarding Western military construction. They seek to reinforce that sector of Western opinion which contends that war in a nuclear era is unthinkable and, therefore, not really possible. At the same time, the Soviet leadership seeks to instill in its own people the conviction that war is possible and that, as a consequence, great spiritual and material sacrifices must be made in order to create a war-fighting and war-winning capability.

In an attempt to test the sincerity of Soviet claims to a radical shift in the "correlation of world forces" due to the achievement of strategic nuclear parity in 1969-70, the question frequently arises: What have the Soviets done since 1969-70 that they would not have done under previous conditions? Such a question implies the expectation that the Soviets will use their new position to further communist expansionist aims. One line of reasoning might extrapolate from Soviet risk-taking of earlier and more vulnerable periods to suggest that the stronger the Soviets become militarily, the more risks they will undertake.

Such an argument may have some validity as exemplified by Soviet-Cuban involvement in the Angolan War or by Soviet threats and mobilization during the Arab-Israeli War of 1973. However, it is too simplistic to measure the Soviet perception of the shifting "correlation of world forces" only in terms of overt Soviet military acts. Because of their past military inferiority, the Soviets have, by force of circumstances, developed a concept of power that is multi-dimensional. While such power depends on military might, it is often manifested through economic influence, ideological persuasion, and political prestige. Thus, from the Soviet viewpoint, the current "correlation of world forces" frees the Soviet Union to pursue many arenas of competition with the West, while its level of military development gives the assurance that the United States will not respond with a real threat to Soviet survival.

Moreover, there is no imperative that the Soviet Union must "do something" with the new "correlation of world forces." The Soviets may

find it quite sufficient that (1) the U.S. has acknowledged the USSR as one of the two major actors on the international scene without whose agreement the settlement of conflict situations as in the Middle East would be impossible and (2) the U.S. has in the past three decades modified not only its foreign policy but also its military doctrine and strategy in consideration of increasing Soviet power. In this sense, the Soviets have gained without risk to the Soviet Union. Consequently, Soviet military might has developed into real power insofar as it has achieved influence over Western behavior without having actually resorted to force or the threat of force.

In conclusion, the importance of the military factor in the "correlation of world forces" derives as much from the perception (that is, Western evaluation) of Soviet strength as it does from the weapons of the Soviet armed forces.

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## CHAPTER SIX

### THE SUPERPOWER BALANCE, MILITARY POLICY, AND PUBLIC OPINION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, FRANCE, AND THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY\*

by

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#### INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the views of British, French, and West German publics concerning national security issues and East-West relations. Its goal is to identify some of the roles which these views have played in the system of post-war East-West competition. Unlike many analyses of public opinion, which emphasize the latest poll results, this paper focuses on the analysis of trends in public opinion, since these trends can provide us with a better understanding of the longer-term process of East-West competition. Polls commissioned by the United States

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\*The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and should not be interpreted as representing the policies of CACI, Inc., the Center for Naval Analyses, or any other organization. The author is grateful to Dr. Leo Crespi of the United States Information Agency for his assistance in obtaining some of the data used in this paper.

Information Agency are used as the principal data source.

The paper is divided into three sections. The first presents some of the reasons why we would expect public opinion to have an impact on (and to be influenced by) defense policies and East-West relations and explicates some of the analytical problems which are involved in the analysis of public opinion and its relationships with other factors. The second section traces out some of the broad contours of Western European public opinion. The final section presents an exploratory analysis of the position of Western European public opinion within the broader structure of East-West competition and of the relationship between public opinion and the military balance.

#### PUBLIC OPINION, THE MILITARY BALANCE, AND EAST-WEST COMPETITION

##### The Relevance of Western European Public Opinion

Public opinion in Western European nations can be related to defense policy in two ways: as an influence (or constraint) upon the actions taken by leaders and as an object or target for military/foreign policies.

##### Public Opinion as an Influence

The nations examined in this paper are parliamentary democracies. Even in open polities such as these, simple electoral mandates -- in which the policy preferences of citizens are directly translated into government actions -- are unlikely to exist. Two factors can account for the absence of simple mandates. The first is that in the course of

making electoral decisions citizens can consider a wide variety of domestic and foreign issues which are of varying salience to them. A vote for candidate 'X' may or may not be a vote for her or his defense policies; other concerns might be more salient for the bulk of the electorate. A second factor standing in the way of clear mandates is the unpredictability of the future. Surprises can occur (for example, the 1973 Oil Embargo). The key defense issues at any point may be matters which were not envisioned at the time of the most recent election.

Even in the absence of simple mandates, however, more complex relationships between public opinion and national security policies are possible and, in some cases, even probable. Elections do allow voters to make retrospective evaluations of candidates. As a consequence, in many cases candidates will probably attempt to adjust their policy stances (on national defense as well as other issues) to match the perceived preferences of the voters, although the dynamics of this process in the fields of defense and foreign affairs are not well understood. At the same time, of course, candidates are also likely to attempt to be leaders by persuading voters to accept their own set of policy preferences. The dialectic between these two processes can result, over time, in a rough general congruence between the distribution of preferences among the electorate and the policies advocated by elected officials, even in the absence of a detailed one-to-one correspondence between the two. Hence, public views on defense issues are likely to have some reflection in policy.

On a more basic level, publics and leaders are constantly involved in the definition of the issues which are of policy concern (for example, What is the standing of human rights considerations on a nation's foreign policy agenda?). Within any open political order a continuing, often tacit, dialogue takes place in which the nature of the issues (what is the menu?) as well as the positions which nations should take on the issues (what should we order?) are defined and re-defined. The relative standings of defense concerns on national policy agendas are likely to be affected by this process, as are the longer term political career prospects of candidate leaders.

To the extent that leaders define the universe of relevant issues in the same ways as publics and take positions on the issues that are reasonably consistent with popular opinion, public opinion becomes an important type of resource which leaders can draw upon, leading to policies with greater 'resolve'. To the extent that incongruencies exist between leaders and led, the force of policy actions is likely to be lessened.

#### Public Opinion as an Object of Policy

Public and elite opinions are identified as important targets for foreign and military policy actions in Soviet and American writings on defense issues. For example, recent posture statements by Secretaries of Defense Schlesinger (1975) and Rumsfeld (1976) have expressed concern with such psychological factors as:

The need to maintain a rough equivalence between Soviet and American strategic forces to ensure that major asymmetries do not develop, thereby avoiding the possibility that misperceptions about the balance might lead to pressures, crises, and confrontations;

The requirement that U.S. planners be concerned with the confidence of Western European allies in their ability to resist direct or indirect challenges from the USSR; and

The need to consider the peacetime psychological impact of military forces, such as the employment of naval forces to achieve diplomatic influence.

An organizational reflection of these interests has been the creation of the office of the Director, Net Assessment, within the Office of the Secretary of Defense. One of the concerns of this office has been the assessment of the psychological impact of Soviet and American forces.

Parallel concern can be found in Soviet writings. Georgi Arbatov, the Director of the Institute of the United States of America and Canada, has emphasized the importance of public opinion in considerations of interbloc relations. Arbatov argues that tactics aimed at influencing public opinion are one of the central elements of modern diplomacy.<sup>1</sup> In his consideration of the role of psychological factors in

the "correlations of forces" (or balance of power between the blocs), Tomashevsky discusses the importance of "subjective" factors such as public opinion in terms which are not far removed from those found in American considerations of net assessment questions:

The complexity of the category of the balance of power and its components is apparent also in the peculiar range of objective and subjective factors. For example, the subjective factor -- evaluation by participants in international relations of the relative strength of one another and of the general balance of power, may sometimes play the role of an element of the objective situation. Irrespective of whether such an evaluation is correct or not, it may engender certain actions and bring about consequences of an altogether objective nature, and a change in the objective balance of power. In this connection, the role of information (and misinformation) is growing in world politics.<sup>2</sup>

Soviet interest in the impact which their politics have upon public opinion in foreign nations is also reflected in the attention which recent Soviet foreign policy writings pay to the results of Western survey research.<sup>3</sup> There is also reason to believe that the Soviets are highly concerned with the ramifications which their foreign policy actions might have upon public opinion with the USSR, particularly insofar as it might influence the Soviet public's support of the regime.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, as is the case in the U.S., this concern with the importance of public opinion in interstate relations has had organization manifestations. For example, a recent assessment of the Soviet Institute of the U.S.A. and Canada notes that it is concerned with the analysis of American policies, opinions, and attitudes.<sup>5</sup>

#### Analytical Problems

The analytical problems that need to be considered stem from two interrelated factors: the nature of the data and the limited amount of previous research dealing with trends in public opinion and/or with the relationship between these trends and other factors of interest.

##### Data Limitations

The most obvious problems encountered in the analysis of trends in public opinion derive from the analyst's dependence on previous polling efforts. The 'right' questions (in the analyst's eyes) may or may not have been asked in the past. A sufficient number of data points for trend analysis may not exist. There may be a sufficient number of item repetitions for trend analysis, but with significant discontinuities in the time series. The values taken by individual observations in the time series may be highly dependent on the precise point at which the item was asked (for example, imagine 1962 polls dealing with Western views of the USSR taken before, during, and after the Missile Crisis). Attempts to merge similarly worded items can encounter serious problems of item

comparability. For the most part there are no clearcut solutions to these problems. This paper responds to this type of problem by relying on polls commissioned by a single source, which reduces comparability problems. Given this research decision, there is no solution for the problem of gaps in the time series other than to recognize their existence and to consider what implications they have for the substantive conclusions of the analysis.

The data also present some less immediately obvious problems. Most of the available poll items ask respondents to give their views concerning a state of affairs -- their attitude or opinion concerning an object (for example, 'who is ahead in the military balance') -- rather than their opinions concerning policy actions or behaviors ('given the state of military balance, what should our nation do about it?') This is an important problem for two reasons. The first is that policy preferences are by no means automatically determined by state of the world assessments (the Humean 'is'/'ought' dichotomy has its applications in the field of survey research as well as in epistemology). For considerations of defense policy it is policy questions (what should be done?) that are of the greatest interest, but these are the items which are not, by and large, available. The second problem is that the correlation between an attitude towards an object and subsequent behavior is likely to be weaker than an attitude towards a behavior and subsequent performance of the behavior.<sup>6</sup>

Once again no true solution is available. The most that can be done is to postulate a plausible linkage relationship between public opinion and presumed policy preferences (for example, 'spend more when the balance is perceived to be going against the U.S.')

and to empirically determine if the hypothesized relationship holds true.

A second, subtle, limitation of the data is that public opinion polls do not, by and large, deal with basic political cultural factors and perceptions. Questions may deal with respondents' views of the Soviet Union. Questions are far less likely to deal with the network of perceptions in which these views operate (for example, is the Soviet Union viewed as an aggressive or as a conservative state?) Once again this is a type of limitation which cannot be surmounted, given available data.

The final problem in this category has to do with the impact of previous world views/policy agendas on the content of questions. The policy agenda which is reflected in a set of survey results may or may not correspond to the policy agenda of an analyst working at a later point in time; some perceptions of what are 'major issues' have changed. Once again, given a decision to rely upon survey data, the only response that can be made to this problem is to recognize it and to be alert for its possible impact on the analysis.

#### Limitations Due to the Limits of Previous Research

While there have been many studies of public opinion concerning foreign affairs and defense issues, most have focused on the analysis

of opinion, per se, over the short term (usually the most recent poll results). Relatively little work has been done on the analysis of trends and/or the relationship between public opinion and other facets of the international system. Moreover, while some very good theoretical work has been done on the dynamics of the way in which public opinion is interrelated with policy (for example, the two-step and attentive public models), relatively little empirical work has been done which traces the actual operations of these processes.

As a result of these characteristics of previous research, only relatively weak theoretical 'priors' are available to guide this analysis. The absence of strong research 'priors' has serious implications for the employment of regression analysis in the last section of the paper, since it results in relatively weak specifications for equations. These relatively weak specifications, in turn, have consequences for the selection of the regression model to be employed in the analysis, for the responses which are made to the problems of multicollinearity and autocorrelation, and for the way in which regression equations are reported and interpreted.\*

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\*Standard econometrics texts tend to deal with two classes of problems: (a) situations where strong specifications (based on strong theoretical priors) exist and where attention focuses on regression parameters; (b) situations where almost no priors exist and where attention

Ordinary least squares regression will be employed in the analysis. While OLS cannot capture interactive causality of the sort that is most likely present in the system under consideration, it is fairly robust and relatively well understood. More sophisticated alternative approaches which can capture interactive causal relations require strong specifications of the sort that simply cannot be provided, given the 'priors' which are available.

The regression analysis will focus on the examination of common patterns across indicators (for example, common trends in public opinion and defense expenditures). In this analysis the pattern matching components of OLS regression will be emphasized (variance explained and the fit between actual and predicted values). Relatively little emphasis will be given to regression coefficients (b's and B's), since these have less importance in the absence of fairly strong specifications.

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focuses almost exclusively on prediction. Many political science problems fall into an intermediate zone, where some priors exist but where strong specifications are not possible. The techniques to be presented have been developed to deal with problems (such as the standing of European public opinion within a larger system of East-West relations) which appear to fall within this intermediate range. Considerations of space prevent a more detailed presentation of this approach to regression.

These coefficients will be used, however, to 'drive' the residual analyses.\*

In the analysis, the existence of multicollinearity and autocorrelation will be noted, where appropriate. Because of the relatively weak priors involved, it will not be possible to determine the true causes of these 'problems' (for example, how to apportion variance among predictors or whether autocorrelation is due to the omission of one or more explanatory variables, to the mis-specification of the mathematical form of relationship, or to some truly serially dependent process). As a consequence, no response will be made to the presence of either factor.

## THE CONTOURS OF WESTERN EUROPEAN PUBLIC OPINION

### Introduction

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\* A simple thought experiment can bring out the distinction involved here. Assume that the regression weights in an equation were to be artificially changed so that the signs and relative magnitudes of weights varied but the net results, in terms of  $R^2$  and the fit between actual and estimated values, did not change to any great degree. For present purposes these alterations in the equation would not have any analytical consequences, since the fit between one pattern and some set of other patterns (considered as a set) is the only point emphasized. Obviously this would not be the case in a path analytical approach to regression.

This section outlines the views of Western European publics which bear directly or indirectly on East-West security relations. It blends a presentation of recent poll results with an analysis of trends. Greater emphasis is placed on the latter element which tends to be neglected and which is the critical aspect for gaining a better understanding of the longer-term dimensions of East-West competition.

The section deals with a number of topics:

A summary of recent European views on defense subjects:

Perceptions of East-West competition;

Preferences regarding superpower parity and how these preferences have changed over time;

An assessment of trends in public perceptions of the military balance and opinions of the superpowers.

The last subject will provide the basis for an examination of the standing of Western European public opinion in the broader context of post-war East-West relations. To the extent possible, the analysis in this section will identify the views of the most highly educated component of the publics, as well as those of the public at large, since the former group is likely to contain many of the opinion leaders whose views are likely to have greater policy import. For convenience (to provide synonyms) the terms views, opinions, attitudes, and perceptions will be used interchangeably.

## Recent Survey Results

The most recent (March 1977) views of European publics regarding Soviet and American military strength are presented in Table 6.1. Perceived trends in Soviet and American military strength are presented in Table 6.2.

On the face of things these are not ideal results from an American perspective. Neither the current standings nor the perceived trends favor the U.S. At the same time, however, attaching strategic import to these results is not an unambiguous matter. Consider, for example, the case of two American analysts, one an adherent of the Assured Destruction school of strategic thinking and the other a believer in Counterforce (and/or Damage Limitation). To the former these would be reasonably acceptable standings, since the only point of crucial import would be the percentages who perceived a substantial Soviet lead. To someone in the opposite camp the results would be much more negative, since more importance would be attached to the large percentages in the "U.S.S.R. somewhat ahead" category in Table 6.1. Here, as elsewhere, the meaning of the poll results depends, to a large extent, on the other factors and considerations.

### Perceptions of East-West Competition

There is considerable evidence that European publics (and leaders as well) do not view East-West competition solely (or perhaps even primarily) in military terms. In 1972 general and university educated

TABLE 6.1

## U.S.-Soviet Military Strength: 1977 Polling Data

"How to you think the U.S. and the U.S.S.R compare at the present time in total military strength (CARD)-U.S. considerably ahead, U.S. somewhat ahead, U.S. and U.S.S.R. about equal, U.S.S.R somewhat ahead, U.S.S.R considerably ahead?"

<u>March 1977</u>	<u>Great Britain</u>	<u>France</u>	<u>West Germany</u>
No. of cases	(1903)	(993)	(1008)
U.S. considerably ahead	3% ] 10%	6% ] 16%	3% ] 15%
U.S. and U.S.S.R about equal	7 ]	10 ]	12 ]
U.S.S.R somewhat ahead	19	27	35
U.S.S.R considerably ahead	34 ] 50	27 ] 34	25 ] 34
No opinion	16 ]	7 ]	9 ]
Totals*	22	23	17
Net U.S. Ahead	101%	100%	101%
	-40	-18	-19

\* Here and in subsequent tables, totals range between 99% and 101% due to rounding approximation.

Source: United States Advisory Commission on Information (USACI),  
The 28th Report (USACI, 1977), p. 183.

TABLE 6.2

## Shifts in U.S.-Soviet Military Strength: 1977 Polling Data

"Regardless of how you believe the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. compare in military strength at the present time, do you see military strength currently shifting more toward the U.S., more toward the U.S.S.R., or in neither direction?"

<u>March 1977</u>	<u>Great Britain</u>	<u>France</u>	<u>West Germany</u>
No. of cases	(1903)	(993)	(1008)
Toward U.S.	9%	11%	9%
Toward U.S.S.R.	38	26	32
Neither	28	24	33
No opinion	26	39	27
Totals	101%	100%	101%
Net Favorable	-29	-15	-23

Source: United States Advisory Commission on Information (USACI),  
The 28th Report (USACI, 1977), p. 183.

publics were asked the question presented in Table 6.3. Since more than two alternatives were presented, the item is not strictly comparable to the more recent military strength question presented in Table 6.1. Nevertheless, publics can still be compared by subtracting those who saw the U.S.S.R. in first place from those who put the U.S. in that position.

In the same survey, a more general national power question was asked which was not restricted to military factors (Table 6.4).

In each country and for both sets of publics the U.S. is seen as being stronger when all of the bases of power are considered than when the Soviet-American comparison is focused (as in Table 6.3) only on military considerations. When the respondents who put the U.S. into first place were asked why they did so, the modal response attributed America's lead to economic rather than military factors, though the two were quite close in the case of West Germany.<sup>7</sup>

Another dimension of the perception of East-West competition has to do with expectations of conflict. Some non-survey data on this subject can be taken from the research of Kjell Goldmann.<sup>8</sup> Goldmann uses content analysis to estimate leaders' perceptions of the likelihood of inter-block conflict in Europe. Since the early to mid 1960s leaders' perceptions (as measured by Goldmann) have been favorable, indicating that inter-block conflict is perceived as being less likely. Goldmann's conclusions are consistent with the findings of Lerner and Gordon that only a small fraction of the Western European elites in their surveys anticipated major inter-bloc war and that the primary

TABLE 6.3

Military Strength: 1972 Polling Data

Now, which of the countries on this card would you say is the strongest militarily at the present time: U.S., Soviet Union, Mainland China (PRC), Japan, European Common Market Countries (as a group)"?

<u>General Public</u>	<u>United Kingdom</u>	<u>France</u>	<u>West Germany</u>
U.S. ahead	29%	47%	50%
U.S.S.R ahead	45	28	31
U.S.-USSR	-16	+19	+19
<u>University Educated</u>			
U.S. ahead	38	59	55
U.S.S.R ahead	39	27	34
U.S.-U.S.S.R	-1	+32	+21

Source: United States Information Agency, U.S. Standing in Foreign Public Opinion Following the President's Visit to China (USIA, 1972), p. 16, 30.

TABLE 6.4

## Overall Strength: 1972 Polling Data

Considering all the things that make a country strong, what country would you say is the strongest in the world at the present time?

<u>General Public</u>	<u>United Kingdom</u>	<u>France</u>	<u>West Germany</u>
U.S.	46%	61%	59%
U.S.S.R	29	16	22
U.S.-USSR	+17	+45	+37
<u>University Educated</u>			
U.S.	50	73	64
U.S.S.R	27	8	23
U.S.-U.S.S.R	+23	+65	+41

Source: United States Information Agency, U.S. Standing in Foreign Public Opinion Following the President's Visit to China (USIA, 1972), p. 16, 30.

Soviet challenge perceived by these leaders was political.<sup>9</sup>

These findings concerning Europeans' expectations of conflict between the blocs and their evaluation of the competition as a predominantly political context bear on the earlier survey results having to do with U.S. and Soviet national power. Clearly, there is an irreducible military component to the relationship between the blocs. At the same time, however, if one regards East-West competition as a long-haul process in which conflict is not anticipated over the shorter term, then the political-economic and political-military components of the competition take on greater relative importance, (if only because they provide the resources required for future military efforts). Viewed in this light, the finding that American standing vis-a-vis the U.S.S.R. increases when all of the bases of power are considered and that economic factors figure prominently in this evaluation takes on increased relevance and 'qualifies' to some extent more narrow evaluations of the comparative military balance, such as those presented in Tables 6.1 and 6.3.

#### Views of Superpower Parity

From 1958 through 1971 there was a striking shift in the opinion of Western European publics concerning Soviet-American parity. In 1958 a majority of respondents in the United Kingdom and the Federal Republic of Germany and a plurality in France preferred a U.S. lead in military

strength (Table 6.5). By 1971, a majority in all three nations preferred for neither superpower to be ahead in nuclear weapons. This shift in opinion is even more noteworthy because the questions used to identify it are among the few items in the USIA surveys which index policy preferences ("what would be best in your opinion?") rather than state of the world assessments ("who is ahead?").

The February 1963 preference of publics in France and Great Britain for "parity" of another sort between the superpowers is shown in Table 6.6. It is probably no coincidence that the two nations in which a plurality of the respondents favored a parallel removal of American missiles also were the two states which had pluralities in favor of parity in Soviet and American military strength as early as 1964. (Table 6.5).

#### Trends in European Assessments of the Military Balance and Opinions of the Superpowers

Since the mid-1950s, USIA polls have repeated several items a sufficient number of times to allow for time series analysis (though there are some notable gaps in the time series). The most salient items for present purposes are three questions having to do with assessments of the military balance and general opinions of the superpowers:

"All things considered, which country do you think is ahead in total military strength at the present time -- the United States or the USSR?"

TABLE 6.5

U.S.-Soviet Military/Nuclear Strength: Polling Preferences

1971 wording: "What would be best in your opinion-for the U.S. to be ahead in nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union to be ahead, or neither to be ahead?"  
 1964 wording: "What would be best in your opinion-for the U.S. to be ahead in military strength, the Soviet Union to be ahead, or neither to be ahead?"  
 1958 wording: "Would you prefer the U.S. to be militarily stronger than the U.S.S.R., weaker, or about the same in military strength?"

	Great Britain			France			West Germany		
	Oct. '58	Feb. '64	July '71	Oct. '58	Feb. '64	July '71	Oct. '58	Feb. '64	July '71
No. of cases	(611)	(1178)	(1240)	(635)	(1175)	(1263)	(610)	(1202)	(1211)
Prefer U.S. ahead	69%	40%	31%	43%	22%	12%	73%	49%	31%
Prefer U.S.S.R. ahead	2	1	3	3	2	3	1	-	1
Prefer neither ahead	21	47	56	36	64	71	15	35	56
No opinion	8	12	11	18	12	15	11	16	13
	100%	100%	101% <sup>a</sup>	100%	100%	101% <sup>a</sup>	100%	100%	101% <sup>a</sup>
Net Favorable to U.S. (U.S. ahead less U.S.S.R. ahead plus neither)	46	-8	-28	4	-44	-62	57	14	-26

<sup>a</sup> Totals may vary slightly from 100 per cent owing to rounding.

Source: United States Advisory Commission on Information (USACI), The 28th Report (USACI, 1977), p. 123.

TABLE 6.6

## Removal of Missiles

8. Question: "Some people say that the U.S. should remove its nuclear missiles from bases near the Soviet Union, just as the Soviet Union removed its nuclear missiles from Cuba, near the U.S. Others say that the two cases are quite different, and the U.S. should not remove its missiles.

With which of these views are you more inclined to agree?

	<u>Great Britain</u>	<u>France</u>	<u>West Germany</u>
N=	1186	1200	1202
Remove U.S. nuclear missiles from bases near the Soviet Union	49%	45%	29%
Don't remove U.S. nuclear missiles	22	19	34
Qualified answer	*	-	2
DK	<u>11</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>24</u>
Total	82%	84	89%
Not aware of crisis	18%	16%	11%

Source: R. L. Merritt and D. J. Puchala Western European Perspective on International Affairs (New York: Praeger, 1968), p. 448.

"Do you have a very good, good, neither good nor bad, bad or very bad opinion of the USSR?"

"Do you have a very good, good, neither good nor bad, bad, or very bad opinion of the United States?"

The responses of the European publics are plotted in Figures 6.1 and 6.2.\* The most significant items for present purposes are the military balance questions plotted in Figure 6.1. While there are significant discontinuities in the time series (for example, the 1966-1967 and post 1969 values), some trends can be identified. The profiles of opinion are remarkably similar across the three countries. Assessments of relative American military strength were lowest in 1960-1961, the period of the Berlin Crisis. Evaluations of relative American strength increased in all three states after 1962, possibly as a result of the Missile Crisis.

The Germans were consistently the most optimistic concerning America's standing vis-a-vis the USSR; the British were consistently the most pessimistic.

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\*Following the practice of the USIA report from which these data were taken, net standing scores are presented in the figures and employed in subsequent analyses. The net standing score for the balance item is: U.S. ahead minus USSR ahead. The net standings for the last two items are computed by subtracting the bad and very bad responses from the good and very good.

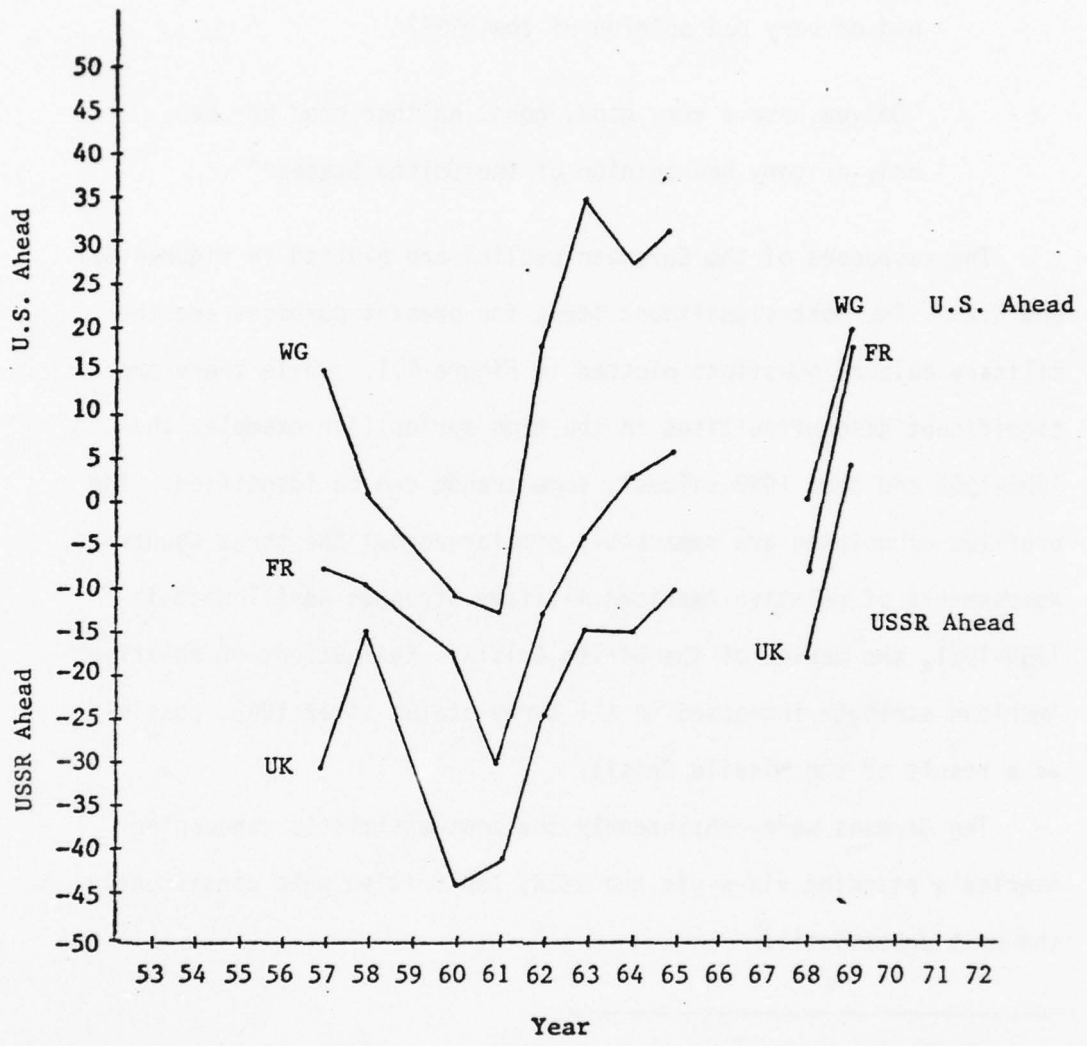


Figure 6.1 Opinion of U.S.-Soviet Military Balance

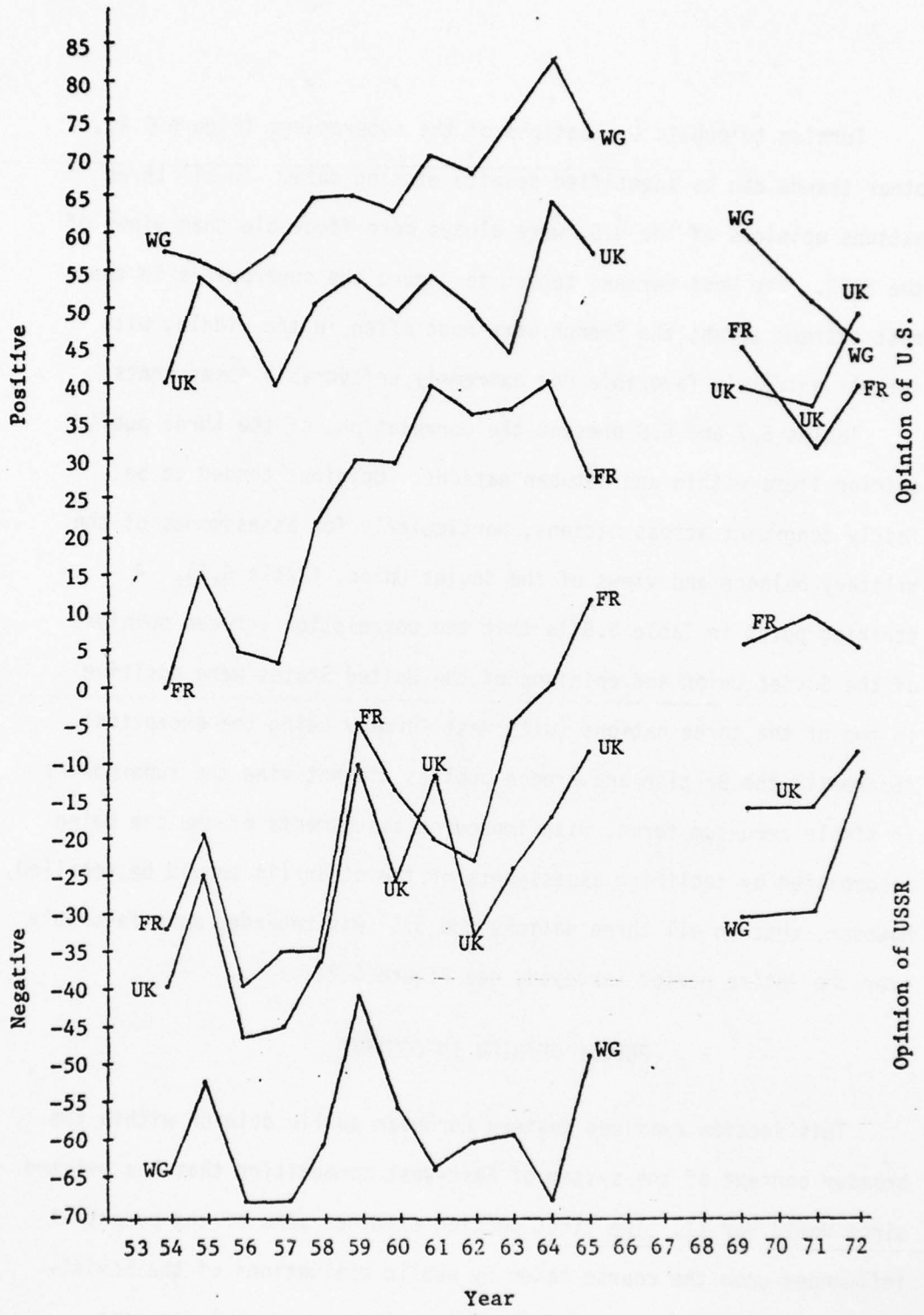


Figure 6.2 Opinion of Superpowers

Turning to public evaluations of the superpowers (Figure 6.2), other trends can be identified despite missing data. In all three nations opinions of the U.S. were always more favorable than views of the USSR. The West Germans tended to regard the superpowers in the most extreme terms; the French were most often in the middle, with neither extremely favorable nor extremely unfavorable assessments.

Tables 6.7 and 6.8 present the correlations of the three public opinion items within and between nations. Opinions tended to be fairly congruent across nations, particularly for assessments of the military balance and views of the Soviet Union, (Table 6.7). A striking point in Table 6.8 is that the correlation between opinions of the Soviet Union and opinions of the United States were positive in two of the three nations (with West Germany being the exception). Apparently the British and French publics *did not* view the superpowers in simple zero-sum terms, with improving assessments of the one being accompanied by declining assessments of the other (it should be recalled, however, that in all three nations the U.S. was regarded more favorably over the entire period surveyed, see Figure 6.2).

#### PUBLIC OPINION IN CONTEXT

This section examines Western European public opinion within the broader context of the system of East-West competition that has existed since World War II. The first portion examines some of the potential influences upon the course taken by public evaluations of the Soviet-American military balance (Figure 6.1). The second part assesses

TABLE 6.7  
Across Nation Correlations \*

	UKoB	FRoB	WGoB
UKoB	1.00	.90	.66
FRoB		1.00	.73
WGoB			1.00
	UKoSU	FRoSU	WGoSU
UKoSU		.87	.61
FRoSU		1.00	.70
WGoSU			1.00
	UKoUS	FRoUS	WGoUS
UKoUS	1.00	.30	.61
FRoUS		1.00	.41
WGoUS			1.00

---

\* The first two letters in each variable code refer to the country (UK = United Kingdom; FR = France; WG = West Germany); the 'o' stands for opinion; the last letter or letters refer to the type of opinion (of the military balance = B; of the Soviet Union = SU; of the U.S. = US). Hence UKoB refers to British public opinion regarding the military balance between the U.S. and USSR. N = 15 observations for oSU and oUS variables; N = 10 for oB variables. All correlations are computed using pair-wise deletion.

The use of tests of statistical significance with non-sample data is a subject of controversy.

In this paper, correlations  $\geq .30$  will be focused upon in the analysis.

TABLE 6.8

## Within Nation Correlations\*

	UKoB	UKoSU	UKoUS
UKoB	1.00	.24	-.13
UKoSU		1.00	.35
UKoUS			1.00
	FRoB	FRoSU	FRoUS
FRoB	1.00	.62	.10
FRoSU		1.00	.70
FRoUS			1.00
	WGoB	WGoSU	WGoUS
WGoB	1.00	.19	.38
WGoSU		1.00	-.51
WGoUS			1.00

---

\*N = 15 for correlations between oSU and oUS;  
 N = 9 for correlations involving oB and oSU or  
 oUS (1968 data is available for oB but not for  
 the other two variables).

Western European public opinion as one potential influence upon national defense efforts (defense burdens: defense expenditures/GDP). These national defense efforts, in turn, affect the East-West military balance.

The analyses to be presented in this section are exploratory. Relatively weak theoretical "priors" and trends are being used. The complexity of the relationships which public opinion has with other factors is undoubtedly being underestimated. As was noted in the first section of the paper, in these analyses emphasis is placed on similarities in patterns across variables, using covariation as an indicator of potential interdependence in a complex system.

#### Other Elements in the Pattern of East-West Competition

Previous analyses have identified a number of facets of East-West relations which might be related to European public opinion.<sup>10</sup>

These factors can be grouped into five sets:

The articulated perceptions of Soviet and American leaders regarding the state of East-West relations,

Comparable perceptions for the leaders of the three Western European nations,

The state of the Soviet-American strategic balance,

The behaviors directed by the USSR to the three Western European states,

the behaviors exchanged between the superpowers.

The first two sets of factors will be indexed by using data collected by Kjell Goldmann.<sup>11</sup> Goldmann uses content analysis to assess the amount of tension in East-West relations in Europe that was perceived by leaders in NATO and WTO states. Based on an interpretation of Goldmann's arguments concerning the Soviet-American strategic relationship between the superpowers, the third factor will be identified and distinguished in terms of the amount of "objective" tension each represented insofar as a stable/secure nuclear balance was concerned:

Phase 1	1946-1947	(3) (Objective Tension Score)
Phase 2	1948-1956	(2)
Phase 3	1957-1965	(4)
Phase 4	1966-1975	(1)

In this scheme a low number indexes low levels of "objective" tension in the strategic balance. In this sense the most balanced period was the phase of mutual second strike capabilities (parity), 1966+. The next most stable phase was 1948-1956, when only the U.S. possessed the capability to attack the other superpower's homeland with a major strategic strike. This was followed by the period in which neither superpower possessed significant nuclear forces. Finally, the period which had the most objectively "tense" or "unstable" relationship was 1957-1965, when both superpowers had counter-homeland nuclear strike capabilities, but where the U.S. had a significant lead. Parity, achieved sometime during the mid-1960s, ended this imbalance.

This aspect of the relationship between the superpowers will be indexed by the four values which follow each of the phases.

The final two sets of factors will be indexed by using event data taken from Azar and Sloan.<sup>12</sup> Two types of behaviors will be considered: conflictual events (denoted by a subscript 'c') and "cooperative" events (denoted by subscript 'a').\*

#### Potential Influences Upon Public Views of the Soviet-American Balance

The first analytical question has to do with the potential influences upon the course of public views of the balance in the three Western European nations. Table 6.9 shows the correlations between public views and the potential causal factors identified above.

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\*It is generally easier to identify conflict rather than cooperation. Some of the events included on the Azar-Sloan cooperation scale (and other scales of cooperative behaviors) could be interpreted as indices of interaction or participation rather than cooperation per se. In this paper, the Azar-Sloan "cooperation" scale will be employed as a measure of nonconflictual "activity" (hence the subscript "a") since it includes cooperative as well as more neutral interactive behaviors. The yearly mean levels presented in Azar and Sloan will be employed in the analyses. Where no value is presented for a given nation and a year, a score of "3" (neutral or indifferent behaviors) will be assigned on both scales.

TABLE 6.9  
Correlations of Opinions Concerning  
Military Balance and Predictors \*

	<u>UKoB</u>	<u>FRoB</u>	<u>WGoB</u>
USp	<u>.60</u>	<u>.72</u>	<u>.83</u>
SUp	<u>.27</u>	<u>.46</u>	<u>.48</u>
UKp	<u>.69</u>	--	--
FRp	--	<u>.60</u>	--
WGp	--	--	.20
BLNCE	<u>-.52</u>	<u>-.46</u>	.04
US-SUc	<u>-.71</u>	<u>-.72</u>	-.21
US-SUa	<u>.21</u>	<u>.11</u>	-.18
SU-USc	.02	.00	<u>.34</u>
SU-USa	<u>-.40</u>	-.27	<u>-.15</u>
SU-UKc	-.15		
SU-UKa	.07		
SU-FRc		<u>-.52</u>	
SU-FRa		<u>-.53</u>	
SU-WGc			<u>.40</u>
SU-WGa			<u>.72</u>

\*Key: p = Elite Perception Data

BLNCE = US-Soviet Balance Variable

Behavior Variables = Actor, Target, Type  
(for example, US-SUc = American conflictual behaviors towards the USSR).

The results presented in Table 6.9 show that the opinions of Western European publics regarding the Soviet-American military balance varied over time in ways that were congruent with changes in other facets of the hypothesized network of East-West competition. Articulated American perceptions are salient in all three nations.\* Soviet perceptions of tensions are salient in France and West Germany. National leaders' perceptions are significant in Great Britain and France. The signs of all of these relationships are positive, with "better" public views of the balance (better U.S. standings) being associated with periods in which leaders perceived less tension in East-West relations in Europe.

The "objective" status of the strategic balance is correlated with "subjective" impressions of the overall military balance in two of the three nations (*Great Britain and France*). The sign of this correlation reflects the scoring of the strategic balance variable in which "unstable" periods have higher values.

U.S. conflicts towards the USSR (primarily verbal behavior) was salient in France and Great Britain. The negative sign of the relationship associates periods of greater U.S. conflict with periods of greater relative Soviet leads in the perceived balance. The views of

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\*In this paper, correlations greater than or equal to .30 in magnitude will be considered to have substantive "significance" or "salience."

West German publics were positively associated with Soviet conflict towards the United States. With only three nations involved in the comparisons it is difficult to account for national differences in the salience and signs of individual predictor factors.

Soviet behaviors towards Western European nations were significantly associated with public views of the balance in France and West Germany. Once again, with only three nations in the comparisons, it is difficult to account for the anomalous signs of the German correlations.

In terms of the methodological strategy that has been adopted for this paper, the most interesting way in which to examine the standing of Western European public opinion within the larger structure of East-West competition is to use multiple regression analysis to determine if the course of public opinion concerning the balance can be accurately reproduced on the basis of some set of other factors. Because of the limited number of degrees of freedom available, small sets of predictors will be employed. USp was salient in all three nations and will be used in all equations. The British and French equations will also include BLNCE and US-SUC. These predictors were salient in both nations. Their inclusion provides a balanced set of predictors reflecting psychological, relational, and behavioral factors. The West German equation will consist of USp, and SU-WGa and SU-USc. This provides a mix of one psychological factor plus two types of behavior. The results of the multiple regression analyses are provided in Table 6.10 and Figures 6.3-6.5.

TABLE 6.10

Multiple Regression Results, UKoB, FRoB, WGoB\*

	<u>R</u>	<u>R<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>SEE</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>DW</u>
UKoB	.78	.61	11.0	3.1	2.45
FRoB	.85	.73	8.2	5.6	1.56
WGoB	.90	.82	8.6	9.1	1.19

\* All equations estimated for the range of the dependent variable

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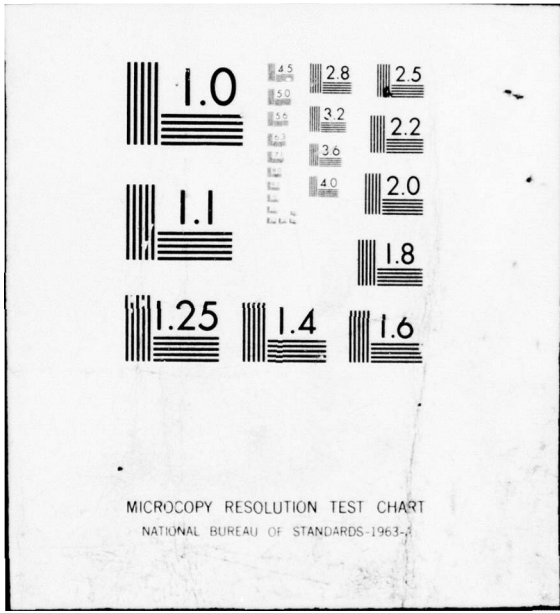
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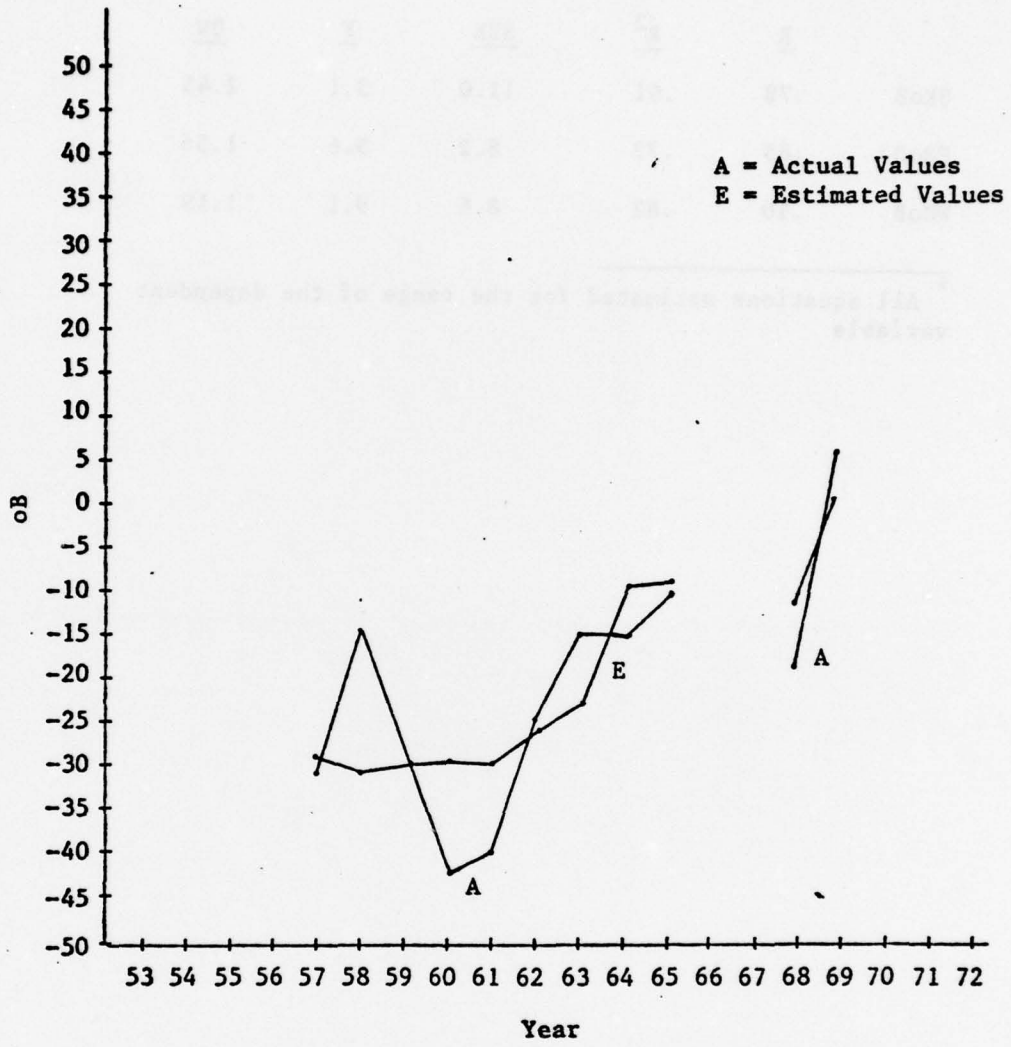


Figure 6.3 UKoB Results

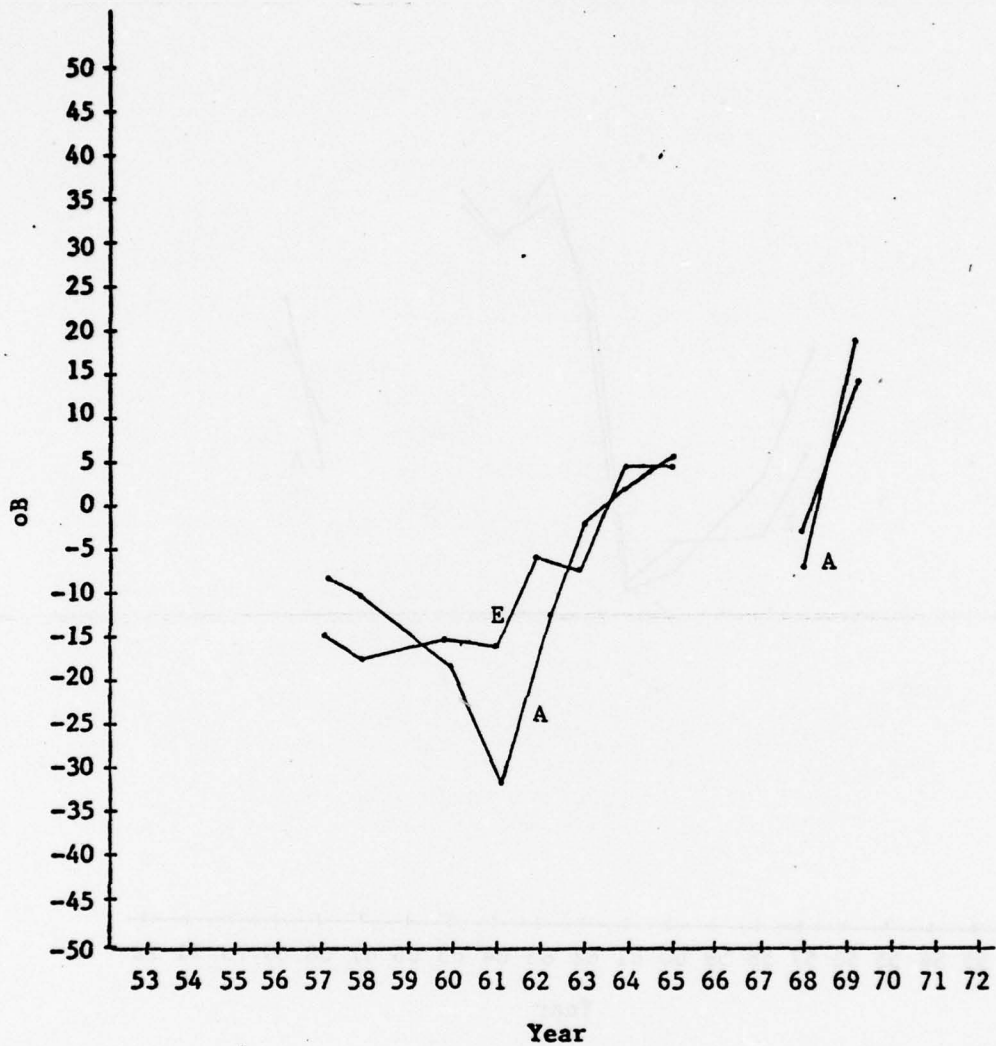


Figure 6.4 FRoB Results

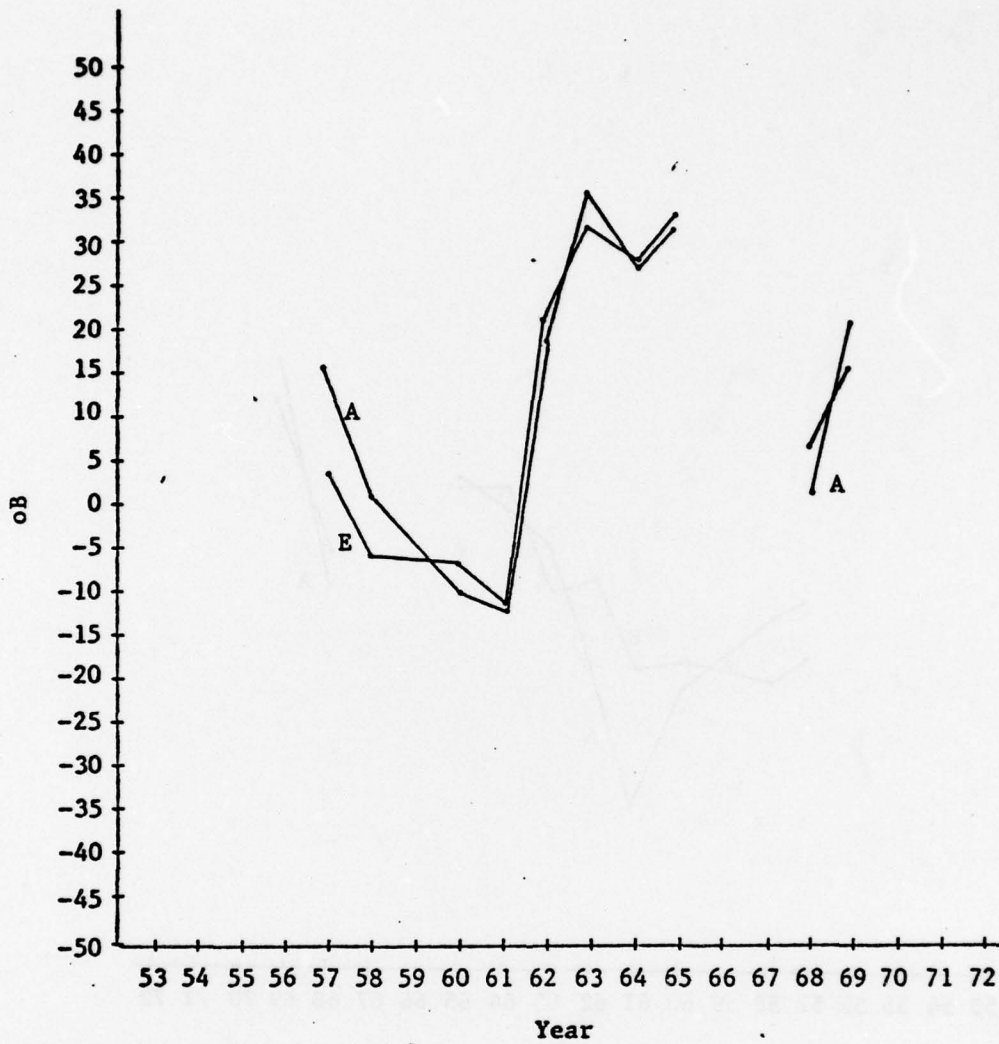


Figure 6.5 WGoB Results

Given the constraints under which the analysis operates, the results are quite favorable. The course of public views concerning the balance appear to be reasonably well-connected with other facets of the hypothesized system of East-West competition; the pattern of public opinion can be reproduced on the basis of the other factors. The British equation is the weakest. The oscillations in the 1958-1961 period of the Berlin Crisis are underestimated (1961 is a bad year for the French equation as well). Otherwise the fit between estimated and actual patterns is respectable. The F levels for the equations are also respectable.

#### Public Opinion and the Military Balance

The first half of the section singled out public opinion as a *dependent variable*, potentially influenced by a variety of other factors. The remaining portion of the section will deal with European public opinion as a potential causative factor, as one of many possible influences upon the military balance. The postulated relationship is one in which opinions of the Soviet Union and of the military balance influence publics' willingness to support national defense efforts. Changes in public support for defense efforts, in turn, can influence the balance by affecting resource allocation decisions. Opinions of the Soviet Union and views of the balance have been selected because of their apparent face validity as potential influences on support for defense spending. National defense efforts will be assessed as

defense burdens (defense expenditures/GDP). The course of national defense burdens since the early 1950s is given in Figure 6.6 and Table 6.11.

German defense expenditures differ markedly from those of France and Great Britain. The German curve is significantly lower and flatter. This difference is probably due to a number of factors: Germany's disarmed status in the early 1950s, the relative size of the German GDP, and the Germany's lack of strategic weapons and forces. Whatever the precise causes, this German difference appears to have consequences for later analyses of the influences that might act upon national defense burdens (see below). Reproducing the pattern of earlier analyses, Table 6.12 presents the correlations of oSU and oB with defense burdens.

The similarities in pattern are striking; all of the correlations are above the .30 threshold being employed in the analysis. The negative signs on the correlations mean that as opinions of the USSR became relatively more favorable and/or as America's perceived relative standing in the military balance improved, national defense burdens decreased. As before, the Germans present the only anomalous case: the positive correlation between WGoB and WGdb. This may be due to the different form taken by Germany's defense burden since the early 1950s. Multiple regression results for these variables are presented in Table 6.13 and Figures 6.7-6.9.

National defense efforts are undoubtedly influenced by many factors in addition to public opinion (for example, the effects of bureaucratic inertia and incremental decision-making; the actions of

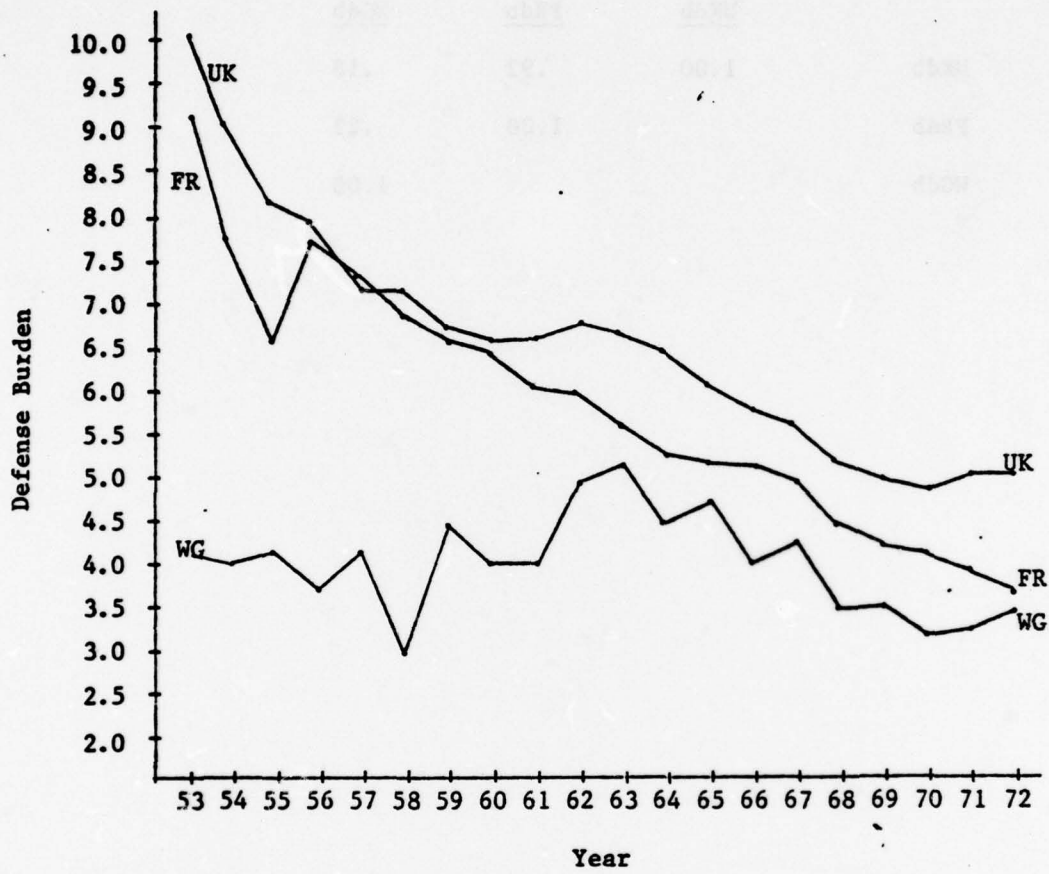


Figure 6.6 Defense Burdens

1 TABLE 6.11

Correlations of European Defense Burdens

	<u>UKdb</u>	<u>FRdb</u>	<u>WGdb</u>
UKdb	1.00	.92	.18
FRdb		1.00	.22
WGdb			1.00

TABLE 6.12  
 Correlations of European Opinion  
 and Defense Burdens

	<u>UKob</u>	<u>FRoB</u>	<u>WGoB</u>	<u>UKoSU</u>	<u>FRoSU</u>	<u>WGoSU</u>
UKab	<u>-.59</u>			<u>-.68</u>		
FRdb		<u>-.64</u>			<u>-.88</u>	
WGdb			<u>+.59</u>			<u>-.37</u>

TABLE 6.13

Multiple Regression Results; UKdb, FRdb, WGdb

	<u>R</u>	<u>R<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>F</u>	<u>SEE</u>	<u>D-W</u>
UKdb	.84	.72	7.7	.40	2.00
FRdb	.90	.81	13.4	.45	2.15
WGdb	.71	.51	3.1	.51	1.54

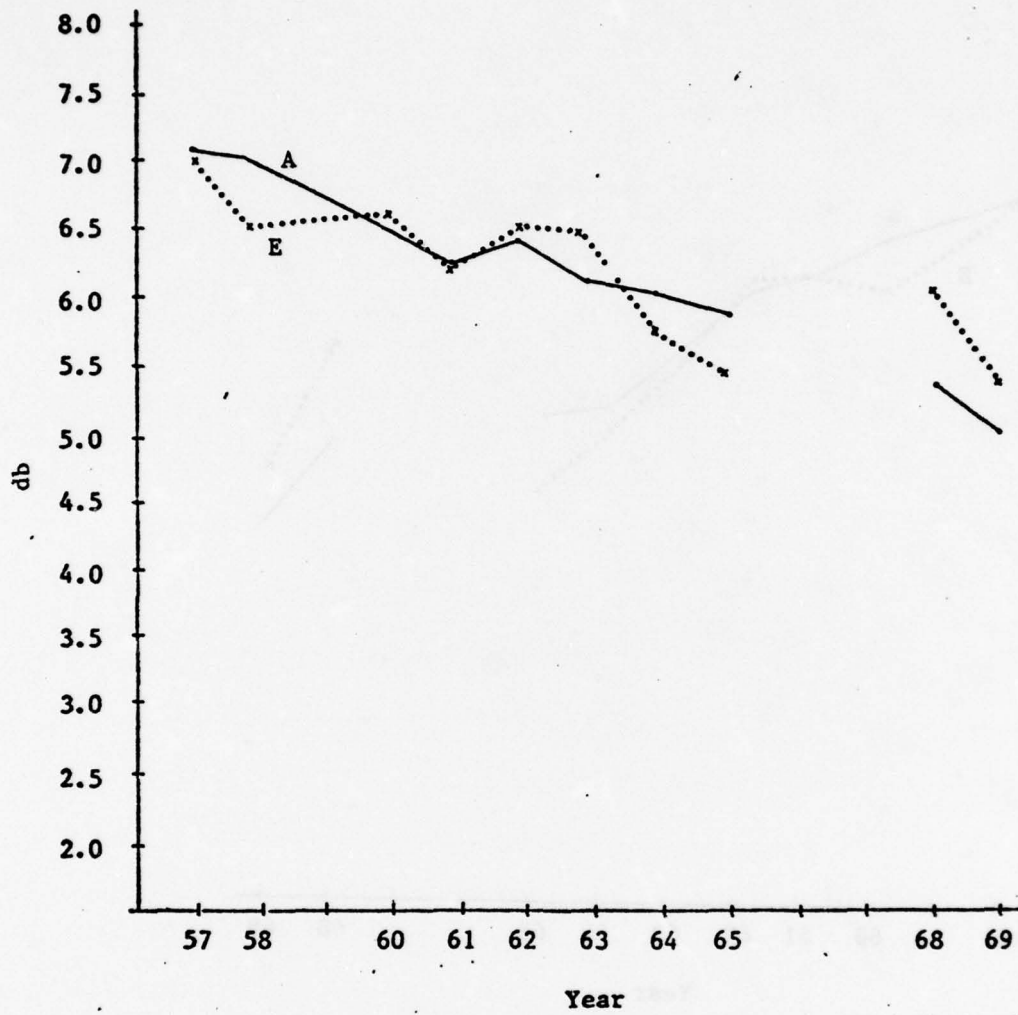


Figure 6.7 UKdb Results

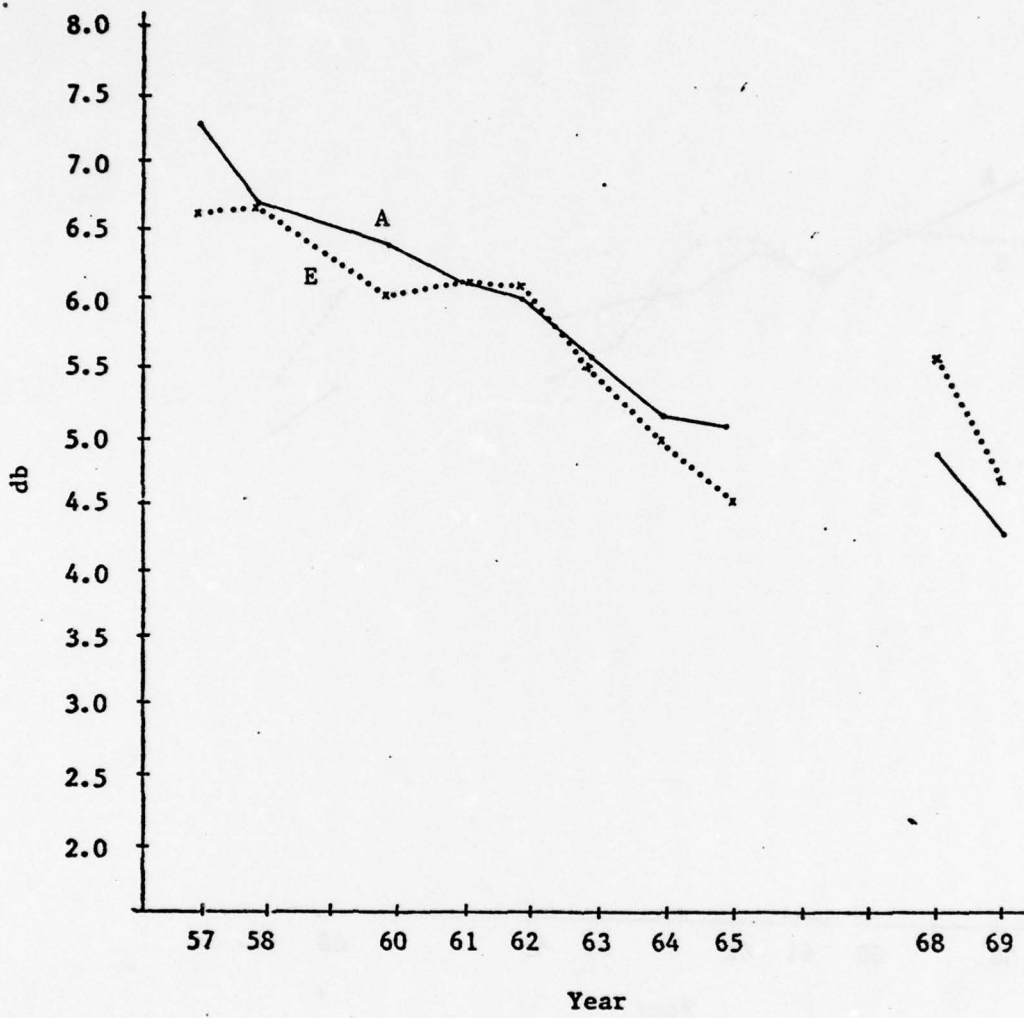


Figure 6.8 FRdb Results

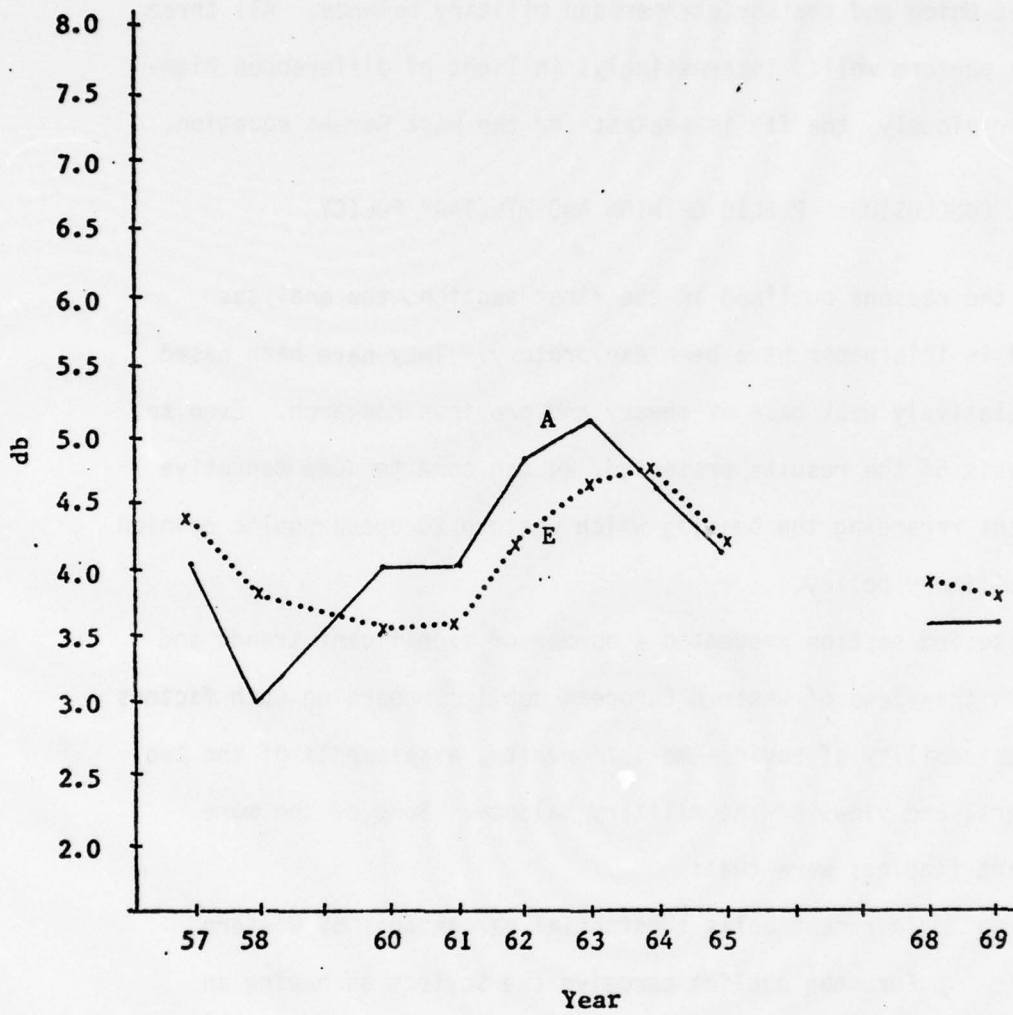


Figure 6.9 WGdb Results

the superpowers). Even so, the patterns of national defense burdens can be accurately reproduced from knowledge of public views concerning the Soviet Union and the Soviet-American military balance. All three equations perform well. Interestingly, in light of differences highlighted previously, the fit is weakest for the West German equation.

#### CONCLUSION: PUBLIC OPINION AND MILITARY POLICY

For the reasons outlined in the first section, the analyses presented in this paper have been exploratory. They have been based upon a relatively weak base of theory and previous research. Even so, on the basis of the results presented, we can come to some tentative conclusions regarding the bearing which Western European public opinion has for military policy.

The second section presented a number of significant trends and changes in the views of Western European publics regarding such factors as the desirability of Soviet-American parity, assessments of the two superpowers, and views of the military balance. Some of the more significant findings were that:

- o In recent polls substantial percentages of Western European publics perceive the Soviets as having an edge in the military balance, with the significance of this perceived lead being highly conditioned by the strategic theory within which it is viewed.
- o The United States fares much better in comparisons in which all bases of national power (rather than simply

military factors) are considered; it was further argued that this was a reasonable perception if East-West competition is considered as a long-haul process in which conflict is not anticipated over the shorter term.

- o There have been striking shifts in the views of Western European publics regarding the desirability of parity; recent survey results show a strong stand in favor of Soviet-American parity instead of a U.S. lead; these findings are even more significant because the items which index them are among the few poll questions which focus on policy preferences.

The paper's most significant finding is that trends in public assessments of the superpower balance and views of the USSR covary to a substantial extent with other facets of East-West relations. This was true both when public views were considered as a dependent variable, potentially influenced by a variety of other factors, and when the potential influence of public opinion upon national defense burdens was examined. This pattern of moderate to strong covariation supports the earlier assumptions and arguments that public opinion within Western European nations plays a role in the larger system of East-West competition, both as an influence and as a subject of influence.

In turn, this lends support to recent tendencies within the U.S. analytical communities to take a broader view of American political-military affairs (as opposed to a focus confined strictly to military factors) and to direct more analytical attention to the broader policy context of factors such as public opinion within which U.S. defense policy is formulated and implemented.

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

### FRENCH PERCEPTIONS OF THE U.S.-SOVIET MILITARY BALANCES: ANALYSIS OF DÉFENSE NATIONALE\*

by

Donald C. Daniel

#### INTRODUCTION

France historically has been the most independent of the NATO states in her foreign and military policy, and she has probably gone the farthest in generating uncertainties as to her intentions in the event of a major U.S.-Soviet or East-West conflict. Her overtures to the Soviet Union (especially during the deGaulle years), her development of the force de frappe, and her withdrawal from the military structures of the alliance -- all provide the basis for hypothesizing that, if French observers viewed the military balances shifting away from the U.S., they might in general be more apt than their NATO colleagues to recommend policies calling for greater aloofness from the Americans or closer accomodation with the Soviet Union.

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If the above hypothesis is plausible, then France is a particularly interesting state to key on regarding third country perceptions of the U.S.-Soviet military balances. There exists a number of ways for structuring inquiry into French perceptions, and this chapter will summarize some results of a fairly extensive study<sup>1</sup> applying one method -- i.e. the coding of twenty years (1955 through 1974) of selected articles and items from a French journal viewed as representing particularly well the views of French government officials and defense-oriented intellectuals.

### DÉFENSE NATIONALE

According to its masthead, Défense Nationale (referred to herein as DN) inquires into the "great national and international questions," be they "military, economic, political, scientific." It is a highly respected journal published by the Comité d'études de défense nationale, an organization somewhat akin to the U.S.'s Council on Foreign Relations. Its authors often consist of French government and military officials, including ministers and military chiefs-of-staff.

The journal appeared 11 times a year, and a total of 219 were published from 1955 through 1974. In 1968 one normally expected issue failed publication, but the editors made up for it by increasing the content of several published companion issues. The only year for which statistical totals are not fully comparable with those of others is 1964 since the July number was missing from the serial collection to which the writer had access.

Each journal numbered approximately 175 pages and contained about

10 articles and 25 to 30 "Chronicle" items (referred to herein as "c.i.'s"). Articles accounted for approximately two-thirds of any one journal. As suggested by the masthead, they did not necessarily deal with military or defense questions but also with a wide variety of other topics such as syndicalism, the UAR after Nasser, meteorological satellites, or the relation between salaries, prices and unemployment. Items found in the "Chronique" section took up about one-fourth of each journal. Their purpose was to keep readers informed of current developments in national and international military, naval, maritime, and aeronautical affairs as well as NATO, international organization, and French overseas matters. Most were moderate in length though some were no longer than one paragraph while others were equivalent to or approached full-length articles. The remainder of each DN issue was devoted to advertisements and a "Bibliography" section which briefly described recent books of interest.

#### STUDY PROCEDURES

##### Reading Défense Nationale

The writer read DN selectively and scrutinized an article or c.i. only if it concerned itself with one or more of the following topics:

- (1) French policy toward the United States, the Soviet Union, NATO, or the Soviet Bloc;
- (2) U.S., Soviet, NATO, or Soviet bloc policy vis-a-vis one another or France;

- (3) French weapons developments, defense policy, military capabilities, or military activities but not as these related to French colonies or Third World nations;
- (4) U.S. and/or Soviet weapons developments, defense policies, military capabilities, or military activities but not as these were inspired by purposes other than keeping the other superpower's military in check;<sup>2</sup>
- (5) the defense of Western Europe as a whole, or Central Europe/West Germany, or of France;
- (6) control of or hegemony in the various seas or oceans of the world;
- (7) deterrence, war, military strategy or tactics (as, e.g., articles dealing with strategy in the nuclear age) but excluding articles dealing with guerrilla war.

The above criteria were intended to guide the selection process so that only relevant articles or c.i.'s -- relevant in the sense of containing military comparisons -- world "surface" for investigation. I started with criteria which were vague and refined them in the process of almost cover-to-cover reading of the journals for 1955-56 and 1965-66. That reading, plus further sampling, made it clear that, because of consistently low utility, one could eliminate from further consideration the "Bibliography" section, the "Overseas" section of the Chronicle, and articles published under the recurring rubrics: "Science and Technology" and "Economic Facts".

The process of selecting articles or c.i.'s for scrutiny began with a review of titles. On that basis alone, some seemed obviously worthy of investigation while others seemed just as obviously irrelevant -- the latter being immediately dropped from consideration. Titles on a third group were sufficiently tantalizing or ambiguous to rate reading the introductory and closing paragraphs as well as scanning the material in between. All articles or c.i.'s deemed worthy of investigation were then read to see if they actually did contain balance comparisons. In all, 258 articles and 77 c.i.'s were coded.<sup>3</sup>

#### Coding Défense Nationale

For the purposes of this chapter, coding Defense Nationale meant answering six questions. The first was: What military capabilities are being compared? *The categories of concern are comparisons of:*

- overall strategic nuclear capabilities<sup>4</sup>
- strategic bombs and warheads<sup>5</sup>
- strategic missiles (aggregate)<sup>6</sup>
- ballistic-missile submarines<sup>7</sup>
- strategic aviation/strategic bombers<sup>8</sup>
- overall conventional or ground forces capabilities<sup>9</sup>
- overall naval capabilities<sup>10</sup>
- overall air capabilities<sup>11</sup>

In the overwhelming majority of cases there was little difficulty in deciding under which category a comparison belonged. For example,

authors would simply come out and say something to the effect that one side had nuclear, conventional, or naval superiority or more and/or better missiles, bombers, ships, and the like.<sup>12</sup> Of course, different authors may have had different conceptions as to what they meant by what they said. For example, one group of authors viewed strategic aviation as entailing only bombers capable of striking one superpower's homeland by taking off from the other's while a second group seemed to consider European-based U.S. tactical aircraft as strategic bomber assets. In coding, this writer did not control for such differences since attempting to do so turned out to be overly complicated and time-consuming.

Partly for the same reasons, some comparisons of more-or-less different capabilities were grouped together in one category. The "conventional or ground forces" category, for instance, reflected the oft-recurring situation where DN authors would make general assertions about Soviet conventional superiority but then restrict examples or amplifying data to ground forces only. Because of the difficulty of knowing under what category to code such references (a conventional forces category or a ground forces category) and because of simplicity and expeditiousness, this writer chose to form a category uniting both capabilities and coded accordingly.

Sometimes a more difficult task than categorizing comparisons was deciding if a comparison was intended in the first place. A central concept of this study, the word "balance" ("équilibre" in the French),

was itself a source of uncertainty in this regard. At times the term was used such that it was not clear if the DN author meant that the superpowers were in balance, meaning equal, or whether they were actors in a balance, whatever its actual state might be. For instance, it is not entirely clear how an author views the balance when he writes: "French policy cannot ignore the nuclear balance existing between the superpowers." This writer had to make a careful study of the context in order to decide whether to code such a reference. If nothing in the context suggested that the DN author viewed both sides as equal, then the reference was not coded.

On occasion reference was made to both superpowers in such a way as to place them in a class by themselves, implying a comparison that had them roughly equal. More than one article, e.g., contained the admonition that France must continue her force de frappe and related delivery system programs even though she had no hope of matching U.S. or Soviet capabilities. This writer accepted that, in comparing France with both superpowers, the DN author in a sense was also implying some measure of rough equality between them since they together (rather than just one) set the norm, the standard, against which the French program was being measured.

Once this writer decided that the DN author was making a comparison, then that comparison was coded only one time per article or "Chronicle" item. This coding rule applied no matter how often an author stated in his piece that one or the other side was ahead or equal.

The second question which guided the coding process was: Whose capabilities are being compared? While the main thrust of this study was to reach conclusions about U.S. and Soviet (i.e., US-SU) balances, it was thought useful to code comparisons of NATO/West vs. Soviet Union/Soviet bloc (i.e., N/W-S/S) conventional military capabilities. So doing helped put into perspective the context in which the conventional balances were viewed since it allowed one to answer questions such as: Is the naval balance viewed more in US-SU or N/W-S/S terms?

The Soviet Union was singled out as an entity on the S/S side since there were many articles or items which specifically compared NATO or Western capabilities against those of the Soviet Union alone vice the Warsaw Pact or Soviet bloc. In contrast, there were no comparisons involving the U.S. alone versus the Soviet bloc/Warsaw Pact. *Less than a handful* of Soviet comparisons involved or implied that China was a member of the bloc.

Because the United States and Soviet Union were viewed as being the undisputed primary competitors in all aspects of strategic weapons and delivery systems, all comparisons relative to these systems were coded as US-SU balances. This coding rule applied regardless of whether the journal author may have referred to "East versus West" rather than to the superpowers per se when making strategic system comparisons.

The third coding question was: Which side does the DN author see as superior at the time of writing? In this regard mention has already been made of those cases where DN authors talked of the superpowers

being in a class by themselves, implying in this writer's view a comparison that had both equal. There were also instances -- occurring 15 times -- when some comparisons had to be coded as "split opinions" (referred to as "s.o.'s"). These occurred either because the authors were ambiguous or undecided as to whether one side was ahead or equal or because they had one side ahead in some circumstances and its adversary ahead in others.

An oft-recurring situation -- indeed, one which reflected standard operating procedure in the chronicles -- was for a DN author to quote or paraphrase without comment someone else's views on a balance. Since the purpose of this study is to present DN perceptions of the balances, it did not make sense for this writer to code, e.g., Chairman Khrushchev's or Secretary MacNamara's views if these were presented in strictly reportorial fashion. Hence, comparisons were coded only if the DN authors seemed to subscribe or accept the views in question. Contextual analysis was the method utilized to resolve ambiguous cases.

Contextual analysis was also utilized to deal with a similar but relatively infrequent problem -- i.e., resolving ambiguities about whether an author's statement about a balance reflected his views as to which side was ahead at the time the author was writing. For example, if an author writing in 1970 stated that the Soviets were ahead in strategic missiles in 1959 but gave no indication that they were also superior in 1970, then no comparison was coded.

Questions four and five were simple to code. Four inquired into whether quantitative factors played a significant role in perceptions. Coding consisted of noting those comparisons where numerical measures were explicitly relied on (either independently or in conjunction with qualitative factors) in assessments of the balance. Question five entailed noting what sources were specifically acknowledged by the DN writer as providing him with information about the balance with which he was concerned.

Coding question number six -- What recommendations does the DN author make in view of the state of a balance as he perceives it? -- required that this writer exercise a fair degree of judgment. The reason is that, while many recommendations were straightforward, causing no coding problems, a large number were not directly linked by the DN author to the comparisons with which they were associated by this writer. It was not at all unusual for a DN author to make comparisons in the course of an argument in which he made a number of other points and assertions. Numerous recommendations might also be made, but none would necessarily be tied in any direct, explicit, "cause-and-effect" manner to any of the points or comparisons made in the argument, yet particular recommendations seemed to this writer to flow logically from the comparisons made and hence were coded. In so doing I constantly sought not to make connections which the DN author simply did not intend to have made.

## Collating the Data

Collating the data meant ascertaining trends or patterns contained in the coded responses. For the purposes of this chapter, the questions which guided the collating process fall into three groups.

Questions relating to the frequency of comparisons:

\*How did the balances rank relative to one another over the twenty years in terms of the frequency in which they appeared?

\*If one compares frequency totals for the last two five-year periods, were there any radical shifts in the attention paid each balance where attention is measured by frequency of comparisons?

\*Were conventional force comparisons most often made in a US-SU or N/W-S/S context?

Questions relating to DN author perceptions of the balances:

\*What were the long-term trends in perceptions? Particularly, which balances over the twenty years trended in favor of perceived US superiority, USSR superiority, or parity?

\*What were the more recent trends in perceived superiority or parity if one compares perception totals over the last two five-year periods?

\*Were perceptions for the conventional balances in the N/W-S/S context similar to those in the US-SU context?

Questions relating to quantitative indicators:

\*How often did quantitative indicators play a role in comparisons?

\*Which balance areas most often involved reliance on quantitative measures?

Question relative to sources:

\*Grouping sources into categories, how did they rank relative to one another over the twenty year period?

Questions relating to DN author policy recommendations:

\*If one focuses on policy recommendations having applicability to more than one balance area, which recommendations recurred most frequently?

\*Were these recommendations associated with any recurring or predominant views as to which side was ahead in the respective balances?

\*From this writer's viewpoint, were there any recommendations which recurred much less frequently than expected?

## STUDY RESULTS

### Results Relating to the Frequency of Comparisons

There were 361 comparisons overall, and their distribution in order of frequency across the balances is contained in Table 7.1. This table also highlights shifts in attention paid to each balance by noting the difference in the number of comparisons made in 1965-69 with the number made in 1970-74. As seen therein, the strategic balances generally received the greatest amount of attention with the strategic nuclear balance far and away being the subject of the greatest number of comparisons. Consistent with the frequency of strategic nuclear comparisons was the relatively high number of strategic missile (aggregate) references. Of the conventional balances, the naval was definitely the most significant while both the air and conventional or ground forces categories received the smallest amount of attention of all balance areas.

There were no radical shifts in the attention given to any balance. The most significant difference in the number of comparisons made in the last two five-year periods was a decrease of 3 comparisons each associated with both the strategic missiles (aggregate) and the ballistic missile submarine balances.

Table 7.1

FREQUENCY OF COMPARISONS

Balance	Number of Comparisons (1955-1974)	Change in number of Comparisons (1965-69 vs. 1970-74)	
(1) Strategic nuclear balance	201	-2 (From 55 to 57 comparisons)	
(2) Strategic missiles (aggregate)	57	-3 (From 18 to 15)	
(3) Naval-in-general	29	+2 (From 4 to 6)	
(4) Strategic nuclear bombs and warheads	22	0 (From 7 to 7)	
(5) {	Ballistic-missile submarines	21	-3 (From 8 to 5)
	Strategic bombers/strategic aviation	21	0 (From 7 to 7)
(6) Conventional or ground forces-in-general	6	0 (From 0 to 0)	
(7) Air-in-general	4	+1 (From 0 to 1)	

From the point of view of context (see Table 7.2), the conventional or ground forces balance was most often seen in N/W-S/S and the naval in US-SU terms. The air totals were too small for valid conclusions.

#### Results Relating to DN Author Perceptions of the Balances

The data summarized in Table 7.3 indicate that over the twenty years the United States dominated in comparisons of strategic bombs and warheads, ballistic missile submarines, strategic aviation, overall naval power, and overall air power -- though the U.S. lead in this last area is questionable due to the small number of comparisons. The Soviets led in only one category: that of conventional or ground forces, but its lead is also questionable due not only to the paucity of comparisons but also to the fact that there were no comparisons in the period from 1965-74.\* Both superpowers were overwhelmingly perceived as equal in the strategic nuclear balance, and both were viewed as superior in a nearly equal number of times in strategic missiles, this balance being in "stalemate" for the twenty years as a whole since 86 percent of all comparisons had one or another side ahead.

Trends of a more recent nature result from comparing perceptions in 1965-69 with those in 1970-74. Table 7.4 reveals that the United States in 1970-74 "held its own" in maintaining 1965-69 leads in

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\*The Soviet lead, however, is not so questionable if one considers that USSR forces make up the vast bulk of Warsaw Pact armies and that of 36 N/W-S/S comparisons of conventional or ground forces, the Soviet group was perceived as superior in every case. See below, Table 7.6.

Table 7.2

CONVENTIONAL BALANCES IN US-SU AND N/W-S/S CONTEXT

Balance	Number of:	
	U.S.-S.U. Comparisons	N/W-S/S Comparisons
Conventional or ground forces	6	36
Naval	29	9
Air	4	2

TABLE 7.3

BALANCE PERCEPTIONS:  
1955-1974

BALANCE	Twenty Year Summary			
	U.S.	S.U.	EQ.	Total <sup>(a)</sup>
Strategic Nuclear	28+2 s.o. (14%)	3 (1%)	168+2 s.o. (84%)	201 (99%)
Strategic Bombs and Warheads	11+1 (52%)	3+1 (16%)	7 (32%)	22 (100%)
Strategic Missile (aggregate)	24+4 (46%)	22+2 (40%)	7+2 (14%)	57 (100%)
Ballistic Missile Submarines	14+3 (74%)	3+3 (21%)	1 (5%)	21 (100%)
Strategic Bombers/ Strategic Aviation	20 (95%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	21 (100%)
Conventional or Ground Forces	0 (0%)	6 (100%)	0 (0%)	6 (100%)
Naval	25 (86%)	0 (0%)	4 (14%)	29 (100%)
Air	3 (75%)	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	4 (100%)

(a) Percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding.

TABLE 7.4

BALANCE PERCEPTIONS:  
1965-69 and 1970-74

Balance	Summary for 1965-1969				Summary for 1970-1974			
	U.S.	S.U.	EQ.	Totals	U.S.	S.U.	EQ.	Totals
Strategic Nuclear	13 (23%)	0 (0%)	44 (77%)	57 (100%)	5 (9%)	0 (0%)	50 (91%)	55 (100%)
Strategic Bombs and Warheads	5 (71%)	2 (29%)	0 (0%)	7 (100%)	4+1 (64%)	1+1 (21%)	1 (14%)	7 (99%)
Strategic Missiles (aggregate)	13+1 (75%)	1+1 (8%)	3 (16%)	18 (99%)	6+1 (43%)	6+1 (43%)	2 (13%)	15 (99%)
Ballistic Missiles Submarines	5+1 (69%)	1+1 (19%)	1 (13%)	8 (101%)	3+1 (70%)	1+1 (30%)	0 (0%)	5 (100%)
Strategic Bombers/Strategic Aviation	7 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (100%)	7 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (100%)
Conventional or Ground Forces	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overall Naval Power	4 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (100%)	3 (50%)	0 (0%)	3 (50%)	6 (100%)
Overall air Power	0	0	0	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)

(a) Percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding.

strategic bombs and warheads, ballistic missile submarines, and strategic aviation. In no area, however, did it "experience" a significant increase in favorable perceptions whether one compares absolute totals or percentages.

In contrast the Soviet Union went from being viewed ahead in only 8 percent of 1965-69 strategic missile comparisons to 43 percent in 1970-74 -- a very sizable gain occurring predominantly at the expense of favorable US perceptions. The end result is that the strategic missile balance shifted from overwhelming US domination in perceptions in the former time period to both superpowers being viewed as ahead an equal number of times in the latter.

An even greater percentage shift took place -- again at the expense of perceived US superiority -- in the naval balance. There were only four comparisons of overall naval power in 1965-69, but all favored the United States. The number increased to six in the next five years, but only three were "pro-US". The remaining three had the balance in parity, causing this balance to trend for the first time in the direction of equality.

The tendency to perceive the strategic nuclear balance as in equality, already well-established in 1965-69, was reinforced in 1970-74 as the US lost some ground in this balance also. In the first of these periods, 77 percent of all comparisons had both sides equal and the remaining 23 percent had the US ahead. By the end of the second period, the percentages had changed to 91 and 9 respectively.

As for the air and conventional or ground forces balances, there were too few comparisons to allow for conclusions.

Table 7.5 links together the twenty year trends with the more recent trends described immediately above. Balances by long-term trend are grouped together in columns while arrows or boxes represent recent trends. An arrow indicates the direction of a significant shift in perceptions while a box signifies that no such shift occurred. A heavy box has been placed around the strategic nuclear balance to highlight the increasing tendency over the last ten years to view it as in equality. Parentheses around the air and conventional or ground forces categories indicated that trends associated with them are of questionable significance due to small number of comparisons.

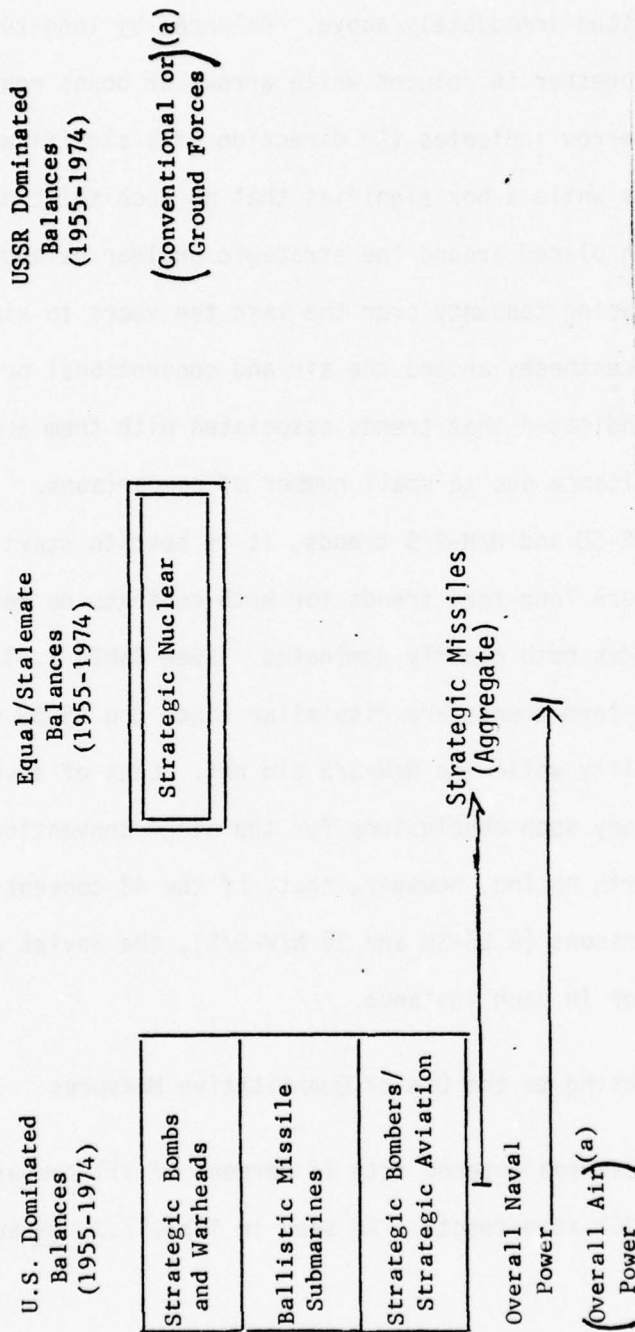
In comparing US-SU and N/W-S/S trends, it is best to start with the naval area, where long-term trends for both contexts do match since the U.S. and N/W sides both clearly dominated. (See Table 7.6). In contrast, the short-term trends are dissimilar since the US-SU context shifted toward equality while the N/W-S/S did not. Lack of adequate data precludes reaching any such conclusions for the other conventional balances. It is worth noting, however, that, of the 42 conventional or ground forces comparisons (6 US-SU and 36 N/W-S/S), the Soviet group was perceived as superior in each instance.

#### Results Relating to the Use of Quantitative Measures

Quantitative measures entered into 23 percent of all comparisons, i.e., in 84 of the 361 assessments. As seen in Table 7.7, DN authors

TABLE 7.5

BALANCE PERCEPTION TRENDS



(a) Long-term and recent trends are of questionable significance due to insufficient number of comparisons. However, on conventional or ground forces balance, see footnote at bottom of page 206.

Table 7.6

U.S.-S.U. CONVENTIONAL BALANCE PERCEPTIONS IN N/W-S/S CONTEXT

BALANCE	PERIOD	U.S.	S.U.	EQ.	N/W	S/S	EQ.
Conventional or Ground Forces	Twenty Year Totals	0	6	0	0	36	0
	1965-1969 Totals	0	0	0	0	10	0
	1970-1974 Totals	0	0	0	0	4	0
Naval	Twenty Year Totals	25	0	4	7+1	1	1+1
	1965-1969 Totals	4	0	0	2	0	0
	1970-1974 Totals	3	0	3	1	0	0
Air	Twenty Year Totals	3	0	1	0+1	1	1+1
	1965-1969 Totals	0	0	0	0	0	0
	1970-1974 Totals	0	0	1	0	0	0

Table 7.7

## COMPARISONS INVOLVING QUANTITATIVE MEASURES

Balance Area	Total of All Comparisons	Number of Comparisons with Quantitative Measures	Percent of Comparisons for Area
Strategic Bombs and Warheads	22	13	59%
Naval-in-general	29	16	55%
Strategic Aviation	21	10	48%
Ballistic Missile Submarines	21	8	38%
Strategic Missiles	57	20	35%
Air-in-general	4	1	25%
Strategic Nuclear	201	16	8%
Conventional or Ground Forces	6	0	0%

had a very strong tendency to think numerically (whether exclusively or in conjunction with qualitative factors) when contemplating the strategic bombs and warheads, naval, and strategic aviation balances. For each area 59, 55, and 48 percent respectively of the comparisons were quantitatively-oriented either in whole or in part. The strategic nuclear and conventional or ground forces areas differed sharply since only 8 percent of the former and none of the latter (which had only six comparisons) involved numerical indicators. If one eliminates these last two from consideration, then quantitative factors entered into 44 percent of the remaining assessments.

#### Results Relating to Sources of Information

DN authors acknowledged the sources they relied on for information about the balances on 82 occasions, and these are grouped together in Table 7.8. Contrasting sharply with the fact that no Soviet source was ever mentioned, the U.S. Government (especially the Defense Department) accounted for 46 percent of the acknowledgments -- well ahead of any other source. Annual publications specializing in military force levels made up 34 percent with The Military Balance, published by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, alone constituting 19 percent. With the category labelled "other" including two additional references to the IISS as an organization, the result is that the Institute was, after the U.S. Government, the second most acknowledged organizational source.

Table 7.8  
ACKNOWLEDGED SOURCES BY GROUP

Source	Number of Acknowledgments	Percent of Acknowledgments <sup>(a)</sup>
U.S. Government	37	45%
(DEFENSE DEPARTMENT)	(35)	(43%)
Military Force Annuals	27	33%
<u>(Military Balance)</u>	(15)	(18%)
Journals Specialized to Defense/Military Matters	8	10%
Non-specialized Journals/ Newspapers	3	4%
Other sources	7	9%

(a) Does not total to 100 due to rounding

### Results Relating to DN Author Recommendations

Three recommendations recurred most frequently. The first was that France or Western Europe should develop a force de frappe and/or related delivery systems. This recommendation appeared 51 times and with increasing frequency per five year period (i.e., 10, 11, 13, and 17 times). It was usually made in connection with comparisons of the strategic balances wherein both sides were viewed as equal, and it was not at all unusual for it to be associated with the thought that the US could no longer, due to increases in Soviet strategic power, be counted on to go to nuclear war in response to Soviet aggression in Europe. It was also not unusual, regardless of the perceived state of a balance, to have this suggestion justified by claims that France must develop her deterrent either to avoid a superpower condominium or to assure herself a strong voice in NATO circles.

Recurring somewhat less frequently (i.e., 42 times) were admonition that the United States and/or the West should increase their flexible response capabilities. These recommendations occurred especially with strategic comparisons that had both sides equal. They also arose with "pro-SU" conventional or ground forces comparisons (3 times) and "pro-US" naval comparisons (twice). Unlike the force de frappe recommendation, this one generally appeared with decreasing frequency per five year period (14, 14, 9, and 5 recommendations per period).

Occurring 23 times and almost always in connection with strategic balances were suggestions to the effect that the West must act to

counter Soviet politico-psychological advances in the Third World. All except one of these recommendations were made in the late fifties and early sixties when Khrushchev was strongly wooing the underdeveloped and verbally supporting "wars of national liberation." They were particularly associated with the Soviet's reaching equality in the strategic areas (hence assuring themselves a modicum of security vis-a-vis the United States) or with Soviet space activities viewed as particularly impressive to Third World states.

Some recommendations were conspicuous by their absence or by the small number of times they appeared. As perceptions of the strategic missile balance shifted strongly away from U.S. domination to equality in the last five years of the study, one might have expected that at least some DN writers would have called on the United States to build up its missile arsenal. Such was not the case -- a fact, however, which was not inconsistent with the increased trend of perceiving the strategic nuclear balance as an equality and the continued tendency to accept U.S. superiority in strategic bombs and warheads, ballistic missile submarines, and strategic aviation.<sup>↑</sup> (SEE INSERT PAGE 218a) There were merely five recommendations (all reflecting perceived equality in the strategic nuclear balance) supporting the strategic arms limitations negotiations or agreements and no recommendations, even with the mutual balanced force reduction talks, supporting conventional arms control measures. In contrast to the encouragement given the force de frappe, there was only one occasion (in 1971) when an author called upon France, exclusive of the West or the United States, to build up her conventional force

Insert for page 218.

It was also not inconsistent with the belief of many DN authors that both superpowers had an excess of sufficiency in the strategic nuclear area so that an increase in such missile numbers would make little difference.

capabilities -- in this case, naval (reflecting perceived equality in the naval balance). Finally, while many DN authors desired that France/Western Europe build a nuclear deterrent due to some lack of confidence in the United States, there were, surprisingly, no recommendations to the effect that, since one or another balance was shifting in favor of the Soviets, France/Western Europe should move to build up political fences with them. Indeed, recommendations that the United States or Western countries as a group increase their flexible response capabilities signified willingness to continue working within the American/Western alliance context. Whether the decreasing number of flexible response recommendations over times signified decreasing willingness to do so is a question worthy of investigation in future research.

#### SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

This section lists some of the more significant findings of this research:

- (1) The strategic nuclear balance by far was the subject of the greatest number of balance comparisons while the overall U.S.-Soviet air and conventional or ground forces balances elicited the fewest assessments.
- (2) DN authors making comparisons tended to view the conventional or ground forces balance much more in NATO-Soviet Union/Soviet bloc terms than in U.S.-Soviet Union terms. The opposite was true for the naval balance.

(3) Discounting the overall air balance, the United States consistently dominated -- both over the long term and in recent years -- in the areas of strategic bombs and warheads, ballistic missile submarines, and strategic aviation. There was no comparable area for the Soviets if one discounts the conventional or ground forces balance due to the small number of comparisons. (See, however, footnote on page 206.)

(4) The superpowers were generally viewed as equal in the strategic nuclear balance over the long-term with this trend becoming overwhelming in the last years of the study.

(5) When shifts in the balances did occur as a result of comparing the last two five-year periods, they did not favor the United States. Both the strategic missile and naval balances shifted from U.S. dominance toward equality.

(6) Some balance areas (particularly strategic nuclear bombs and warheads, naval, and strategic aviation) elicited a greater tendency among DN authors to think of them in quantitative terms than did others (particularly the strategic nuclear and the conventional or ground forces balances, though the data is limited for this last area.)

(7) The U.S. Government (especially the Defense Department) was most often acknowledged as the source of information concerning the capabilities being compared, followed by annuals specializing in national military force levels. The London International Institute for Strategic Studies also figured prominently as an organizational source. At no time did any author indicate use of Soviet information.

(8) Three recommendations recurred most frequently, very often in conjunction with viewing the strategic nuclear balance as in equality. These encouraged development of a force de frappe by France or Western Europe, an increase in flexible response capabilities on the part of the West or United States, and implementation of a Western program in the late 1950s-early 1960s to counter Soviet politico-psychological advances in the Third World.

(9) Contrary to this writer's expectations, there were few recommendations supporting strategic arms limitations; no recommendations calling for mutual balanced conventional force reductions; no recommendations that the United States increase its strategic missile arsenal as that balance shifted markedly toward equality in the 1970s; only one recommendation encouraging France to develop her own conventional force capabilities; and no recommendations calling upon France or Western Europe to build up political fences with the Soviets as balances shifted away from the United States.

#### NOTES

1. See Donald C. Daniel, DEFENSE NATIONALE Perceptions of the US-Soviet Military Balances, Naval Postgraduate School Technical Report 56D176111, (Monterey, CA., November, 1976).
2. In contrast, excluded from consideration were articles that, e.g., dealt with U.S. activities aimed at checking rebel, guerrilla, or insurgent activities in Third World countries or with U.S. aid intended to help Israel check or balance the Arabs.

3. Admittedly both the criteria for selection and the method described above were by no means foolproof. It might have been possible to make the selection process both speedier and less subjective by deciding ahead of time, for example, to read thoroughly every third article or c.i. and code only those balance comparisons which by chance were contained therein. I chose not to do that on the conviction that too much relevant data would be lost and that I would be wasting my time in reading articles, for instance, whose titles or scanning indicated a high probability that they had little or no value to this study.
4. The strategic nuclear balance category includes all comparisons of U.S. and Soviet capabilities to win a nuclear exchange and/or inflict nuclear destruction. It also encompasses references restricted to comparing overall strategic nuclear delivery capabilities. It does not include references concerned with comparing more specific capabilities such as strategic missile systems per se or nuclear bombs. These are dealt with under other categories.
5. This category includes references comparing which side had more and/or better bombs and warheads, more associated megatonnage, or better

bomb and warhead development programs. Some comparisons dealt only with bombs or only with warheads while others dealt with both as a group and were so coded. In most cases identifying comparisons for coding was a relatively simple task, but there was difficulty in ascertaining if megatonnage comparisons dealt with total megatonnage or with warhead megatonnage only. This writer did not control for the difference.

6. The "strategic missiles (aggregate)" heading encompasses references to strategic missiles-in-general, land-based ICBMs, and SLBMs. Comparisons were readily identifiable and dealt either with which side had more and/or better missiles or better associated development programs. If a reference to strategic missiles-in-general was accompanied by clearly differentiated comparison of land-based ICBM's or SLBM's, then the ICBM or SLBM reference was coded also.

7. This balance includes all statements as to which side had more and/or better boats and all statements comparing the progress each side was making in its boat development and production programs.

8. Included in this category are references comparing which side had more and/or better bombers in general, more and/or better strategic bombers in particular, better strategic aviation capability, or a better bomber or strategic aviation development program. Of primary concern were references to heavy or long-range bombers or bombers which could leave one side's homeland, strike the other's, and return. No attempt was made to control whether a DN author's reference to "strategic bombers" or "bombers" in general was meant to include medium bombers, light bombers, or forward-based tactical aircraft.

9. This category aggregates together references to the general or overall conventional forces balance and to the general or overall ground forces balance. They were aggregated because some authors clearly referred to one or the other's superiority in "conventional," "classical," or "traditional" forces but then restricted discussion to ground forces. Comparisons of overall conventional naval or air power are dealt with in other categories.

10. This category includes all statements focusing on which Navy is superior overall as well as all references restricted to comparing which had more ships or tonnage, technically better ships, or better ship development programs.

11. Coded under this category were statements to the effect that one or the other side had more air power, more and/or better aircraft overall, or a better aircraft development program.

12. Because of difficulties of knowing exactly what was being compared, coding for one balance category not mentioned above had to be discontinued. This category dealt with "general military power/war-winning capability." There were too many unresolvable ambiguous statements in the writings potentially relevant to this category. The ambiguity arose from constantly recurring references to Soviet or American power in general which seemed to be military-associated but were never clear enough to rate coding.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### JAPANESE ELITE ASSESSMENTS OF THE U.S.-SOVIET MILITARY BALANCE

by

Paul Langer

#### INTRODUCTION

No systematic study of the Japanese elite's perceptions of the U.S.-Soviet military balance is known to exist. On the other hand, we do have substantial documentary and a good deal of impressionistic information on this question. An analysis of the available data thus can provide a general idea of the Japanese leadership's interpretation of world events and of its assessment of the international balance of forces.

In focusing on the views of the Japanese elite rather than on those of the Japanese public (as USIA surveys do), the problem posed itself of defining which individuals and interest groups should be considered to make up Japan's elite. For the purposes of this paper, the criterion guiding this determination has been to include those individuals, organizations or interest groups which participate either directly in the process of making Japan's policies or who by virtue of their social, economic, or political position or their special

expertise have important influence on those who do make policy. In practice this meant an exploration of: the views and perspectives of Japanese political and government leaders and those in policymaking positions within the powerful Japanese bureaucracy; the opinions held by Japan's business world (as reflected, for example, by the highly influential Keidanren -- Federation of Economic Organizations -- and its sub-sections); and finally, the views of those advisers, defense, foreign policy and technology experts and commentators who are known to play a role in the Japanese decisionmaking process in foreign and national security policy through their influence on the policymaking elite. This categorization reflects not only the writer's analysis of Japan's power structure, but is shared by most experts on Japan.

The opinions of individuals in the above categories were gleaned from a variety of sources: official and unofficial documents, speeches, policy statements and writings; conference proceedings and other reports by third parties -- Japanese and American --, and personal interviews with representative Japanese figures whom the writer has known for some time. While use was made of the information accumulated over many years during the writer's frequent trips to Japan, most of the interviews took place during 1974 and 1975, either in Japan or in the United States, benefiting from opportunities created by research on other facets of the U.S.-Japanese relationship. Since most individuals interviewed preferred not to have their views attributed to them in writing, no reference to their identity is made in the text.

## JAPANESE PERSPECTIVES ON THE OUTSIDE WORLD

### Insularity and Weak Threat Perceptions

Ever since Japan regained its sovereignty some two decades ago, the ruling conservatives and the opposition have been arguing over Japan's international alignment and the most effective way of assuring the nation's security. The existence of such divergent views imposes severe constraints on Japan's defense strategy and discourages the Japanese government from playing an activist role in international affairs.<sup>1</sup> Yet, a closer examination of the Japanese scene suggests that despite these differences, most Japanese, including the leadership, share certain basic perspectives on the outside world, perspectives which stand in marked contrast to those of the European allies of the United States. These Japanese international perspectives can be summarized under two headings: insularity and weak threat perception.

The Japanese themselves are deeply conscious of their insular mental attitudes (shimaguni konjō) which mark their relationship to the outside world and tend to set them apart from it. But noting the rapid pace of Japan's Western-style modernization of daily life and the Japanese economy's ever growing global involvement, one might be tempted to play down this characteristic as diminishing in relevance for the Japanese international outlook. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Language and cultural-psychological barriers continue to present enormous obstacles to international communications with Japan.

At the same time that the Japanese are economically more deeply involved with other nations than ever before, they remain to a considerable degree isolated from the outside Western developed nation with its own very distinctive value system and perspectives. Paradoxically, although the Japanese have developed one of the world's most highly developed international communications networks, in their perceptions they continue to remain remote from developments abroad and admit to a lack of "feel" for them. (The extremely homogeneous ethnic and cultural make-up of the Japanese population may account as much for this national insularity as does the country's island location off the Asian continent.)

These observations apply, if to a lesser degree, to the policy-makings elite as they do to the general public. At the top of the Japanese power pyramid stand men who are singularly Japanese in their social and psychological outlook, personal associations, and world view. Japan's decisionmakers in the political, economic, and bureaucratic spheres tend to have only a superficial intellectual involvement with the world beyond Japan. Hence the significance in Japan of such intermediaries as the "defense intellectuals" and other specialists in international affairs who can serve as interpreters of international developments for an audience of policymakers not well equipped to read -- literally and intellectually -- the news from abroad.

The insularity of Japan also contributes to the weak external threat perceptions that characterize Japan and stand in sharp contrast

to European reactions. With the exception of the Allied (i.e. American) occupation after World War II, the Japanese islands have never experienced foreign military incursions. Whenever Japan has been entangled in military ventures, it has been the result of Japanese initiatives and occurred away from the home islands. If anything, Japan's defeat in the war has reduced the Japanese people's concern with an external threat, as Japan's security is being assured by the American military presence and formal U.S. defense guarantees. So long as the United States is acknowledged to be the world's paramount power, the Japanese, further protected by their physical distance from potential adversaries, can feel secure, leaving them free to focus their energies on domestic construction. In the past three decades, this inward-directed effort has minimized Japan's involvement in international affairs and thereby also the Japanese people's exposure to external problems.

Another factor deserves mention in this context. Japan's disarmament after the war, its rejection of military power as an instrument of national policy (Article 9 of the Japanese postwar Constitution), and the Japanese leaders' conscious decision to build economic rather than military strength has naturally tended to divert their attention away from global military concerns. Nations, like individuals, presumably are inclined to see the world in an image fitting their preferred strategies. Rightly or wrongly therefore -- and we are not concerned

here with judging the validity of Japanese views but with describing them -- the Japanese have commonly been viewing military power as of lesser utility in assuring their national security than the protection provided by economic strength and world-wide trade relations. The conviction is by now deeply embedded in the minds of the Japanese people -- and not only of the general public -- that so long as Japan continues its present policies, there is no good reason -- or incentive -- for the Soviet Union or any other nation to threaten the security of Japan.

Reinforcing these conclusions are certain widely-held notions about the U.S.-Soviet military relationship. In the past, statements by authoritative Japanese (e.g. the Defense Agency Chief and Japan's Foreign Minister) confirm that from the Japanese leadership's viewpoint the U.S.-Soviet equilibrium has positive global significance in the sense that it renders an armed clash of the superpowers highly unlikely thereby setting also natural limits to the localized conflicts expected to occur from time to time on the fringes of the two competing alliance systems. In the Japanese view there is no reason why any nation should wish to engage in aggression against a virtually unarmed Japan, allied to the United States and deeply enmeshed in mutually beneficial economic exchanges with the world's major nations, although there remains some fear that Japan might be drawn into a local conflict. Thus, under present conditions, characterized by the absence of acute tension in Japan's international environment, one finds little concern among the

Japanese leadership about serious repercussions for Japan resulting in the short term from the U.S.-Soviet global military competition.\*

There is another difference between Japanese international perspectives and those of the European non-Communist nations. In Europe one notes a strong conviction that the U.S.-Soviet global balance has a direct and immediate bearing on the security of every European nation and that Soviet challenges wherever they may occur in Europe are viewed as inter-related and affecting all of Europe. Hence the deeply felt need for a united front against Soviet pressures. The Japanese, on the other hand, view their security as being assured and essentially distinct from that of most of Asia. They see the rest of Asia in a state of extreme flux, where the threats to stability tend to be multiple and largely internal rather than single, external, and easily defined. In line with these basic perceptions, the Japanese elite recognizes in the Far East no place for a strong and broad military alliance that would include Japan.

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\*Japanese opinion makers and defense intellectuals participating in Moscow in late 1974 in a conference devoted to an appraisal of Soviet-Japanese relations saw such convictions confirmed when their Soviet counterparts reportedly downplayed the U.S.-Japanese security pact as being no more than one element in U.S. attempts to maintain a U.S.-Soviet global balance rather than being specifically aimed at the Soviet Union.

It is understandable then that the Japanese leadership has been much less preoccupied with global non-economic concerns and the U.S. and Soviet military roles than is the case with the Europeans. The relative intensity of Japanese sensitivities can best be depicted with concentric circles. At the center is, of course, the preoccupation of the leadership with the state of affairs at home; then, concerns about the security of the area around Japan and Korea; further out, a continued strong interest in the stability of conditions along the arc from North-east to Southeast Asia; and, finally, a broad, general, but rather remote concern with the state of the global U.S.-Soviet military balance. Although this balance is acknowledged to have its indirect effect on areas of special interest to Japan, it is viewed as a problem quite beyond Japan's ability to affect. In that sense, the Japanese perspective is that of a regional and economic rather than that of a world power.

#### Japanese Preferences Vis-a-vis the Superpowers

Perceptions of reality filter through the prism of policy preferences. What then are Japanese psychological predispositions and preferences with regard to the United States and the Soviet Union? The answers are not difficult to ascertain. They are reflected in everything we know about Japanese views of each country, in Japanese behavior toward the two big powers, in Japanese writings, official statements, and in the many public opinion polls conducted on the subject over the years.

It seems hardly necessary to go into detail regarding Japanese attitudes toward the United States, a subject on which much has been written on both sides of the Pacific. While there have been ups and downs in the U.S.-Japanese relationship since the war and while the relationship has never been completely free of friction, Japanese attitudes toward the United States remain essentially positive, despite -- or perhaps because of? -- the wartime defeat and the effects of the postwar military occupation of Japan. This is a tribute to U.S. policy and to the success of the economic, social, and political restructuring of postwar Japan in which the United States played initially at least a dominant role. It is also an indication that the Japanese leadership sees Japan's national interest in close political and military bonds with the United States rather than in a neutralist or unaligned posture.

While the alliance rests primarily on economic and thus perhaps shallow foundations rather than on a consciousness of shared values, this has never really subtracted from the essentially positive Japanese perception of the United States. These positive sentiments are held by the vast majority of the general public as well as by Japan's conservative leadership, but they also are present as a latent force far into the liberal and left wings of Japanese opposition politics. After more than two decades of close political, economic, and military ties between the two countries, the alliance with the United States has proved its worth to most Japanese -- even to many in the political opposition, as is evidenced in its leaders' increasingly gingerly handling of the security

pact issue. So long as Japan prefers to assure its security through a military alliance, the United States remains the logical and favored partner in the eyes of the majority of the Japanese people and its leadership. In their view, U.S. policy objectives and world outlook continue to be essentially compatible with the perceived national interest of postwar Japan.

In studying one nation's response to another nation, one encounters a composite of predispositions, assumptions, and reactions. The resulting image plays a very real role in influencing a nation's international behavior and its foreign policy choices. Such an image appears to be primarily the result of the cumulative effect of the historical experience. It encompasses conflicts and alliances -- military, political and ideological. It is affected by geographic and economic factors, by the scope, depth and nature of cultural interchange, by the intensity of the flow of communications between the countries concerned and by the actions and inter-personal relationships of their leaders.

It has already been pointed out that the Japanese image of the United States is on balance a very favorable one. Japanese perspectives on the Soviet Union, on the other hand, are strongly and negatively marked by past confrontations of a military and ideological nature. World War II further accentuated Japanese feelings of hostility and distrust when Soviet forces suddenly attacked in Manchuria during the last days of the fighting (and despite the still valid non-aggression pact with Japan), subsequently held a million or more Japanese

captured military and civilians in camps (where many of them did not survive the rigorous conditions) and seized territory traditionally considered Japanese. Thereafter, Soviet international behavior -- in Eastern Europe and closer to Japan -- coupled with the rapid buildup of military strength did nothing to improve the Soviet reputation in Japan. Moreover, in the competition with China for Japanese support, the Soviet Union from the beginning was handicapped. Chinese propaganda in Japan still further blackened the Soviet image. During the past decade, Soviet approaches to Japan and expanding economic exchanges have provided a somewhat better environment for Soviet-Japanese relations. Nevertheless, Japanese distrust of the Soviet Union remains deep-rooted among the elite, especially among the older generation which provides Japan's political leadership. On public opinion polls, the Soviet Union continues to vie with the two Koreas for the spot of "most disliked nation" in Japan. In its global competition with the United States Japanese sympathies and Japan's national interest are acknowledged to be on the U.S. side. The Japanese leaders realistically view the Soviet Union as a power to be reckoned with. They view it as a potentially troublesome neighbor with whom relations should be improved, but who also deserves to be watched with suspicion.

#### Reliance on U.S. Information

The nature and dimensions of the channels through which one nation learns about another obviously exert an important influence on the perceptions of one nation by another. The flow of information entering

Japan from the United States has always been vastly superior in quantity, quality and diversity from that coming out of the Soviet Union. There is no precise way of comparing the two information flows, but a ratio of 100:1 is probably not an exaggeration. Certainly, both the Japanese general public and the elite are notably more familiar with all aspects of American conditions and policies than with those of the Soviet Union. The reasons lie in the different natures of the two societies as well as in the very extensive and still progressing enmeshing of Japanese and American societies. In contrast to the trickle of Japanese visitors to the Soviet Union going there for political, commercial or cultural purposes and to the even fewer Soviets coming to Japan, millions of Americans have had direct contact with the Japanese since the days of the military occupation and hundreds of thousands of Japanese have visited or lived in the United States as tourists, students, businessmen, technicians and scientists. Every day the average Japanese is exposed to the English language -- in school, on television and radio, in advertisements, in press and literature. Familiarity with the Russian language remains the exception in Japan, being found primarily among students of literature or among government research analysts, concentrated in the Foreign Ministry, the Defense Agency and the several organizations concerned with foreign intelligence. Not surprisingly, these analysts are severely handicapped by the less accessible nature of Soviet society and the consequent paucity of data on Soviet developments. This applies particularly to information which would allow continuous, direct monitoring of Soviet

military strength. Thus, today the flow of information about Soviet developments, especially with regard to military matters, enters Japan almost entirely by way of the United States rather than from the Soviet Union.

Japanese perceptions of relative U.S. and Soviet strengths thus tend to be powerfully influenced by U.S. views, perspectives and judgments. This phenomenon is accentuated by the large gap between the levels of U.S. and Japanese sophistication in the understanding of advanced weapons technology and the complexities of nuclear strategy. Virtually all nonactive Japanese military experts and defense intellectuals have been trained in the United States or else have honed their analytic skills through frequent contacts with their American counterparts and through their reading of the pertinent American literature. Much of the Japanese perspective on the worldwide military balance and the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two superpowers is thus the result of continuous exposure to American views and interpretations.

Available evidence indicates that virtually all U.S. public information of importance and relevant to the state of the U.S.-Soviet military competition reaches Japan sooner or later through one or another of the many existing channels. Conversations in Tokyo, confirmed by a review of the pertinent Japanese literature, suggest that among this massive flow of information certain sources exert a particularly strong influence on the Japanese elite's views and that the number of these sources is quite limited. Among them are, not

surprisingly, statements by the U.S. Secretaries of Defense and State, the military service chiefs, and high officers in the Pacific command. (To a lesser extent, this is true also of the statements of their Soviet counterparts.) Hence the annual posture statement of the Defense Department and its State Department version are paid special attention by Japanese officials\* and experts who brief their superiors or comment on the trend of world developments, although the political element in such statements is recognized. To the extent that budget figures allow a detailed analysis of U.S. military programs and their evolution, the annual U.S. defense budget is also examined with much interest in Japan. Such documents are usually compared with the versions of earlier years in order to detect trends and new developments in U.S. military estimates and strategies. Presidential speeches, interviews, and messages are given attention primarily for indications of the future direction of U.S. policy rather than for their value as sources of specific information.\*\* It is not always realized in the U.S. how

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\*Hence in evaluating the military strength of the nations relevant to the security of Japan, the recent White Papers (1976 and 1977) issued by Japan's Defense Agency rely heavily on such official U.S. assessments.

\*\*Thus, a speech delivered in Kansas City in July 1971 by President Nixon--and largely ignored by the U.S. public--was studied in Japan for clues as to the meaning for Japan of the Nixon Doctrine which long puzzled the Japanese as to its concrete implications.

carefully Congressional debates, testimony, and reports are scrutinized in Japan for information which may elucidate, complement -- or contradict -- the data provided to the Japanese government in official U.S. communications (including those submitted by the U.S. side in connection with the various regularly-scheduled bilateral talks or the exchange of intelligence information). The very diversity of views and arguments expressed in the Congressional forum enriches -- and often confuses -- Japanese interpretations of U.S. thinking.

A similar and very important role is played by the many non-official studies and analyses prepared by a number of U.S. and other research organizations or individual specialists on strategic problems enjoying a high reputation in Japan. Much of the Japanese elite's thinking about the U.S.-Soviet balance turns out to be inspired by the International Institute of Strategic Studies' The Military Balance or such reference works as Jane's Fighting Ships, Jane's All the World's Aircraft, the SIPRI Yearbooks, the Brookings Institution's Setting National Priorities (and related studies) and many analytical reports issued by The Rand Corporation and several other U.S. research organizations concerned with problems of national security and weapons technology. Nor should one underestimate the role played by a handful of U.S. and other prestigious newspapers and periodicals in shaping the Japanese elite's views. Traditionally, The New York Times has occupied a special place on this short list which includes a few quality non-U.S. papers like The Times of London and Le Monde. Pravda and Izvestia,

although actually read by a small number of Japanese specialists, nevertheless, in their translated form constitute important sources of information, as do the more specialized Soviet publications dealing with military matters and world affairs. In sum, the Japanese elite obtains its information on the state of the U.S.-Soviet competition very much as do their American counterparts. It is only natural therefore that Japanese elite perceptions in that regard often parallel the evolution of American views.

The influence of the personal factor in shaping Japanese perspectives is a considerable one. The major reasons for this have already been referred to but bear repetition: the fact that Japan is a society in which interpersonal relations are particularly important; conditions where Japan today largely lacks the information, sophistication, and experience to evaluate many of the specific technical aspects of the U.S.-Soviet military competition; the heavy reliance of U.S. military power reflected in intensive interaction between the two military establishments; the limited number of Japanese individuals engaged in and competent to judge issues of military strategy and their consequent heavy reliance on information provided by U.S. sources and contacts; and the intensive U.S.-Japanese dialogue conducted between the two countries' political, economic, scientific and cultural elite as well as among their military.

Official exchanges of views between U.S. and Japanese government leaders, civilian and military, exert a demonstrable influence on the views of the Japanese decisionmakers insofar as the appraisal of the

U.S.-Soviet balance is concerned, as the U.S. side is assumed to have a virtual monopoly on inside technical knowledge and sophisticated analytic capability. (This has been shown again and again in such matters as the Japanese assessment of the significance of new weapons developments like the ABM, or MIRV.) Much U.S. influence also is exerted through informal U.S.-Japanese contacts involving private citizens, a condition almost totally absent from Soviet-Japanese relations. Although the Soviet Union has belatedly begun to make efforts to institute a dialogue with Japanese opinion leaders and decisionmakers, this attempt is still in its early stages and is hampered by institutional, political, and psychological barriers between the two societies. On the other hand, the U.S.-Japanese military alliance and its ramifications -- exchanges of personnel, training programs, licensing and joint weapons production and the like -- provide the Japanese side with a continuous opportunity to gauge and be influenced by American perspectives. In recent years, hardly a month has gone by that prominent and influential Americans and Japanese have not met somewhere to discuss international issues at conferences, seminars, or workshops. In many instances, it is possible to trace back to such meetings the emergence of specific Japanese views on issues pertinent to an evaluation of the U.S.-Soviet military balance.

In sum, all available evidence suggests the key role of the United States in forming Japanese perceptions of the outside world, especially

where judgments of a military or technological nature are concerned. Nevertheless, differences in world outlook, priorities, and policy context do not make Japanese perspectives simple mirror images of American views. In the following, an attempt will be made to provide an admittedly cursory and tentative exposition of some of the more interesting Japanese perceptions regarding major aspects of the current state of U.S.-Soviet competition. These observations represent a distillate of information gained from the writer's frequent personal contacts with relevant Japanese and from a continuing examination of the pertinent Japanese literature of the past two years.

#### SOME JAPANESE ELITE PERCEPTIONS

Japanese elite perceptions of the U.S.-Soviet military balance are a composite of diverse considerations. Genuinely military judgments enter, of course, importantly into the assessment. So do political, economic, and technological assessments of observable developments and trends produced by the interplay of the two big powers. But the resulting conclusions regarding the state of the U.S.-Soviet balance are also functions of a much broader set of considerations related to the prevailing psychological climate in Japan, the nation's priorities as perceived by its leaders, as well as national reactions to the behavior of the two superpowers, factors that have been discussed earlier.

Thus, judgments on the part of Japan's power elite as to "who is ahead" or "who is advancing and who is retreating" are not the product of a single assessment -- military, technological, economic, or political -- but the result of a combination of considerations the elements of which are not always analytically separable. Nevertheless, it is generally possible to determine at least what kinds of international events and developments or actions taken by the United States or the Soviet Union have markedly affected Japanese elite perceptions of the U.S.-Soviet military balance and how and why any of their previously-held views have been modified.

The question may legitimately be raised whether it is possible at all to generalize about the Japanese elite's perceptions of the U.S.-Soviet balance since in Japan as in other democratic societies the elite can presumably not be precisely defined and since at any rate it may be expected to hold a spectrum of views on the subject. In answer to this question it should be pointed out that this analysis consciously confines the inquiry to those Japanese circles making up the country's power elite and to those who by virtue of their professional functions have direct influence on it. The scope of this study thus does not encompass the views of Japan's Socialist or Communist opposition leaders who do not directly participate in determining Japan's foreign alignment or defense orientation. Nor does it purport to reflect the judgments of anti-establishment activists and ideologically-oriented intellectuals associated with the left wing of Japanese politics.

The principal components of Japan's power elite -- the government bureaucracy, the ruling conservative political party, the leaders of finance and business, and those professionals who as experts, advisers and commentators have a continuing impact on the views of Japan's leadership -- are quite homogeneous, sharing a common value system and basic perspectives. Differences in these leaders' assessments of the U.S.-Soviet military balance tend to be differences of emphasis and degree rather than fundamental disagreements originating for the most part in their differing professional vantage points and areas of responsibility.

What then is the prevailing view among the Japanese elite regarding the present correlation of U.S. and Soviet forces operating on the world scene and what changes if any do they expect in that regard in the decades ahead? In a broad and undifferentiated way, they judge the United States and the Soviet Union to have reached a state of near-parity. "Near-parity" because the United States is believed to retain some degree of superiority in the purely technical aspects of military power, but this U.S. edge is thought to be rapidly becoming thinner and thinner to the point that strategically it may no longer count for much. In essence, this state of near-parity is seen as producing relatively stable international relations, for like powerful sumo wrestlers (an image frequently used to describe the situation) the superpowers are straining to upset each other while being locked in a grip that virtually immobilizes them. Hence for the time being at least, the

United States and the Soviet Union are forced to concede strategic parity to each other. At the same time, their strength is such that no third power is now or will be in the foreseeable future even remotely in a position to challenge the two superpowers militarily. In the Japanese view, these circumstances create conditions conducive to a continuing detente in superpower relationships. In turn this state of affairs is also considered highly desirable from the point of view of Japan's national interest since the resulting relaxation of tensions not only prevents a catastrophic clash of the two big powers and their allies, but imposes limits on the scope and violence of local military conflicts that even in an era of detente might occur from time to time on the fringes of the two alliance systems.

If the prevailing Japanese view of the U.S.-Soviet balance shows a lack of serious immediate concern about the implications for Japan of the present state of U.S.-Soviet strategic relations, this does not necessarily hold true of Japanese assessments of future developments. It is widely believed that the long-term trend of U.S.-Soviet strategic power ratios may hold danger for the status quo, for SALT and other U.S.-Soviet arms agreements are not interpreted as evidence that the Soviets have abandoned ambitions to achieve military superiority over the United States. While it is acknowledged that many things can change between now and the late 1980s, over the longer run trends in the balance of forces are on the whole perceived as tending to favor the Soviet Union.

What are the reasons for such Japanese views about possible changes in the future U.S.-Soviet balance? The answer is evident from Japanese comments on the world situation including those expressed in private by members of the elite. The Japanese are simply extending into the future the trend of world affairs of the last decade as they see it. They see no reason to modify significantly such a projection. The United States is judged to have had absolute superiority in all major areas of national power perhaps as late as the 1950s. Since then the world has witnessed a relative decline in U.S. influence, the devolution of U.S. international commitments and responsibilities (the Nixon Doctrine is generally referred to as one of the important symptoms of this development), the Soviet attainment of military parity or near-parity with the United States, the gradual narrowing of the existing technological gap between the two powers at least insofar as military capabilities are concerned, the well advertised domestic (socio-economic and political) difficulties the United States has been experiencing in the past years, and a number of what are deemed to have been American failures in international affairs -- prominently mentioned among them, the Indochina conflict and occasionally also the India-Pakistan War and the situation in Africa. The United States has been unable to stem the gradual intrusion of Soviet power into regions which once were closed to it. It is acknowledged that to extrapolate from such trends may be misleading as trends are reversible. Yet, it is seen as a fact that the Soviet Union has advanced in a very short span of time from a state of clear strategic inferiority to one approaching

parity; that it has become a factor, politically and militarily, in an ever-widening portion of the world. It is not so much the existing correlation of military forces that gives rise to concern, but the momentum which appears to carry the Soviet position forward. Will this momentum continue unabated during the next decade and if so, what will be the results for world stability? These are the questions being asked in Japan, not insistently as yet, but occasionally and with some hesitation.

Specific developments or events which have given rise to such interpretations can be ranged under four categories only two of which are of a genuinely military nature. In the first place, there is the question of superiority in sophisticated, nuclear weaponry. The Japanese leadership continues to have great confidence in U.S. technological capacities. At the same time, the impression has gained ground -- strongly supported by U.S. analyses circulating in Japan -- that at least in the field of military applications, the gap has been steadily narrowing. This process has been observed in Soviet nuclear weapons development from its inception. The latest example, frequently mentioned in Japan, is the issue of MIRVs. Rightly or wrongly, the Soviet Union is believed to have progressed in this field much more rapidly than had been anticipated in U.S. estimates so that agreements concluded in Moscow (SALT I) and believed to have been premised on a slower Soviet rate of MIRV development may give some advantage to the Soviet Union. The United States is conceded superiority in tactical nuclear weapons, but in regard to strategic nuclear weaponry the

equilibrium is now considered a more precarious one. Japanese strategic analysts recognize that the superior throw weight of Soviet missiles may be a reflection of inferior Soviet technical capability to produce more accurate weaponry, but it is also argued that the very massiveness of the Soviet weapons could have a psychological and political effect and, more importantly, that the Soviet Union in seeking to give these large weapons greater accuracy could gain a further advantage in the future. Arms control agreements may have the effect of pushing the military competition in the direction of qualitative rather than of quantitative improvements of weaponry, conditions which traditionally would favor the United States, but the rapid rate of Soviet advances in military technology is beginning at least in the view of some influential Japanese to cast doubt on this assumption.

The second area of U.S.-Soviet competition, that of conventional forces, is providing even more food for thought. It is not just the force ratios which are shifting to the advantage of the Soviet Union, but a major Soviet effort is successfully being made to remedy existing deficiencies. This is seen with regard to Soviet aviation (where the MIG-25 is reported to have performed very well in the Middle East), but more conspicuously with regard to Soviet naval forces. Japan being an island nation with a navy tradition and in view of the important role assigned to the U.S. Seventh Fleet in Japanese thinking with regard to maintaining stability in the Pacific, it is not surprising that the issue of the steady growth and geographic advance of Soviet naval forces

is prominently mentioned by Japanese leaders and commentators as dangerously increasing Soviet military capabilities and political leverage far beyond the Soviet defense perimeter. Comments on the Soviet tonnage increase and the qualitative improvement of the Soviet naval forces tend to be juxtaposed with statements about the declining number of U.S. naval craft and their growing age. A prominent U.S. admiral's warning that the Pacific has ceased to be an American lake was widely taken up in Japan. In that context, the Soviet naval exercises termed Okean II, conducted in 1975, have had a particularly strong effect on Japanese analyses of military and foreign policy issues, analysts of the exercise dwelling at some length on the growing dimensions and ambitiousness of the 1975 operation compared to its 1970 predecessor.

In a similar vein, one encounters comments about the lengthening reach of Soviet intervention abroad. (It is this third area of arguments pointing toward an increasing Soviet political world role at the expense of the United States that is particularly effective with the general public.) There is of course the case of Soviet influence in the Indochina War which is believed to have resulted in a strengthening of the Soviet position in the Pacific region; India, where a formalized rapprochement (now questionable) with the Soviet Union could open up a vast sub-continent and adjacent seas to Soviet influence; Africa and the Middle East where instability and uncertainty continue to characterize the situation, but where the United States is seen as conceding

a role to the Soviet Union in a region from which the Soviets' influence had hitherto been barred.

But Japanese doubts about the continued ability of the United States to prevail over the Soviet Union appears to be less rooted in the actual and concrete manifestations of expanding Soviet power than in vague doubts about U.S. will and determination to maintain the American world role, to stand up to Soviet pressures and to bear the attendant economic and psychological cost. Much of what has taken place in the world at large as well as in the United States since the days of the Cuban missile crisis seems to be feeding Japanese doubts. As with other Japanese perceptions about the state of the U.S.-Soviet balance, Japanese conclusions regarding a weakening of the United States appears to originate from American analyses and declarations rather than from independent Japanese judgments.

It would be an exaggeration to say that the Japanese elite feels anxiety over the future of the U.S.-Soviet balance. That is not the case. For the moment Japan feels relatively secure in conditions of U.S.-Soviet strategic parity and expects this state to endure at least for the near future. Further, it is a common assumption in Japan that so long as the United States will compete for world influence with the USSR, the American nuclear umbrella over Japan will not be withdrawn and aggression against Japan thus be deterred. In these circumstances, the Japanese leadership sees no reason for immediate concern about possible Soviet actions directed against Japan. This has been

evidenced time and again, most recently when Foreign Minister Gromyko ended his unsuccessful mission to Tokyo (January 1976) with parting words that could be interpreted as an implicit warning to the Japanese government. Nor do occasional Soviet incursions into Japanese air and sea space cause great excitement in Japan. In summing up the situation, it would be fair to say that the Japanese elite's perceptions about the global U.S.-Soviet military balance reveal at this point merely the existence of a mild degree of uneasiness about that balance's future evolution.

If the global balance of forces is judged to be as yet no cause for immediate concern, it is also perhaps because it is perceived as a remote issue over which Japan has at any rate little influence. This is demonstrated by Japanese reactions to SALT and other arms control agreements, concluded or under discussion between the United States and the USSR. SALT has not aroused much interest in Japan. Only specialists have examined the substantive issues involved pointing among other to the possible relevance of future SALT agreements to the defense of Japan insofar as questions of range limitations for offensive weapons are concerned. Generally, SALT has been interpreted in Japan as an understanding between the two superpowers to promote certain coinciding interests and only symbolically as a move toward disarmament or as evidence of an approaching end of the race for arms superiority. The issues involved in the SALT talks are viewed essentially as global and as transcending the range of Japanese interests. Moreover, they are not well understood in Japan in their technical implications except by

a few specialists. Their conclusions in turn tend to be based on U.S. analyses and on discussions with their American counterparts. Thus, to the extent that any critical comments are made about the SALT talks, they repeat American warnings against harboring illusions about Soviet intentions and Soviet willingness to live up to arms agreements. Such warnings strike a sympathetic chord among many Japanese in view of Japan's past bitter experiences with the Russians.

The region around Japan is very much in a state of flux providing incentives for the superpowers as well as for China to compete and expand their influence. Hence American and Soviet behavior and more specifically their force deployments and demonstrations are watched in Japan as indicators of future trends.

In that context, Okean II and the steady growth and increasing visibility of the Soviet naval forces in the Pacific and Indian Oceans are read as reflections of Soviet ambitions. Similarly, U.S. deployments and the extent to which the once predominant American role is being maintained in the region are interpreted not only as directly relevant to the security of the area from Soviet pressures and influence, but by implication also as measures of American will and determination in a worldwide frame. Thus, while U.S. pledges to continue to maintain forces and interest in Korea had an important positive effect on Japanese assessments, the U.S. plan to withdraw forces has again raised questions in the Japanese mind regarding U.S. reflections in the Pacific region.

## SOME IMPLICATIONS

In conclusion, a few observations are in order regarding the implications of Japanese elite perceptions of the U.S.-Soviet military balance. In the first place, the Japanese show little concern about the global aspects of the issue which to them is one involving essentially only the two major players. While their interest certainly lies in preventing this global balance from being destroyed, they feel impotent to do much to sustain it. They view the Soviet Union as having made great strides in recent years, militarily, technologically, and perhaps even politically (although clearly not economically) toward superpower status rivaling that of the United States which is seen as having meanwhile entered a period, temporarily, perhaps, of relative decline. There remains in Japan strong confidence in U.S. technological superiority and in American capacity to maintain the material foundations required for competition with the Soviet Union on at least equal terms. But one notes also some uneasiness about the future. That uneasiness stems from perceptions of weakening U.S. determination to carry on the competition, an aspect of power of which the Soviet Union is thought to have ample supplies. These perceptions may be responsible for a delicate change that has occurred in the thinking of what is still a minority among the Japanese elite with regard to the optimum way of ensuring Japan's national security. The need for maintaining the American alliance is acknowledged by them as strongly as ever. But one notes incipient support for the concept of

supplementary security guarantees for Japan including Soviet participation in such an arrangement -- a concept, incidentally, that in the past found advocates only among the opposition Socialists.

Evidence regarding the impact on Japanese perceptions of demonstrations of U.S. power through weapons demonstrations, space exploits and other technical feats is contradictory. But Japanese assessments of U.S. strength are certainly affected in a significant way by the regional role of the United States in the Pacific. The importance of the Seventh Fleet as an indicator of American intentions has already been suggested. Its withdrawal or drastic reduction if undertaken in a global context favorable to the Soviet Union would likely be taken by the Japanese leadership as a significant signal that the regional balance was in the process of shifting due to declining U.S. determination. Such a development could prompt not only a reappraisal of Japanese conclusions regarding the state of the U.S.-Soviet military balance, but consequences also could be felt in Japanese national security policies. It could lead to a reopening of the internal debate regarding the limits of self defense and the desirability of building indigenous deterrent power. In addition, one needs to emphasize once more the enormous influence of the U.S. self-view on Japanese perceptions of the U.S.-Soviet balance: to what extent this balance appears to the Japanese elite to tilt in favor of the United States or the Soviet Union is to a considerable extent a function of the way the United

States sees it and of how it communicates its views to the Japanese elite.

#### NOTES

1. For a detailed analysis of these issues, see the writer's Japanese National Security Policy--Domestic Determinants, R-1030-ISA (Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, June 1972).

## CHAPTER NINE

### ARAB PERCEPTIONS OF THE REGIONAL SUPERPOWER MILITARY BALANCE\*

by

Ronald D. McLaurin

#### INTRODUCTION

Many argue that military force is too narrow a conceptual base for power status. It cannot be denied that mineral resources, productivity and productive capability, national character, and many other elements traditionally identified as ingredients in power ranking are relevant in influencing world affairs. Yet, ultimately, in the face of China's population, Japan's economic vitality, mineral and other resources in many of the world's weakest states, and a very poor

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correlation between geography and power status, perceived military capability seems still to equate most closely with power or influence. The Soviet Union is an excellent case in point. While it is not the economic or technological equal of the United States, most analysts have since World War II accepted that it and the United States together -- being the world's military superpowers -- dominate the international system.

One regional subsystem in which both the United States and the Soviet Union have important interests is the Middle East. Indeed, the salience of superpower interests, investments, and commitment combined with intra-regional conflicts have made this area the most explosive in the world. It is a region for which the superpowers have shown themselves willing to expend considerable resources -- including potentially coercive resources such as military force -- to influence the views of the local actors.

#### STUDY PURPOSE AND METHOD

The purpose of this study is to consider Arab perceptions of the Mideast superpower regional balance as these are reflected in Arab newspapers between 1965 and 1975. Two newspapers served as sources of data for the entire period with an additional two consulted when gathering data for 1975. The former are al-Ahram, a semi-official Cairo daily, representing the Egyptian regime, and an-Nahar, the most important Beirut daily, highly-regarded as independent in its editorial policies.

The latter are al-Hayat, a Beirut daily representing the Saudi perspective, and ash-Sharq, a small daily, also published in Beirut but reflecting the Syrian viewpoint.

Content analysis was employed in order to gather data from these sources. It is a research method which aims at objective, quantitative, and systematic description of communications content. Although innumerable systems of content analysis vary markedly depending upon objectives, all must enable different coders to arrive at similar coding decisions on the same material, must organize content into discrete categories of which statistical analyses are possible, and must explicitly posit criteria for treatment of content. Detailed coding rules and procedures were developed and assembled together in what was termed the FACES codebook (i.e., Codebook for the Force Assessment Content/Events Data System).<sup>1</sup> It is suffice to say here that the unit of analysis was an article or article segment discussing superpower military force events which occurred in or affected the areas from Morocco on the West to Iran on the east and from Turkey on the north to Oman on the south. These events included but were not limited to: the conclusion of defense agreements; agreements on, implementation of, or other developments concerning arms transfers or arms control; weapons systems developments and performance characteristics; advanced technology breakthroughs with potential military relevance; force deployments (including new weapons or additional manpower); the establishment, expansion, reduction, termination, or change in terms of reference of

military missions in countries near or in the Middle East area; maneuvers and exercises; visits to these countries of armed forces, ships, aircraft, or personnel; military (naval) operations in times of crisis; policy decisions or statements by the executive or legislative branches relating to defense policy within the legislative branch.

Resources were inadequate to collect data systematically across one or more newspapers for the entire 1965 through 1975 time frame. Data-gathering was restricted to those issues published during time periods when superpower military force events (such as those described above) either occurred in the Middle East or, if outside the area, were of such a magnitude that they might well be expected to influence regional perceptions. These were specifically selected with the intent that the various types of U.S.-Soviet military force events should be represented, preferably by more than one example. Other than superpower ship visits, military maneuvers, exercises, and non-crisis deployments (mentioned nearly 290 times in the papers consulted), there were over 200 events (including crises and associated deployments) which guided the selection of dates with the majority in 1970 and beyond. Obvious examples were the June War, the Yom Kippur War, the 1970 Jordanian crisis, and the Lebanese civil war. Others included the signing of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the Czech invasion, the announcement of the Guam doctrine, the opening of SALT discussions, and the expulsion of Soviet advisers from Egypt.

## DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESES

A number of hypotheses were developed against which to test the data gathered. Their development and the order of their presentation reflect the categorization of superpower military force events contained in the FACES codebook. These hypotheses appear below:

I. Symbolic force events in the Middle East are not related by the media to either the local superpower balance or to the superpowers' local capabilities.

II. U.S. weapons are generally considered superior in design and quality control to Soviet weapons of the same type. Exceptions are some SAM (surface-to-air missile) systems, ATGMs (anti-tank guided missiles), and the Kalashnikov AK-47 rifle. (The weapons were widely used by the Arabs and have been generally reported by the Western media to be highly regarded by the Arab forces using them.)

III. Foreign military missions are not considered as factors influencing either local superpower military capabilities or the regional balance between the U.S. and U.S.S.R.

IV. The Arab press does not relate weapons research and development (R&D) to the local military balance or to the local superpower military capabilities.

V. Arab media are not in a position to determine the time lag between research/breakthrough and deployment. Consequently, these lags are not related by the Arab press to the local military balance between U.S. and Soviet forces.

VI. On the other hand, deployments of new systems are seen by the media to affect both American and Soviet capabilities and the regional balance of their forces.

VII. Middle East military facilities under the control of the United States and the U.S.S.R. are related by Arab media both to U.S. and Soviet regional capabilities and to the force balance.

VIII. Deployments, exercises, and maneuvers of forces in non-crisis periods are not associated by Arab media to military readiness and therefore are not associated with the local U.S.-Soviet balance. The contrary is true during crisis periods.

IX. Superpower airlift/sealift capabilities are seen to directly affect the local superpower balance.

X. Middle East elites believe the United States and the Soviet Union are in a position of global strategic stand-off. They do not follow the details of new strategic weapons developments, but assume a mutual deterrence capability both globally and regionally.

#### FINDINGS

I. Symbolic force events are not related by the media to the local superpower balance or to the superpowers' local capabilities.

None of the 143 visits, -- which are symbolic force events -- or 40 games, maneuvers, and exercises -- many of which are also symbolic events -- was identified as having any effect on the regional military balance between the United States and the Soviet Union. Only two of

the 155 other deployments were considered to influence the balance. Thus, Table 9.1 indicates that the Arab newspapers do not equate symbolic force events for critical developments affecting the balance.

Similarly, symbolic force events are not perceived to have an affect on local superpower military capabilities. Unlike the balance issue, local capabilities could conceivably be affected by visits, maneuvers, and the like. Nevertheless, none of the 143 visit observations or the 40 observations relating to maneuvers, games, and exercises was stated by the newspapers to be likely to affect U.S. or Soviet capabilities. Somewhat surprisingly, only one of the other 155 deployments was expected to have such an effect, according to the newspapers. Table 9.2 summarizes the data.

II. U.S. weapons are generally considered superior in design and quality control to Soviet weapons of the same type. Exceptions are some SAM systems, ATGMs, and the Kalashnikov.

The media do not seem to assume consistently U.S. weapons superiority, but, in general, the United States is considered to enjoy an overall technology lead over the Soviet Union,<sup>2</sup> and this lead ramifies predictably on certain areas of complex weapons systems such as, for example, aircraft, where even the MIG-23 is considered inferior to many Western aircraft.

However, in two areas -- air defense systems and ATGMs -- the volume of newspaper data suggests Soviet weapons superiority. Although there is relatively little discussion of artillery, Soviet equipment was

Table 9.1

Symbolic Force Events and the Local Superpower Balance

<u>Type of Event</u>	<u>No. obs.</u>	<u>Aggregate Space (cm<sup>2</sup>)</u>	<u>Affecting Loc. Sup. Balance</u>		<u>Space</u>	
			<u>Obs.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>(cm<sup>2</sup>)</u>	<u>%</u>
Visits	143	22,665	0	0	0	0
Games, maneuvers, exercises	40	2,401	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	183	25,066	0	0	0	0
Note: Other deployments	155	15,547	2	1.3	686	4.1

Table 9.2

## Symbolic Force Events and Local Superpower Military Capabilities

Type of Event	No. Obs.	Aggregate Space (cm <sup>2</sup> )	Having an Effect			
			Obs.	%	(cm <sup>2</sup> )	%
Visits	143	22,665	0	0	0	0
Games, maneuvers, exercises	40	2,401	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	183	25,066	0	0	0	0
Note: other deployments	155	16,547	1	0.6	586	3.5

also considered superior in that field. Soviet SAMs received particularly abundant laudatory newspaper attention. Interestingly enough, the Arab press totally disregarded that Soviet SAM systems had a very low kill rate in the Yom Kippur War and that newer ECM and better tactics later in the war further reduced SAM-inflicted Israeli aircraft losses. See Tables 9.3 and 9.4.

III. Foreign military missions are not considered as factors influencing either local superpower military capabilities or the regional balance between the United States and the U.S.S.R.

Of the 25 observations addressing the subject of military missions, not one suggests any of the missions is likely to affect the military capabilities of either the United States or the U.S.S.R. In reality, however, the large-scale Soviet military training in Egypt did result in altering local Soviet military reconnaissance capabilities to surveil the U.S. Sixth Fleet. Moreover, the availability of Egyptian ports materially increased the flexibility of the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron. Egyptian facilities supporting these activities, while not technically a part of the mission's role, were provided in exchange for the Soviet training effort. In this context, two of the articles (8 percent) indicated that the military missions concerned did affect the local superpower military balance.

IV. The Arab press does not perceive a relationship between weapons research and development (R&D) and the local military balance or regional American and Soviet military capabilities.

Table 9.3

Attention to U.S. and Soviet Weapons Performance and Technology

<u>Country</u>	<u>Total Obs.</u>	<u>Total<sup>2</sup> Space (cm)</u>	<u>Page 1 Articles</u>	<u>Banner Headlines</u>	<u>Major Headlines</u>
U.S.	105	73,222	51 (47%)	43 (41%)	52 (50%)
U.S.S.R.	59	16,267	29 (49%)	8 (14%)	34 (58%)
Superpowers	17	6,770	0 (0%)	2 (12%)	12 (71%)

Table 9.4  
Media Attention to U.S. and Soviet Equipment\*  
(Observations/cm )

<u>Equipment Type</u>	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>U.S.S.R.</u>	<u>Superpowers</u>
Aircraft: combat	2/224	2/1185	1/310
Aircraft: other	1/288	1/2007	
SAM		10/3813	
SSM		2/620	
SLBM		1/15	
PGM	2/581		
ATGM		2/250	1/470
Satellite		9/715	1/310
Non-lethal equipment	3/330		

\*Weapons performance and technology subjects only.

The media do not give credence to the importance of weapons research with respect to the local force balance of the superpowers, since none of the 149 relevant observations posited any such effect.

Counter-intuitively, neither did the Arab newspapers have a single observation dealing with weapons R&D that stated a likely impact on the regional military capabilities of the United States and the Soviet Union. We had expected coverage of Soviet naval carrier procurement or construction of Western aircraft to demonstrate such an effect.

Weapons R&D events were seen to affect the military balance between regional powers rarely (2.6 percent of the observations dealing with weapons development and performance), and the global U.S.-Soviet balance seldom (but less infrequently -- 12.8 percent of the observations).

V. Arab media are not in a position to determine the time lags between research/breakthrough and deployment. Consequently, these lags are not related by the Arab press to the local military balance between U.S. and Soviet forces.

With the recognition given time lags between weapons research, development, testing, and evaluation (RDT&E) and actual deployment, it is hardly surprising that none of the observations in which time lags were considered suggested that the reported event would have an impact on the local force balance between the United States and the Soviet Union. See Table 9.5.

VI. On the other hand, deployments of new systems are seen by the media to affect both American and Soviet capabilities and the regional balance of their forces.

Table 9.5  
Effect of RDT&E Time Lags

Action	Total Obs.	No Time Lag			Time Lag				
		Obs.	Effects			Obs.	Effects		
			1 <sup>a</sup>	2 <sup>b</sup>	3 <sup>c</sup>		1 <sup>a</sup>	2 <sup>b</sup>	3 <sup>c</sup>
Test	177	174			5	3			
Develop	35	25			2	10			1
Deploy	18	15			5	3			
Produce	9	7			2	2			1
Other	77	69			1	8			
	316	290	0	0	15	26	0	0	2

1<sup>a</sup> signifies that the stated impact is on the local superpower force balance.  
 2<sup>b</sup> signifies that the stated impact is on local superpower military capabilities.  
 3<sup>c</sup> signifies that the stated impact is on the global military balance.

New weapons systems deployed to local units of U.S. and Soviet military forces attract considerable media attention but are not perceived to have much effect. Of the 117 deployments of new weapons systems to superpower forces in the Middle East area, only one -- i.e., less than one percent -- was expected to affect the U.S.-Soviet regional balance. See Table 9.6.

VII. Middle East military facilities under the control of the United States and the U.S.S.R. are related by Arab media both to U.S. and Soviet regional capabilities and to the force balance.

Bases in the Middle East are not seen to play a critical role in the local politico-military situation. Only 1.25 percent of the 160 bases observations indicated that the event would affect the local military balance of the superpowers, and none of the observations on this subject projected an impact on the military capabilities of the United States and the U.S.S.R. in the Middle East-Persian Gulf area.

VIII. Deployments, exercises, and maneuvers of forces in non-crisis periods are not associated by Arab media with the local U.S.-Soviet balance. The contrary is true during crisis periods.

Surprisingly, exercises and maneuvers do not seem to attract much more attention in crisis than in non-crisis periods. They receive slightly more space in non-crisis periods (61.2 cm<sup>2</sup> to 51.6 cm<sup>2</sup>) and are almost three times as frequently covered. (See Table 9.7.) Although the relative rarity of crises (even in the Middle East) is greater than this, one must consider the fact that the articles were selected to focus on such periods as the June and October Wars.

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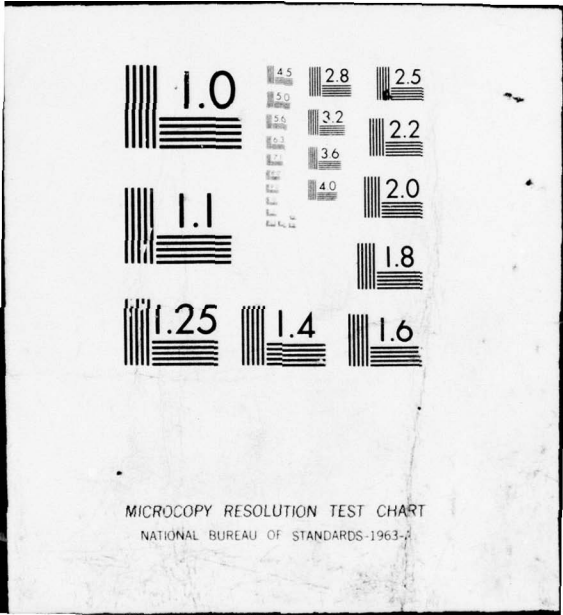


Table 9.6  
New Systems Deployments and Effects

<u>Weapons Systems</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Effects on Local Superpower Balance</u>	<u>Capabilities</u>
Major	62	0	0
Unknown	8	0	0
Other	47	1	0

Table 9.7

Exercises, Maneuvers, and Deployments

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Crisis</u>		<u>Non-Crisis</u>	
	<u>Obs.</u>	<u>Space (cm<sup>2</sup>)</u>	<u>Obs.</u>	<u>Space (cm<sup>2</sup>)</u>
Exercises & Maneuvers	9	464	32	1,957
Deployments	<u>90</u>	<u>10,749</u>	<u>63</u>	<u>5,758</u>
TOTAL	99	11,213	95	7,715

However, clearly crisis deployments attract media attention. Almost 60 percent of the deployments recorded occurred during crisis periods. The size of these articles was 31 percent greater than that of non-crisis deployments.

As a whole, 51 percent of the observations were related to crisis, and 59 percent of the space was devoted to crisis-coincident observations. Predictably, also, while only 20 percent of the editorials on the subjects were written for crisis-related or -coincident observations, 75 percent of the banner headlines on this theme accompanied deployments and other movements during crisis.

Of the 95 non-crisis observations of force movements, 32 dealt with exercises and maneuvers. None of these observations was related by the media to the global or local superpower force balances.

Surprisingly, none of the 90 crisis deployments observations was explicitly stated to have an expected effect on the military balances at the global level.

No deployments to forces in the Middle East, Persian Gulf, or other nearby areas during crisis ( $n = 72$ ) were perceived to affect the regional U.S.-Soviet force balance. Surprisingly -- and quite counter-intuitively -- one non-crisis observation was perceived to have such effects. (See Table 9.8.)

IX. Superpower airlift/sealift capabilities are seen to directly affect the local balance between the United States and the U.S.S.R.

**Table 9.8**  
**Effects of Force Movements**

<u>Timing</u>	<u>Effects on Local Superpower Balance</u>	<u>Observations</u>
Crisis-coincident	0	72
Non-crisis-coincident	1	49

Activities dealing with airlift and sealift capabilities and operations in our data population were expected by the media to affect only local military balances between regional states (8.2 percent of the 49 observations). Indeed, U.S.-Soviet airlift/sealift was the second most important category in terms of perceived impact on the local military situation (principally, the Arab-Israeli conflict). We were surprised that the media did not address the importance of airlift/sealift capability in the global strategic balance, since Western media discuss the subject frequently, nor was any effect seen on the regional force balance of the superpowers.

X. Middle East elites believe the United States and the Soviet Union are in a position of global strategic stand-off. They do not follow the details of new weapons developments, but assume a mutual deterrence capability both globally and regionally.

The analysis of Arabic newspapers suggests that this hypothesis is valid. We have elsewhere written of this perception of global strategic standoff and its implications.<sup>3</sup> We found no suggestion that any newspaper saw either superpower as having a decisive edge in military capabilities. Substantial awareness of and interest in events that are viewed as affecting the local balances of power between Arab countries and between the Arab states and Israel are not reflected in local superpower capabilities or in the regional global balance of U.S. and Soviet forces. Table 9.9 demonstrates this limited concern.

Table 9.9

Events Perceived to Affect the Superpower Strategic Balance

Theme	Obs.	Local Superpower Balance		Local Superpower Capabilities		Global Balance	
		Obs.	%	Obs.	%	Obs.	%
U.S.-Soviet Strategic competition	198	2	1.0	2	1.0	60	30.3
Weapons Dev./ Performance	149	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	12.8
Technological Breakthroughs	167	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.2
Airlift/sealift	49	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	563	2	0.4	2	0.4	81	14.4

Another way of viewing the small proportion of events expected to have an impact on the U.S.-Soviet balance is that only 15.2 percent of all events dealing with these subject areas were perceived likely to have an effect on either the global or local superpower balance or regional military capabilities of the United States or Soviet Union. Meanwhile, over 11 percent of military assistance and sales observations posited some influence on local military balances between regional states.

The different levels of effect suggest that conflict salience dictates perceived effect. Although Arab media pay some attention to weapons systems developments, and the like, many articles suggest that the Arabs see the global rivalry as balanced, at least in the sense of a deterrent level of mutual assured destruction. Local superpower capabilities and the local U.S.-Soviet balance seem to have little salience because a local superpower conflict is expected to become a global one, and because the local U.S. and Soviet forces are seen to have symbolic ("trigger") rather than military importance in terms of their contribution to the local problems that preoccupy elite analysts. In other words, the Soviet-American military equation is simply not viewed as a local balance, and both forces are seen to have already the level of capabilities necessary to accomplish regional functions, including deterring the other from intervention. By contrast, many events are seen to affect the local balance between regional countries and the global U.S.-Soviet balance.

## CONCLUSIONS

The Arab media are not very attentive to the details of the U.S.- Soviet military balance in the Middle East. The impact of deployments of personnel and weapons, of weapon technology developments, of security assistance and military sales, and of airlift and sealift capability, for example, is not believe to significantly alter or affect the regional superpower balance or even the capabilities of local American or Soviet forces. The inattentiveness suggests that the Arabs do not focus on regional power, probably because they feel each superpower's forces deter the forces of the other from intervention in the Middle East.

We are left with the ambivalent observation that although the individual elements contributing to or detracting from U.S. and Soviet local power are not important to the regional audiences both Washington and Moscow seek to influence, the aggregate of regional power -- credible deterrence through symbolic presence -- is vitally important to them. Hence, the psychological elements of credibility may be far more critical to influence than factors concerning military readiness.

## NOTES

1. The codebook gives a thorough explanation of procedures and requirements. Edward E. Azar, Suhaila Hadd, and R. D. McLaurin, The Assessment of the Impact of Military Force: Codebook for the Force Assessment Content/Events Data System (FACES) (Alexandria, VA: Abbott Associates, Inc., 1976).

2. See R. D. McLaurin, "The Soviet-American Strategic Balance: Arab Elite Views," International Interactions, III, no. 3 (1977), pp. 236-237.

3. R. D. McLaurin with Suhaila Haddad, The Political Impact of U.S. Military Force in the Middle East (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1977), Chapter 5.

## CHAPTER TEN

### ISSUES AND FINDINGS

by

Donald C. Daniel

This chapter highlights and draws together findings on issues addressed in two or more chapters of part two. While all the conclusions are subject to further investigation and refinement, they provide initial insights and can be useful when formulating hypotheses in future studies.

Issue one: Which superpower is "presently"\* perceived as ahead in overall military capabilities or in overall strategic nuclear strength?

Agreement was not entirely uniform for either balance. On the one hand, a majority of British, French, and West German public opinion believed the Soviets to be equal or ahead in total military strength with the greater bulk of opinion leaning toward Soviet superiority. The Japanese elite, on the other, perceived the Americans in possession of a very narrow lead.

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\*The quotation marks reflect the fact that the final cut-off date in the time period covered in each chapter fluctuated from the end of 1974 to mid-1977.

As for the strategic nuclear area, the Americans who expressed an opinion differed on the standing of the superpowers, but the Soviets, the French of Defense Nationale, and the Arab media generally believed them to be equal. The Japanese elite were concerned that a faster-than-expected rate of Soviet MIRV development may have given some advantage to the Soviet Union.

Issue two: How do the superpowers "presently" compare in the other balances covered in part two?

Of the remaining balances, the United States was generally accepted as the leader in tactical nuclear weapons by the Japanese elite, in military-technology by the Japanese and the Arab media, and in strategic bombs and warheads, ballistic missile submarines, and strategic aviation by the French journal authors. These last also rated it superior or equal in naval power and equal to the Soviet Union in strategic missiles. If one includes NATO-Warsaw Pact conventional or ground forces comparisons, the Soviets viewed both groups as essentially equal while the French authors in Defense Nationale consistently accepted Soviet bloc superiority.

Issue three: Have recent shifts in perceived strength favored the United States?

Recent shifts have not. This conclusion applies to Soviet, British, French, West German, Japanese, and, for the most part, American views of the overall military or strategic nuclear balances, Japanese elite views of the military-technological balance, and French journal views of the

strategic missile and naval balances. In each of these areas, the momentum was perceived to favor the Soviet Union.

Issue four: How were the United States and Soviet Union rated in overall power (consisting of economic, political, scientific as well as military factors)?

The United States was perceived as superior by British, French, and West German public opinion as well as by the Japanese elite, but not by the Soviets, who felt that the "correlation of world forces" (which includes additional factors such as the ideological) had shifted in 1969 or 1970 to where they were now equal. Soviet spokesmen did acknowledge that the most significant factor affecting the change in the overall correlation was achievement of strategic parity. One implication is that they weighed the military-strategic factor more heavily than did the British, French, Germans, or Japanese, who seem in turn to have given more weight to economics.

Issue five: When the United States was the preferred superpower ally, did this preference carry through to a preference for U.S. strategic nuclear superiority?

The case studies dealing with British, French, and West German public opinion and with Japanese elite views established that, while these observers did prefer the United States, they also preferred superpower strategic nuclear equality rather than American superiority. They believed that international stability was thereby enhanced.

Issue six: What were the perceived prospects of superpower conflict?

The prospects of such conflict were assessed as low by American spokesmen, Western European and Japanese elites and, by implication, the Arabs. The Soviets also saw the prospects of war decreasing due to strategic equality causing "sober-minded" circles in the United States to realize the futility of war.

Issue seven: What was the perceived relation between the global strategic balance and local or regional superpower balances?

Japanese and Arab observers viewed the global strategic nuclear balance as overriding the local or regional superpower balance. In their minds, the global balance set limits on superpower activities in regional areas. In the Japanese case, however, U. S. efforts to maintain the local balance were seen as important indicators of U.S. resolve to stand up to the Soviets.

Preferences for strategic nuclear equality by the British, French, and West German publics, on the assumption that stability was thereby enhanced, imply that they also may have seen "strategic override" applying to their areas. Many of the Defense Nationale authors seemed to be as sensitive as the Japanese about maintaining a local balance when they recommended that, with the advent of strategic equality, the Western alliance should increase its flexible response capabilities.

Issue eight: What role did American sources play in shaping foreign perceptions?

The Soviet, Defense Nationale, and Japanese studies clearly established that U.S. spokesmen (with Government spokesmen being prominent) played a pivotal role in shaping perceptions abroad. They were a chief source of information relied on by observers who either desired to know more of the balances or (as with the Soviets) wished to offer proof that strategic parity had become an accepted "fact."

Issue nine: Do military demonstrations, space exploits, and activities such as games, maneuvers, exercises, and deployments trigger thinking about the balances?

This is a very complex issue, and what evidence is available suggests that the impact of these activities is highly uncertain. The Arab study noted that symbolic force events such as military visits, exercises, and deployments, even in crises, attracted much media attention but had almost no visible impact whatsoever on views relating to the local balance. The Japanese study concluded that the evidence was contradictory, but it also pointed out that the steady growth and geographic advances of Soviet naval forces and their conduct of large naval exercises such as the 1975 OKEAN maneuvers did contribute to Japanese misgivings about trends in the military balance. It noted that the U.S. Seventh Fleet deployments to the Western Pacific and U.S. willingness to station troops in Korea were important for allaying such misgivings.

Issue ten: To what extent did the perceivers tend to think in terms of numerical comparisons of superpower military strength?

The USSR study indicates that the Soviets avoid numerical comparisons as a matter of course. In contrast, French journal authors relied on them over 40 percent of the time if one discounts the overall strategic nuclear and conventional or ground forces balances. The low reliance on quantitative measures for the former balance reflects the oft-stated French belief (shared by some American and Soviet spokesmen) that overall strategic inventory totals have lost their significance due to the "balance of terror." It is generally felt that both sides have more than enough.

Issue eleven: Was any connection evident between views of the balance and willingness to support defense spending or efforts to increase military capabilities?

The findings on this issue suggest a connection. It is clear that the Soviets are very pleased to be accepted as the military and strategic equal of the United States. They are also pleased with the impact, as they see it, of this equality on aspects of U.S. foreign and military policy--particularly American willingness to accept the Soviet Union as a co-equal world actor and American caution on issues which could lead to confrontation. As a consequence, they seem determined to do what is necessary to insure that the Soviet Union remains at least equal. Indeed, while some Soviet spokesmen question the value of seeking superiority in the face of mutual assured destruction, the official line remains that superiority is desirable for assuring deterrence of "imperialist adventures."

As for the American spokesmen, those viewing strategic trends as unfavorable urged U.S. efforts to insure equality while their more confident colleagues, i.e., those perceiving mutual assured destruction, cautioned against over-concentration on maintaining strict weapons parity. They feared that such concentration would be at the expense of other important areas affecting U.S. security ranging from nuclear terrorism to Third World needs.

Coincident with perceived superpower strategic equality, many French journal authors encouraged France or Western Europe to develop a force de frappe. Some encouraged the NATO alliance to increase its flexible response capability. The force de frappe recommendations were linked to one or two beliefs. The first was that, with parity, France or Western Europe could no longer rely on the U.S. nuclear umbrella. The second was that the commanding lead held jointly by both the United States and Soviet Union in strategic power could result in a superpower condominium, a situation to be obviated by development of French or Western European nuclear capabilities. The flexible response recommendation reflected the obvious concern that, in a situation of nuclear stand-off, the Western alliance had to be better prepared to meet threats at lower levels.

While uneasy about military and strategic trends, the Japanese elite felt themselves powerless to do much about it, but they did want

the United States to continue to play a balancing role. Their fear was that American resolve to insure military and strategic equality was in a period of relative decline.

Finally, the case study of British, French, and West German public opinion addressed this issue in a slightly different manner. Focussing on the "defense burden" (defense budget/gross domestic product) of each state over time, the study concluded that, except for Germany, as America's perceived position in the military balance improved, national defense burdens decreased.

Issue twelve: Did recent perceived shifts in some balances away from U.S. favor result in recommendations that one should thereby seek accommodations with the Soviets?

Even though many French authors perceived some trends in a manner unfavorable to the United States, none recommended that France should as a result increase its ties with the Soviet Union. The same conclusion generally but not totally applies to the Japanese elite. While as a whole it favored continued maintenance of the American alliance, there is incipient support among some members for supplemental security guarantees involving the USSR. Interestingly enough, Soviet observers felt that the Americans did move toward closer accommodation with onset of strategic parity, and recommendations by some American spokesmen supporting the SALT process help provide confirmation for the Soviet views.

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