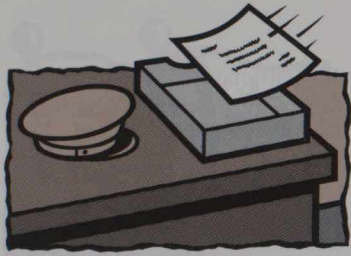


DEFENCE NOTES



The Warsaw Pact

■ In late 1989 and early 1990, developments in the Warsaw Pact dominated defence developments in both East and West. In mid-January the new government of Czechoslovakia began talks with the Soviet Union aimed at an agreement on the withdrawal of all Soviet troops by the end of 1990. Soviet troops entered Czechoslovakia with those of other Warsaw Pact countries in 1968 to suppress the uprising in that year against communist rule.

At a Warsaw Pact meeting on 4 December 1989, the members, including the Soviet Union, condemned the 1968 invasion as an inadmissible interference in the internal affairs of Czechoslovakia. During 1989 some 5,000 Soviet troops, 700 tanks and 200 aircraft were withdrawn from Czechoslovakia as part of Gorbachev's decision to reduce Soviet troops in Eastern Europe by 50,000. About 75,000 troops remain in Czechoslovakia.

On 24 January, Czech foreign minister Jiri Dienstbier announced informally that his country will end its international trade in arms. Czechoslovakia ranks seventh in the world in total weapons exports.

Some days later, at the Vienna seminar on military doctrine attended by military representatives from both the Warsaw Pact and NATO alliances, Hungary called for the withdrawal of all Soviet troops from Hungarian territory by the end of 1991. Negotiations began shortly thereafter. Statements attributed to the new government in Poland also indicated that the withdrawal of Soviet troops was seen as a prerequisite to a new relationship between Poland and the Soviet Union.

At the same time, all of the members of the Warsaw Pact have

indicated that they intend to remain members. In Vienna, Soviet spokesmen suggested that there would soon be changes in the political direction of the Pact. According to these sources, the present Political Consultative Committee will be scrapped and replaced by a council which will more strongly reflect the national governments and interests of the Pact members.

The effect of Soviet troop withdrawals on Soviet military doctrine is not yet clear. In his comments to the Vienna seminar, Mikhail Moiseyev, Chief of the Soviet General Staff, stated that the Soviets were now guided by the principle of "reasonable sufficiency." In conventional forces, this means "a quantity and structure which will enable the sides to repel any aggression and yet have no capacities to launch an attack or wage large-scale offensive operations." By way of explanation, Moiseyev pointed to the Soviet unilateral force reductions of 500,000 troops, but he gave no explanation of the kind of force posture which would preclude offensive operations. Moiseyev also announced that the Soviet defence budget will be reduced by 8.2 percent in 1990, and by another fourteen percent in the following two years.

Two NATO Reactions

■ As the pace of change in Eastern Europe accelerated, NATO planners, according to one unidentified spokesperson, have not so much managed the change as watched it. However, two implications have been noted. First, West German officials have expressed great doubt that an agreement will be reached to deploy a successor to the short-range Lance nuclear missile. "Do we really want to install new nuclear missiles," a senior West German official is quoted as saying, "that can only hit Lech Walesa's Poland, or Hungary?"

Second, the Warsaw Pact capability to launch a surprise attack

has been reassessed. In recent years, US intelligence sources have stated that NATO might have a fourteen day warning or less, of a full-scale Soviet attack on Western Europe. Revised national intelligence estimates claim that there would be at least one month's warning of such an attack, with other estimates suggesting at least two months. The length of reliable warning time is related to defence expenditures, particularly for the US which needs a large airlift capability to ensure rapid reinforcement of its troops in Europe.

The US Defence Budget

■ After many weeks of debate in the media about the restructuring of US military forces, on 30 January, President Bush presented his fiscal year 1991 defence budget to Congress. The surprise in the budget was that there were no surprises. Bush called for defence spending of US \$303.3 billion, an increase from \$296.3 billion in FY 1990, but a reduction of about two percent after inflation is taken into account.

Despite widespread speculation that major strategic programmes would be abandoned or cut, Bush called for the continuation of the modernization programme of strategic nuclear forces. This programme includes the B-2 bomber, the advanced cruise missile, the new Seawolf attack submarine, the Trident D-5 submarine-launched ballistic missile, the multiple warhead MX missile, and the single warhead Midgetman. The budget also called for an increase in spending on Star Wars research.

As presented by Defense Secretary Richard Cheney, the administration plans to reduce the budget by two percent annually over the next four years. The cuts seem most likely to fall on conventional forces as the US prepares to reduce the size of its army in response to changes in Europe. Indeed, on 31 January, the day after releasing his budget, George Bush proposed

that the US and USSR cut deployed forces in Central Europe each to 195,000.

While the strategic direction indicated in the budget will be subject to considerable criticism in Congressional hearings now in progress, Cheney's proposal to close sixty military bases may become the focus of considerable negotiation between Congress and the White House.

Canadian Policy

■ Canadian Forces personnel took part in two historic events in January. First, a Canadian Hercules C-130 transport flew a "proof of concept" mission over Hungarian territory to test procedures proposed for use in an Open Skies regime.

Second, Chief of Defence Staff John de Chastelain led the Canadian delegation to the Vienna seminar on military doctrine. Gen. De Chastelain used the opportunity to restate an old Canadian theme with the NATO allies. Ever since Canada negotiated the NORAD agreement in 1958, spokesmen have pointed out that Canadian defence policy supports NATO insofar as it helps protect the US from surprise attack. In his Vienna speech, de Chastelain first emphasized his point: "I would reiterate that Canada's military role in NATO has just as much to do with the forces we deploy in North America, as it does with those we deploy in the Eastern Atlantic and in Europe."

On the future of Canada's forces in Europe, the speech was slightly less certain. De Chastelain noted that the size of the Canadian contribution is less important than the political message given by its presence. He immediately went on to comment, however, that "militarily our forces are far from being insignificant," and that, "for both alliance reasons and for purely selfish, national reasons, Canada has much to offer and to gain by its military presence in Europe." □

— DAVID COX