

divisions, usually with 9,000 to 13,000 men and 200 to 300 main battle tanks as well as a range of other equipment.

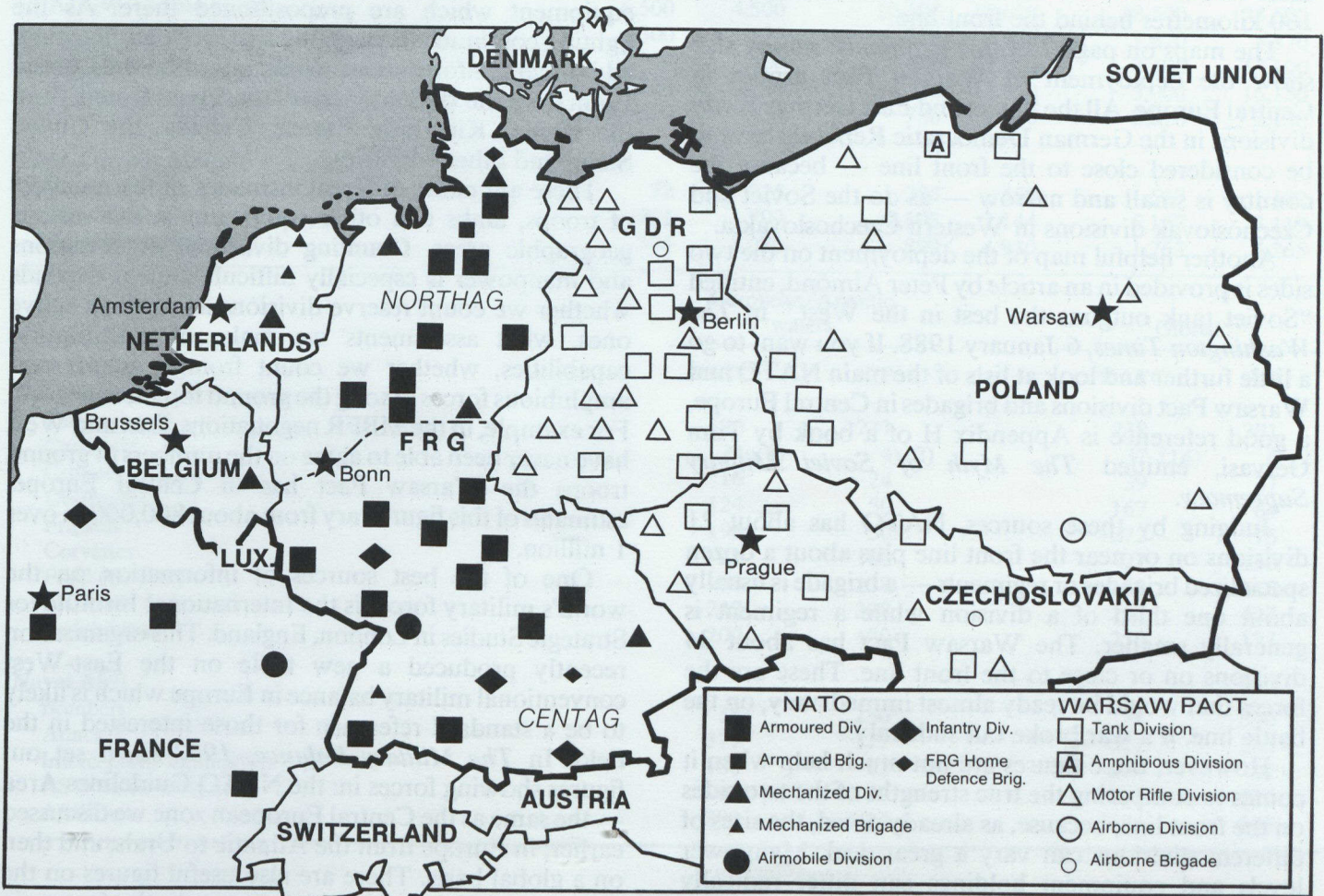
The variations among different types of army divisions causes difficulty in comparing the numbers on the two sides, so attempts are often made to assess the strengths of the armies in terms of a standard unit of measure. One counter is the Armoured Division Equivalent (ADE), which might include, say, 20,000 troops, 300 main battle tanks and a standard range of equipment. Since many of the troops in the NATO and Warsaw Pact armies are administrative and other personnel who serve in headquarters and supply units rather than front line divisions, the ADE includes not only combat and close-support troops but also a slice of other elements.

Aircraft are also considered to be conventional forces when they are not equipped with nuclear weapons. The MBFR negotiations in Vienna tried to set ceilings on air force manpower as part of the European military equation, and it is possible, though not yet certain, that tactical aviation will be included in the new negotiations. Attack and transport helicopters especially have a direct bearing on the balance of

conventional ground forces, since they are used primarily to support army operations.

Naval power is extremely important in calculations of the European military balance, because of the need to reinforce the Central Front from North America during any prolonged war in Europe. However, controls on NATO and Warsaw Pact fleets are not likely to be pursued as part of the negotiations on conventional force reductions in Europe. This is a problem with global rather than continental dimensions, which will have to be tackled in some other forum such as the United Nations or the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

Most of us think we know what we mean by the term conventional forces, but there are one or two problems when it comes to being precise about particular formations of weapons. For example, units armed with battlefield nuclear weapons are generally integrated with ordinary army divisions, not deployed separately, so one cannot say that one division is conventional and another nuclear. They are all considered conventional unless they resort to using the nuclear systems they hold. Many aircraft and artillery pieces are dual-capable, which means they can be



Map of Central Europe showing deployment of forces for the Warsaw Pact and NATO. The heavy line indicates the MBFR reduction zone. (Redrawn from The Economist, 30 August 1986, p. 7.)