

when we try to think about the number of divisions the Warsaw Pact might have available to commit to battle in the critical first few weeks of a war.

Then there is the question of reinforcement. It would take time to move Soviet, French, British, American, Canadian or other forces up to the various fronts, especially if they were under attack by bombers, submarines, or other systems at the time. The Warsaw Pact has some advantage because its communication lines are almost all over land rather than partly across a wide and dangerous ocean, but even it faces problems because there are relatively few rail lines across the main supply routes such as through Poland. A critical issue here is how much time the Warsaw Pact would have to mobilize and reinforce the front line before NATO started to respond: if it had more than a week, it might gain a decisive edge which gave it good chances of a successful assault on NATO's front line.

The list of complexities does not end here. If a war really did start, the numbers of troops, tanks and other equipment on the various battlefields would not by any means be the only item that was important. In history, battles have often been won by the side which had the smaller forces. The advantages conferred by terrain, by military doctrine, by surprise, by fighting from well prepared defensive positions, by superiority in specific weapons systems such as tanks or tactical aircraft, by technology, and so on, need to be taken into account. The quality of the men and equipment on the two sides could be critically important, as well as such other unmeasurable factors as generalship, morale and plans of action. Added to them, moreover, are the inevitable hazards and uncertainties of war.

TACKLING THE CONVENTIONAL BALANCE ISSUE

Despite all the difficulties and complexities just mentioned, intensive efforts continue on both sides to improve the strength of their conventional military forces. At the very least, they want to be sure of having enough trained manpower, modern tanks, powerful artillery and other equipment to withstand an assault if it comes.

At the same time, in the aftermath of the Reykjavik and Washington Summit meetings, as the world looks with increasing hope to the prospects for far-reaching measures of arms control and disarmament, interest in the military balance in Europe is more and more focussed on the issue of conventional force reductions. East and West are working actively on this question in the Mandate Talks in Vienna. The great quest now will be to find ways of maintaining the balance of forces between the two sides at lower levels of military confrontation, and to make sure that sound measures are worked out which allow a conventional force reductions agreement to be put safely in place.

FURTHER READING

- Almond, Peter, "Soviet tank outguns the best in the West," *The Washington Times*, 6 January 1988.
- Clancy, John, *Red Storm Rising*, Putnam, New York, 1986.
- Gervasi, Tom, *The Myth of Soviet Military Supremacy*, Harper and Row, New York, 1986.
- Hill, Roger, "Are Major Conventional Force Reductions in Europe possible?" *Aurora Papers* 7, The Canadian Centre for Arms Control and Disarmament, Ottawa, May 1988.
- Keliher, John G., *The Negotiations on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions: the Search for Arms Control in Central Europe*, Pergamon Press, New York, 1980.
- Klein, Jean, *Securité et désarmement en Europe*, Institute français des relations internationales, Paris, 1987.
- Levin, Carl, *Beyond the Bean Count: Realistically Assessing the Conventional Military Balance in Europe*, Office of Senator Carl Levin, Washington, DC, 20 January 1988.
- Mearsheimer, John J., *Conventional Deterrence*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1983, especially Chapter 6, "The Prospect of Conventional Deterrence in Central Europe," pp. 165-189.
- Thompson, John, "The Soviet Ground Forces Today and into the Nineties," *Canadian Defence Quarterly*, Summer 1987, pp. 21-26.
- Toogood, John, "Conventional Arms Control in Europe," *Background Paper* No. 5, Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, April 1986.
- Wander, W. Thomas (ed.), *1987 Colloquium Reader, Nuclear and Conventional Forces in Europe—Implications for Arms Control and Disarmament*, Program on Science, Arms Control and National Security of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. See the following chapters especially: Stephen D. Biddle, "The European Conventional Balance Debate: A Reinterpretation," pp. 25-57; Fen Osler Hampson, "Emerging Technology Conventional Weapons: Technological Advances and Projected Roles," pp. 59-74; and Jonathan Dean, "Negotiating Measures on Conventional Forces: Reductions and Confidence-Building Measures," pp. 181-187.
- The Department of National Defence, *Challenge and Commitment: A Defence Policy for Canada*, Ottawa, June 1987.
- The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1987-88*, London.
- "NATO's Central Front," *The Economist*, 30 August 1986.



of research at the Canadian Peace and Security. in this paper are the sole or, and should not be taken to Institute and its Board. dian Institute for International onal copies are available from the re, 360 Albert Street, Suite 900, 7.

est également publié en français.
ISBN: 0-662-16351-6

LIBRARY E A/BIBLIOTHEQUE A E



3 5036 20024237 1