

tions of 20,000 men (per side) include 10,000 Americans and Soviets and 5,000 West Germans and Poles. It was expected that additional withdrawals would be negotiated. This proposal was also lacking in any agreed figures on force size and made no real mention of verification.

The first NATO proposal (November 22, 1973) called for a two-phase reduction. The first phase entailed a 15-percent reduction in Soviet and American forces. This meant that 29,000 American troops would leave Germany (their equipment would remain behind) while the Soviets would have to withdraw a complete tank army (68,000 men and 1,700 tanks). The second phase called for reductions in indigenous forces to achieve an overall ceiling for each side of 700,000 ground force personnel. The negotiation of the second phase, however, was to be contingent on the successful completion of phase one. The disproportionate effect of these suggested reductions on the Soviet Group of Forces in Germany and the failure to directly address German military reductions (a dominant and continuing Soviet preoccupation) and other features of the second phase rendered the NATO proposal unacceptable to the Soviet Union.

The NATO proposal was altered in December, 1975. The new proposal's central feature was the addition of an American offer to remove 1,000 tactical nuclear warheads, 36 Pershing missile launchers and 54 Phantom jets as part of the American reduction proposed in November, 1973. This offer was rejected.

The Soviet Union introduced a new Warsaw Treaty Organization proposal in February, 1976. This substantially revised plan incorporated several features of the NATO proposals, calling for a reduction in Soviet and American ground and air personnel amounting to between 2 and 3 percent of total alliance strength in the reduction zone, the withdrawal of 300 main battle tanks by both sides, the withdrawal of an Army Corps Headquarters by both sides, a freeze on other participants' manpower, the withdrawal of 54 tactical nuclear capable aircraft, some missiles, 36 Surface to Air Missiles and, perhaps, 1,000 tactical nuclear warheads. A second phase of reductions would seek to cut the total alliance forces by 15 percent (but on the basis of national sub-ceilings) before the end of 1978. The withdrawn Soviet

and American forces were to be disbanded. The Soviet introduction of numerically equal limitations (tanks and nuclear launchers) exaggerated even further the existing asymmetries in the East-West balance and, on this point, was less acceptable than the original 1973 WTO proposal. Other features of the new proposal were unverifiable or aimed at producing an asymmetrical disadvantage for NATO.

Several months after the proposal of February, 1976, was advanced, the Soviet Union began to alter the basic rationale underlying its interpretation of conventional troop strengths in Europe. Prior to this time the implicit argument had been that the West enjoyed strategic advantages outside Europe and, as a consequence, the Soviet Union was entitled to offsetting advantages within Europe. In June of 1976, the European balance was characterized by Brezhnev as being approximately equal (thus abandoning the prior notion of offsetting balances). This change in basic perspective was perhaps the result of the continued growth of and improvement in Soviet strategic forces. It certainly relieved the Warsaw Treaty Organization of some obvious logical difficulties in their negotiating positions. Overnight, NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization acquired equality. Figures were released to demonstrate this fact and the Soviet position shifted to one of sponsoring balanced and equal reductions in the forces of the two sides.

The Soviet Union produced another new proposal in June, 1978. This time, the WTO offer appeared to address NATO concerns about asymmetrical reductions. The Soviet proposal accepted a ceiling of 700,000 ground force personnel for the two sides (the result of an 11 to 13 percent reduction). The U.S. would reduce its forces by 14,000 and the Soviets by 30,000. The draft also included a clause that prohibited any country from compensating for more than half another alliance member's unilateral reductions (obviously aimed at the West Germans). The fatal flaw in the Soviet proposal, from the Western standpoint, was the WTO insistence that Eastern data be used to calculate reductions. Those data showed roughly equal numbers for the two alliances. This was and has remained an unacceptable condition for NATO. Other features of the 1978 proposal included a reduction of 7 percent in U.S. and Soviet ground force personnel and, basically, the trade-off of three Soviet tank divisions for

