

21. NIC M 90-10002, April 1990, *The Direction of Change in the Warsaw Pact*

National Intelligence Council

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Memorandum

**The Direction of Change
in the Warsaw Pact ~~(CONF)~~**

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NIC M 90-10002

**The Direction of Change
in the Warsaw Pact (e-NF)**

Information available as of 1 March 1990 was used in the preparation of this Memorandum. The Memorandum was drafted and coordinated within the Intelligence Community by the National Intelligence Officer for General Purpose Forces to whom comments may be directed at secure 37311.

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April 1990

Key Judgments

Recent political events in Eastern Europe will further erode Soviet confidence in their allies. Moscow can *not* rely upon non-Soviet Warsaw Pact forces; it must question its ability to bring Soviet reinforcements through East European countries whose hostility is no longer disguised or held in check. On the basis of completed unilateral Warsaw Pact cuts without NATO reciprocation and considering current political turmoil, we now believe that the capability to conduct an unreinforced conventional Pact attack on NATO would be virtually eliminated.

Should current CFE proposals for both sides be implemented, we believe that Soviet defense planners would judge Pact forces *incapable* of conducting a theater strategic offensive *even after full mobilization of reserves and deployment of standing forces within the Atlantic-to-the-Urals (ATTU) Zone*. Conduct of an attack upon NATO in such conditions would require generation of additional forces and equipment.

The unilateral reductions begun a year ago by the Soviet Union will probably be completed on schedule. The recent Soviet agreements to remove all forces stationed in Czechoslovakia and Hungary by mid-1991 will nearly double the originally announced unilateral withdrawal in ground forces (at least 11 rather than six divisions).

The large unilateral reductions in Soviet forces due to be completed by the end of 1990 are forcing widespread restructuring of military units, substantially reducing the armor in Soviet ground force divisions, eliminating some specialized assault units, and reducing ground attack capabilities of tactical air units.

The originally announced Central European reductions (nearly 10 percent in manpower, 20 percent in aircraft, and 50 percent in tanks) will reduce the offensive capabilities of Pact Forces and, along with sweeping Soviet CFE proposals, are convincing indicators of Soviet intent to cut their military burden and are consistent with a movement toward a defensive doctrine.

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In the aggregate, the above changes lessen the state "combat potential" of forward Soviet units. We believe that Soviet planners recognize that these reductions (assuming no change in NATO forces) would require substantially greater forces to be brought forward from the USSR for the conduct of sustained theater offensive operations. On the basis of these military changes alone, in September 1989 we judged that NATO would have 40 to 50 days of warning of a four-front Pact attack. Current political changes would probably increase this warning time.

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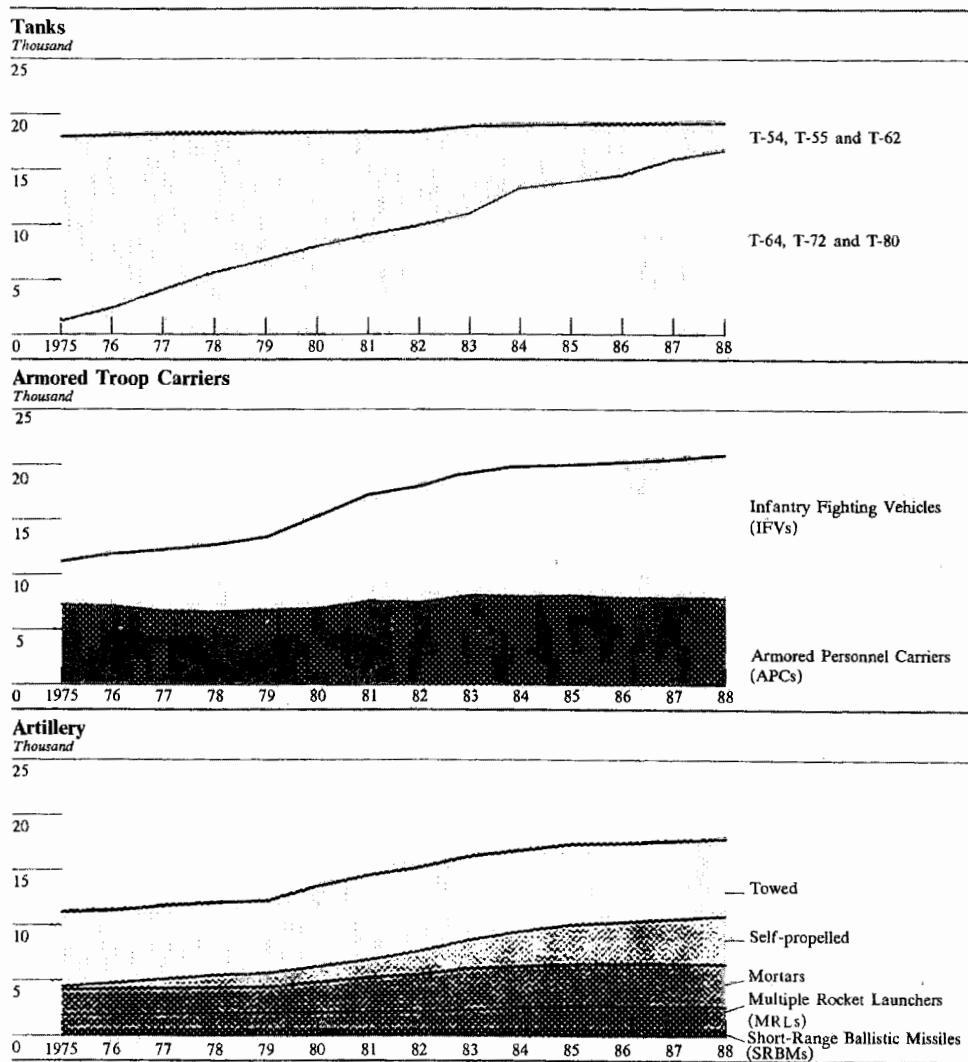
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Figure 1
Soviet Tanks, Armored Troop Carriers, and
Artillery in the Western TMO (in units)



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Discussion

Background

Traditional Soviet Views of Operations Against NATO

The Soviet General Staff based its war plans on the assumption that, if it had to fight a war with the West, the Soviet Union would be able to achieve classic military victory through the destruction of NATO forces and the occupation of NATO territory, principally Western Europe. Occupation of Germany and the political imperative for control of Eastern Europe led to the stationing of substantial Soviet forces in the forward area. By the middle-to-late 1970s, however, Soviet perceptions of their ability to prevail were changing. Where once Soviet forces, using nuclear weapons, could obtain planned objectives with relatively little assistance from their smaller, less well-equipped allies, the prospect of war with at least an initial conventional phase changed the situation to one that required the participation of East European forces and relied upon the long lines of communication that fed supplies from the USSR through Eastern Europe to attacking Soviet forces. Influenced to a large degree by their perception of greatly improved NATO conventional defenses, the Soviet General Staff considered even the large Soviet force in the forward area no longer adequate to the task, and foresaw the need to draw additional forces from the Soviet Union for its planned Theater Strategic Operation. Thus, by the mid-1980s, Soviet staff planners forecast a prolonged conventional war with NATO in which non-Soviet Warsaw Pact forces were included in the initial attack and which relied upon major reinforcements from the Soviet Union for success. (1)

The Soviets Modernize

When Mikhail Gorbachev took over as party General Secretary in early 1985, the Soviet military already was implementing a long-term program of force restructuring, expansion, and modernization:

- *Restructuring* of 36 active divisions from the late 1970s through the end of 1984 had made them larger, more mobile, and more flexible, with

enhanced combined-arms capability and increased firepower.

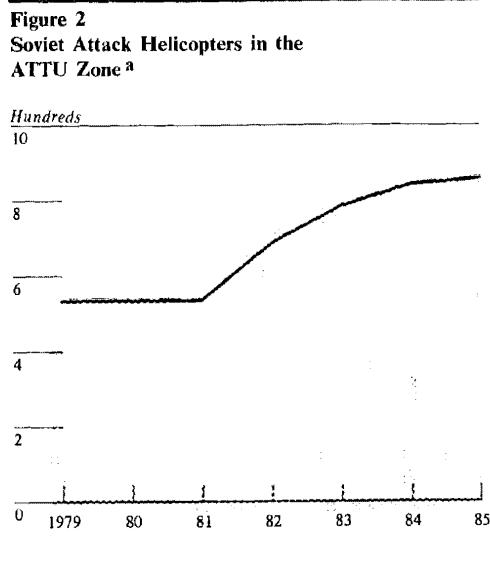
- *Ground force mobilization bases*—units created by the Soviets in the 1960s to stockpile older equipment for inactive divisions—were gradually being activated with small cadre elements that could facilitate rapid expansion to wartime strength and readiness. More than 20 such bases were activated between 1975 and 1984, while the overall number of active tank, motorized rifle, and airborne divisions increased from 176 to 200.
- *Ground equipment modernization*, begun as early as the mid-1960s, had become persistent and even paced. For example, the quantity and quality of tanks, armored troop carriers and artillery in the Western Theater of Military Operations (TMO) opposite NATO's central region had been increasing dramatically (see figure 1)
- *Attack helicopters* also increased significantly—by more than 60 percent from 1981 to 1985 in the Atlantic-to-the-Urals Zone (see figure 2).
- *Air forces modernization* introduced the Su-24 Fencer light bomber and Tu-22M Backfire medium bomber in the 1970s and fourth-generation MiG-29 Fulcrum and Su-27 Flanker fighter-interceptors in the 1980s (see figure 3). (2)

The NSWP Lags

The non-Soviet Warsaw Pact (NSWP) forces lagged the Soviets in force modernization, yet the Soviets depended on them to play a significant, perhaps vital, role in a war with NATO. If NSWP forces were no longer available, Soviet staffs would need to rethink operations against NATO. Soviet confidence in the reliability of non-Soviet Pact forces was the result of strategic interests generally shared with East European Communist leaderships, as well as a carefully planned Soviet-dominated command and control structure to

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^a Includes Hip E, Hind D, E, and F helicopters

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which the East Europeans acceded. Although that architecture gave the Soviet General Staff executive authority for wartime decisionmaking and command generation of Warsaw Pact forces, it relied upon national general staffs to pass orders. Therefore, the Pact command and control structure was, and remains, dependent upon the cooperation of the highest political and military leaders in each Pact country. Since it was clear that their interests in most crisis situations through the mid-1980s would be congruent with the Soviets' interests, we formerly assessed—and believed that Soviet planners also assessed—that the East European forces were at least initially reliable and would respond to commands to fight. (S/NF WO)

Reassessing the Doctrine

By 1985 Soviet theater forces were structured for fast-paced, offensive operations lasting for an extended period of time (weeks—perhaps months) in a nonnuclear environment. Soviet and Pact exercise patterns tended to confirm that they planned on such

a scenario. In building to this capability, however, the Soviets had traded decreased readiness for increased combat power after full preparation. Soviet forces in Central Europe were manned some 170,000 below full wartime strength and were assessed to require two to three weeks to prepare for offensive operations. (S/NF WO)

Soon after coming to power, Gorbachev held talks with his military leadership. He agreed with the need to modernize Soviet conventional forces but understood that conventional modernization would be enormously expensive. He probably concluded that the USSR could not afford a buildup of both nuclear and conventional forces. In 1986 and 1987, there was mounting evidence that the Soviets were reassessing their military doctrine. High-level Soviet military leaders told their Western counterparts that Soviet/Warsaw Pact doctrine had changed, and that evidence of such change should be clear to observers of Pact exercises and training patterns. There were also indications that the "defensive doctrine" being stressed by the Soviets was not understood or accepted uniformly throughout the Soviet military leadership. (S/NF WO)

The Warsaw Pact in Transition

Soviet Cutbacks

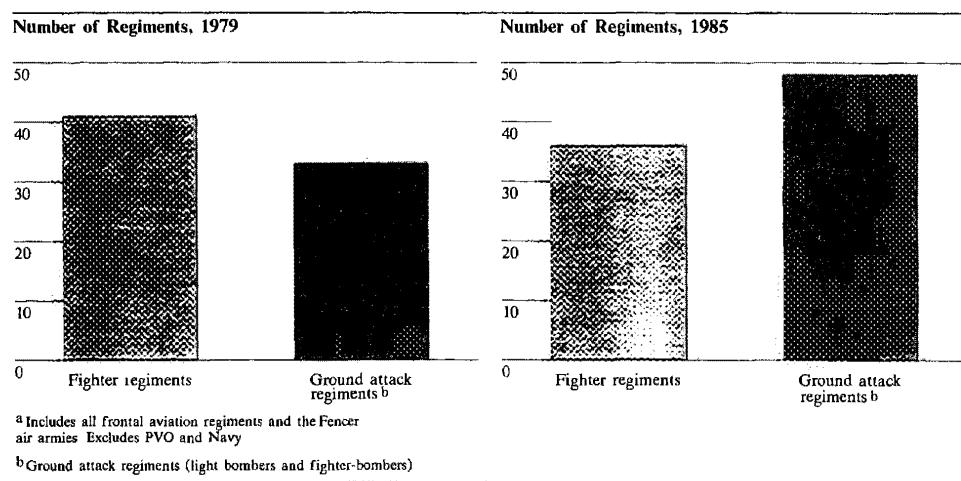
In December 1988, Gorbachev announced at the United Nations that significant unilateral reductions of Soviet forces would take place in 1989 and 1990. His statement was followed by various explanations of Soviet reduction plans and additional announcements concerning cuts in defense spending and production (see inset). Soon after Gorbachev's announcement, each of the USSR's Warsaw Pact Allies except Romania announced force and defense spending cuts. These cuts—to be completed by the end of 1990—roughly parallel the Soviet cuts in types and proportional amounts of equipment, manpower, and expenditures (see table 1). These announcements of cuts, which almost certainly had Moscow's prior approval, contradicted earlier indications that the Soviets would require their allies to make up any unilateral Soviet force reductions. (S/NF WO)

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Figure 3
Force Composition in the ATTU Zone, 1979 and 1985^a
Soviet Tactical Air Force



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**Soviet Unilateral Force Reductions Announced
by President Gorbachev on 7 December 1988
(To Be Implemented by 1 January 1991)**

Reduced from the Soviet Armed Forces 500,000 personnel

Withdrawn from Eastern Europe Six tank divisions
50,000 personnel
5,000 tanks
Assault landing units
Assault crossing units

Reduced in the Atlantic-to-the-Urals Zone 10,000 tanks
8,500 artillery systems
800 combat aircraft

In Central Europe alone, Gorbachev's announced Soviet reductions would entail:

- A total of 50,000 men and 5,000¹ tanks to be withdrawn from Soviet forces in Eastern Europe. As part of this reduction, six Soviet divisions—four from East Germany, and one each from Czechoslovakia and Hungary—were to be withdrawn. The removal of 50,000 Soviet military personnel would reduce Soviet strength in the forward area by nearly 10 percent. The withdrawal of 5,300 tanks would cut total Soviet tank strength in Central Europe in half (see figure 4).
- From the air forces, 320 combat aircraft to be removed from Central Europe; this is a 20-percent reduction in Soviet combat aircraft stationed in Central Europe.

¹ Later increased to 5,300 with the inclusion of Soviet forces in Poland. (u)

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Table 1
Announced Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Unilateral Reductions

	Military Manpower	Force Structure	Tanks	Combat Aircraft	Defense Budget (percent)
Total	81,300		2,751	210	
East Germany	10,000	6 regiments	600	50	10 (1989-90)
Poland	40,000	4 divisions ^a	850	80	4 (1989)
Czechoslovakia	12,000 ^b	3 divisions	850	51	15 (1989-90)
Hungary ^c	9,300	1 tank brigade	251	9	17 (1989) 30 (1990)
Bulgaria	10,000		200	20	12 (1989)
Romania					1.7 (1989)

^a Two to be eliminated; two to be reduced in strength

^b Being transferred to construction troops

^c Excludes November-December 1989 announcements

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- A total of 10,000 tanks, 8,500 artillery systems, and 800 combat aircraft to be eliminated from the Atlantic-to-the-Urals (ATTU) Zone. A 10,000-tank reduction in the ATTU zone would cut the number of Soviet tanks in operational units by about one-fourth. Cutting 800 aircraft represents a reduction of more than 8 percent of the Soviet combat aircraft in units opposite NATO.
- A "major portion" of troops in Mongolia to be withdrawn, later clarified as a cut in ground forces of 75 percent, with the air forces there to be eliminated. ~~(ref)~~

Although unilateral Navy reductions were not part of Gorbachev's speech, the Soviets have embarked on a program of naval measures. In 1989, 46 ships and submarines departed Soviet naval facilities to be scrapped in foreign yards. All but one were at least 30 years old; only one was operational. We have identified an additional 120 units that are candidates for scrapping in 1990. The Soviets have also reduced out-of-area deployments by both ships and Soviet naval aircraft. At the same time, the Soviets continue with

force modernization and construction of aircraft, submarines, and surface combatants, including three conventional takeoff and landing (CTOL) aircraft carriers, although there is debate within the USSR over the need for carriers (~~SNE~~)

The Halfway Point

One year into the two-year unilateral withdrawal/reduction period announced by Gorbachev, the first phase of the program is complete (see inset). Moscow has withdrawn at least 50 percent of the tanks and approximately 60 percent of the combat aircraft from Eastern Europe that Gorbachev said would be removed, and it has withdrawn about half of the tanks and a quarter of the combat aircraft to be removed from Mongolia. In Eastern Europe, of the six Soviet tank divisions to be withdrawn by the end of 1990, Moscow has withdrawn the major elements of three (two from East Germany, one from Hungary). The number of Soviet tactical aviation units (for which no reductions were announced) remains about the same, but the units are losing assigned aircraft. (~~SNE-WI~~)

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Figure 4
Soviet Ground Forces in Central Europe, March 1990



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Announced Soviet Unilateral Withdrawals
From Central Europe

	Current	To be withdrawn	Percentage to be withdrawn	To remain
Maneuver divisions	30	6	20	24
Tanks	10,600	5,300	50	5,300
Combat aircraft	1,800	320	20	1,280
Personnel	600,000	50,000	8.3	550,000

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<i>Assessed Unilateral Soviet Force Reductions, 1 January 1990</i>	
<i>Withdrawn from Eastern Europe</i>	<i>Three tank divisions (major elements) 2,600-2,775 tanks Four air assault units Two assault crossing units</i>
<i>Reduced in the Atlan- tic-to-the-Urals Zone</i>	<i>3,260 tanks 2,120 artillery sys- tems 580 combat aircraft</i>
<i>Reduced from the So- viet Armed Forces</i>	<i>Total: 26 divisions ATTU Zone 16 divi- sions disbanded and three deactivated Non-ATTU Zone. four divisions dis- banded and three deactivated</i>

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Restructuring

To accommodate such radical equipment changes and claimed changes in doctrine, many units are being restructured:

- **Ground force restructuring.** About two-thirds of the 27 Soviet divisions that remained in Eastern Europe at the end of 1989 are probably being restructured (figure 5), as are up to four divisions in the USSR:

—**Tank divisions**, which had three tank regiments and one motorized rifle regiment, will now have two tank regiments and two motorized rifle regiments. Most divisions will lose 69 tanks, or 22 percent of their original holdings.

—**Motorized rifle divisions**, which had one tank regiment and three motorized rifle regiments, will now have four motorized rifle regiments. They are also losing tanks from other divisional

elements. These changes reduce the number of tanks by 105 per division in most motorized rifle divisions in Eastern Europe and by 65 per division in the USSR—40 and 30 percent respectively of their original holdings.

—Some of the personnel and most of the armored troop carriers and artillery from the units being withdrawn are being used to meet the needs of the restructured divisions remaining in Eastern Europe. Additional armored troop carriers—some 450 observed thus far—have arrived from the USSR. Some 2,000 additional armored troop carriers would be required to restructure the 24 Soviet divisions in the originally planned residual force in Eastern Europe. Artillery battalions continue to increase from 18 to 24 guns, and a third artillery battalion appears to be being added to the artillery regiments of tank divisions.

—In addition, some river-crossing and air assault units are to be withdrawn to the USSR

- **Tactical air force restructuring** (figure 6).

—Few units are being disbanded; instead, the average strength of tactical air regiments is being reduced by about 10 aircraft each. Overall, there will be about 17 percent fewer aircraft opposite NATO (bars 1 and 2).

—The most modern of the displaced aircraft are going to regiments with older aircraft (MiG-21/MiG-23/Su-17), which are leaving active service.

—The predominance of ground attack regiments over fighter regiments in East Germany has changed to a more balanced force.

—Half the light bombers (Fencers) in the forward area have been relocated to the Western USSR. These aircraft could be rapidly reintroduced into Eastern Europe.

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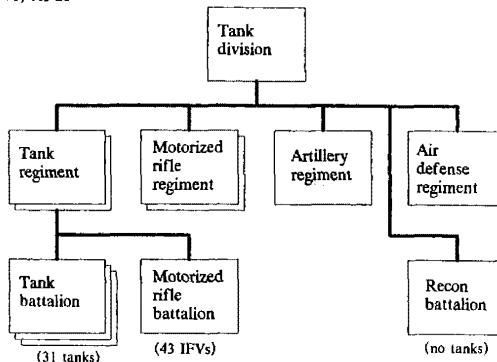
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Figure 5
Soviet Division Restructuring

Tank Division ^a

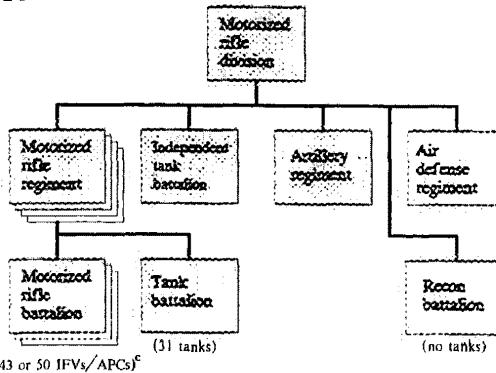
Total equipment: 250 tanks (22- or 31-percent decrease)
340 to 432 IFVs/APCs



^a Soviet tank divisions in Eastern Europe have had 319 or 363 tanks and 251 IFVs/APCs, not including command and reconnaissance variants

Motorized Rifle Division ^b

Total equipment: 155 tanks (40- or 44-percent decrease)
655 IFVs/APCs



^b Soviet motorized rifle divisions in Eastern Europe have had 260 and 277 tanks and 455 IFVs/APCs, not including command and reconnaissance variants

^c Varies depending on whether the regiment is BMP or BTR equipped. Soviet motorized rifle divisions in Eastern Europe that have been restructured have two BMP-equipped regiments and two BTR-equipped regiments

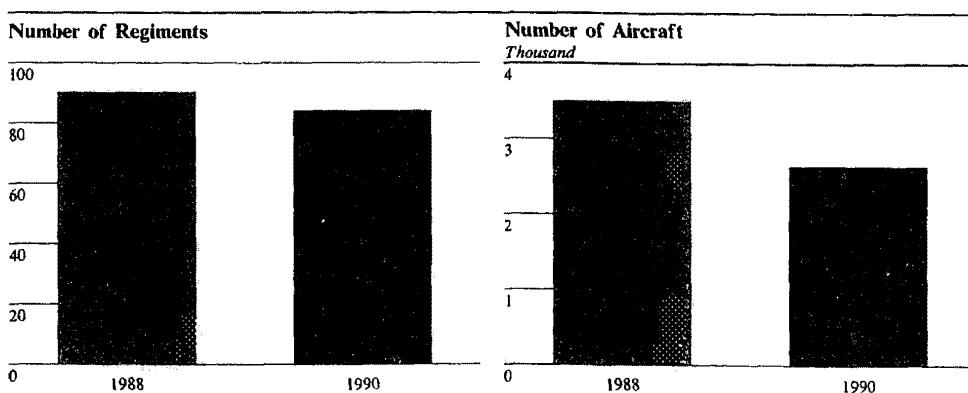
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Figure 6
Reduction and Restructuring, 1988 and 1990
Soviet Air Forces in the ATTU Zone



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- The certainty of complete withdrawal from Czechoslovakia and Hungary and the high likelihood of other reductions beyond those originally announced raise the prospect of further changes in Soviet plans for restructuring. (S NE WN)

Combat Potential

To gauge the probability of mission success, Soviet staff officers often compare the relative strength of opposing forces in terms of their calculated "combat potential." How the Soviets come up with combat

Effects of the Changes

Reductions and restructuring will significantly degrade the ability of Soviet forces to concentrate combat power, particularly for offensive operations. Armored striking power, in particular, is reduced and fragmented. The new motorized rifle divisions are well suited for defensive operations but are not organized specifically to conduct large-scale attacks or counterattacks. The new tank divisions are "balanced"—thus, better suited for holding ground than the previous standard tank divisions—but they retain substantial offensive punch. (S NE)

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it is useful to essay a Soviet-style combat-potential analysis to see how the Soviets might view the correlation of forces in Europe following their unilateral reductions and restructuring. (S NE)

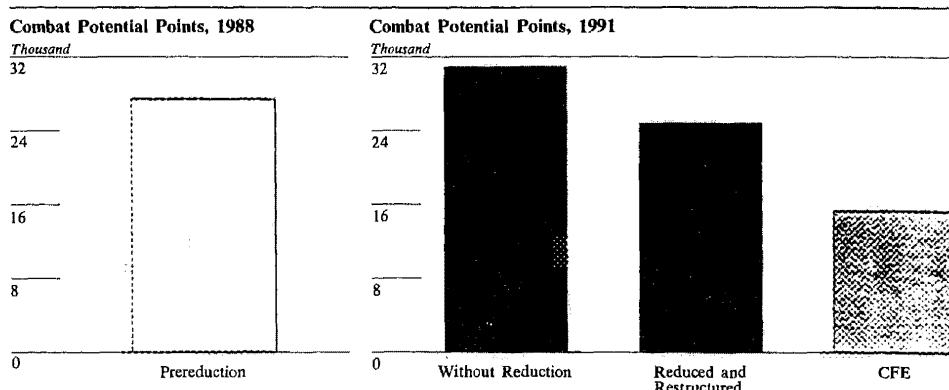
Application of such analysis to the portion of the Soviet *Western Group of Forces* (WGF) in East Germany shows (see figure 7) that the 1991 force will

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Figure 7
Western Group of Forces, 1988 and 1991



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be large, modern, and will possess major combat potential. But it will possess *less* offensive combat potential than the Intelligence Community assessed it would have had in the absence of the unilateral reductions. In fact, a reduced and restructured WGF in 1991 has less combat potential than the 1988 WGF, even though some modernization will have taken place. The projected WGF structure for 1991 (without reductions) would have derived over half its offensive combat potential from tanks, but the force projected for 1991 *after* reductions will draw less than 40 percent of its offensive potential from its tanks (~~S-NF-WN~~)

The *air* assessment is different. The Soviets probably expect most of the effect of the unilateral reductions in air forces to be offset by modernization by the late 1990s. We believe, using Soviet-style combat-potential calculations, that the Soviets expect the unilateral force reductions to result in a modest shift in the

Central European air balance to the *advantage* of NATO, but the current situation of near parity would not be upset (see figure 8). These changes in Warsaw Pact air forces probably would *not* substantially alter the Pact's overall prospects in an air war in Central Europe (~~S-NF-WN~~)

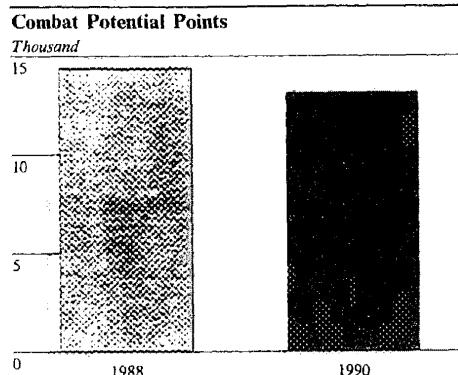
How the Changes Affect Soviet Perceptions of the Balance

Taken together, the reductions and restructuring reinforce our mid-1980s judgment that the Soviet General Staff did not have high confidence in its ability to conduct a deep attack on NATO without introducing significant reinforcements from the Soviet Union before D-Day. After reducing the shock power of forward area forces by 5,300 tanks, the General Staff would consider the Pact even less capable of conducting an attack without substantial reinforcement to

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Figure 8
Soviet Air Forces in the ATTU Zone,
1988 and 1990



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Considering only the effects of the originally announced Soviet unilateral withdrawal, we believe that the residual Soviet forces would be unable to mount a "short warning" attack and that the Soviets would not be even moderately confident of success in pursuing deep theater objectives unless their attack was preceded by a lengthy mobilization period. But events in Eastern Europe have an even greater effect. By mid-1991, Soviet forces will be completely withdrawn from Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Moreover, the fundamental political changes occurring in the individual Warsaw Pact nations and their effect on the reliability of the non-Soviet Warsaw Pact military forces lead us to conclude that the Warsaw Pact does not at this time represent a significant offensive threat to NATO. The rate and scope of political change in Eastern Europe in recent months have outpaced our ability to assess completely the consequences for East European military capabilities. We judge that Soviet planners face the same uncertainties. (S-NF)

Recent and continuing political developments in Eastern Europe have undoubtedly eroded the confidence of Soviet war planners. Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact forces traditionally have made up nearly 50 percent of the Pact's first strategic echelon in Central Europe, and local transportation and security services would be crucial in moving Soviet forces into the forward area. NSWP forces were counted on to play critical roles in operations on both flanks in a NATO-Pact war. Now, the nonavailability of NSWP forces for Soviet offensive war plans and the increased potential of civil resistance to Soviet transit as the result of recent political changes will have far-reaching and adverse impacts on Soviet force commitments, dispositions, and objectives. (S-NF)

bring four fronts into the offensive (see figure 9). The need to bring forward tank-heavy forces from the Western USSR extends Soviet timelines to transition to war and virtually eliminates Soviet capability to execute a successful short warning attack (24 to 48 hours). (S-NF-WN)

While the influx of armored troop carriers and artillery creates a more balanced force in the forward area, it would not make an unreinforced (three-front) attack option appear more attractive to the General Staff. The General Staff would perceive an even greater need to bring forces forward from the western USSR before D-Day to restore the offensive combat power lost with the removal of those tanks as well as the considerable reductions in East European forces. In turn, this would require the Soviets to shift a comparable number of divisions from the strategic reserve to the second strategic echelon—the follow-on fronts necessary to carry an offensive to strategic objectives beyond the Rhine into France. (S-NF-WN)

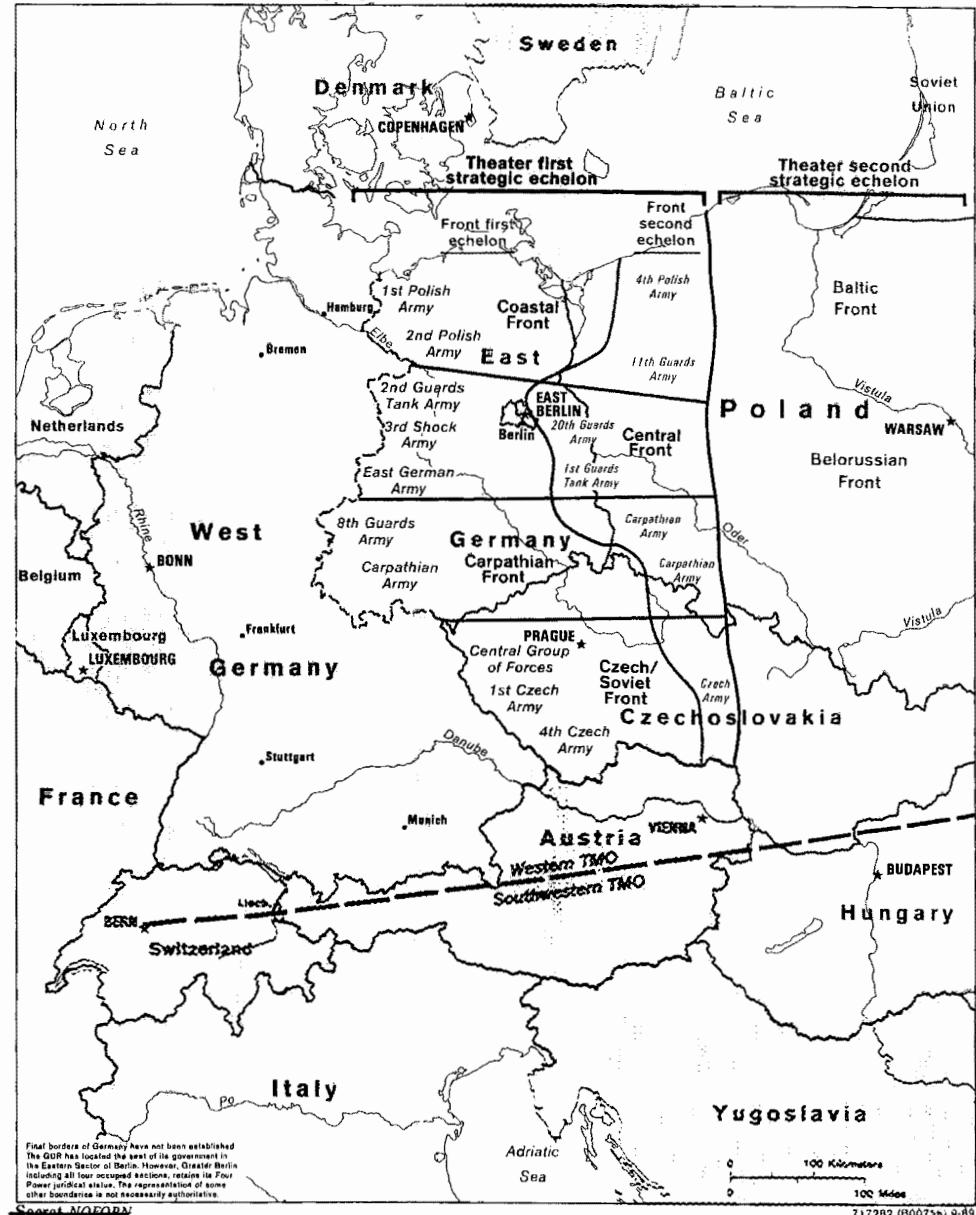
The military changes outlined in this memorandum have led to important lengthening of estimated preparation times for Soviet attack options (see table 2 and, for more detail, the annex). When the effects of the announced cuts under way in most of the NSWP states and the ongoing political developments in Eastern Europe are coupled with Soviet unilateral reductions and restructuring, we believe that Warsaw Pact

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Figure 9
Projected Warsaw Pact Echelons
in the Western Theater of Military Operations (TMO)—Four-Front Attack



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Table 2
Estimated Preparation Times for Soviet Attack Options

NIE 4-1-84	Before Warsaw Pact Unilateral Reductions ^a		After Warsaw Pact Unilateral Reductions ^a		<i>Days</i>
	Mobilization and Movement	Minimum Preparation for Offensive Combat	Mobilization and Movement	Minimum Preparation for Offensive Combat	
Three fronts in first echelon	10 to 12	7 to 14	14 to 21	9 to 16	35 to 45
Five- to six-front attack with four fronts in first echelon	Not addressed	14 to 21	28 to 35	18 to 25	40 to 50

^a Based on conditions in Eastern Europe in September 1989

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capability to conduct an unreinforced conventional attack against NATO is virtually eliminated (assuming that NATO remains at current force levels).

~~(S NE W&B)~~

We assess that Soviet General Staff planners will probably conclude that—without reinforcements from the western USSR roughly equal to at least two fronts—their forces remaining in Eastern Europe after the unilateral cuts would *not* possess the advantage needed to initiate and sustain offensive operations to the depth of the theater against current NATO forces. On the basis of this assessment, we concluded in September 1989 that NATO would have a 40- to 50-day warning time to prepare for a conventional force attack. The current political changes in Eastern Europe, not considered in that assessment, would probably increase warning time.

~~(S NE W&B)~~

The arms reduction proposals unveiled by both the Warsaw Pact and NATO for the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) negotiations would

result in further substantial cuts in Pact conventional forces in the Atlantic-to-the-Urals (ATTU) Zone (see table 3). Moscow would possess by far the largest national force structure in a post-CFE Europe but has already agreed to 30,000 more US than USSR stationed forces, in recognition of its large force advantage on the Continent. After such cuts, and assuming that equipment is destroyed and that NATO maintains parity, we believe that the Soviets would judge Warsaw Pact Post-CFE Forces incapable—*even after full mobilization of reserves and deployment of standing forces within the ATTU Zone*—of achieving the political-military objectives traditionally associated with Soviet strategy for a theater-strategic offensive. Their CFE proposal serves as one of the most convincing indicators to date of the defensive reorientation of their military doctrine and their intent to decrease the economic burden of the Soviet theater force structure through aggressive pursuit of conventional arms control.~~(S NE F)~~

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Table 3
Post-CFE Warsaw Pact Force Structure
Atlantic-to-the-Urals Zone

	1988			1997		
	Soviet	NSWP	Total	Soviet	NSWP	Total
Tanks	35,002	14,809	49,811	12,000	8,000	20,000
Armored troop carriers	36,202	15,948	52,150	16,800	31,200	28,000
Artillery	32,523	10,312	42,835	10,000	6,500	16,500
				32,000	27,000	24,000

Blue=Western proposal
Red=Eastern proposal

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Annex

Warning Implications of Warsaw Pact Unilateral Force Reductions^{2,3}

The announced reductions of Soviet forces in Eastern Europe and East European national forces, if fully implemented, will significantly lower Pact force levels in the forward area. Six Soviet tank divisions, plus critical combat support units such as bridging, and substantial amounts of additional equipment are scheduled to be withdrawn. Scheduled tank reductions amount to about half the Soviet tanks in Eastern Europe. Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact forces, which currently comprise a large proportion of the forces in Eastern Europe, are also to be reduced. Moreover, forces inside the Soviet Union are to be restructured and are to lose tanks and possibly artillery from their structure. Equipment modernization and restructuring of remaining Soviet forces in Eastern Europe may offset to some extent the loss of combat capability, but Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact forces are not taking similar steps. (S-NF)

These reductions—which are well under way—probably will render an unreinforced Pact attack practically impossible and will require the Pact to rely more heavily on currently nonready divisions to support either a two-, three-, or four-front attack. Pact planners will probably conclude that—without reinforcements from the western USSR roughly equal to two fronts—their forces remaining in Eastern Europe after the unilateral cuts would not possess the advan-

tage over current NATO forces needed to initiate and sustain offensive operations to the depth of theater. The Soviets probably would believe that, to attain sufficient combat power in the theater, they would have to generate enough not-ready divisions to replace the withdrawn Soviet divisions, as well as the disbanded East European formations. Such greater reliance on the early commitment of currently not-ready divisions from the Soviet Union for sustained offensive operations would stretch out Pact preparations to 40 to 50 days. We cannot rule out the possibility that the Soviets might judge circumstances as compelling them to commit their forces without the minimum postmobilization training necessary for offensive operations in as little as 18 to 25 days (see table 4) (S-NF)

Our assessment of preparation and warning times after the Pact's unilateral reductions are complete assumes that NATO remains at current force levels. The extent of Pact preparations—reinforcement of forces in Eastern Europe and training—required to conduct a potentially successful offensive campaign is driven in large measure by Pact assessments of NATO military capability. As a result, unilateral NATO reductions outside the context of a conventional force reductions agreement could diminish the Pact's assessment of its force requirements for success and thus reduce the preparation time needed for the Pact and the warning time available to NATO (S)

² Extract from Memorandum to Holders of NIE 4-1-84 (Secret NF NC), September 1989, *Warning of War in Europe Changing Warsaw Pact Planning and Forces*. (S)

³ Note that the preparation times assessed in this annex were based on the Eastern Europe of September 1989. Political turmoil since then would likely increase those preparation time estimates (S-NF)

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Table 4
Estimated Preparation Times for Soviet Attack Options *Days*

NIE 4-1-84	Before Warsaw Pact Unilateral Reductions		After Warsaw Pact Unilateral Reductions ^b	
	Mobilization and Movement	Minimum Preparation for Offensive Combat ^a	Mobilization and Movement	Minimum Preparation for Offensive Combat ^a
Three fronts in first echelon	10 to 12	7 to 14	14 to 21	9 to 16
Five- to six-front attack with four fronts in first echelon	Not addressed	14 to 21	28 to 35	18 to 25

~~Secret~~

