Extended Deterrence and Arms Control

A Conference Report

Nanette C. Gantz

RAND

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PREFACE

On March 24–26, 1986, a conference on Extended Deterrence and Arms Control was held in San Diego, California, bringing together twenty-two government officials and defense analysts from the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Great Britain, and the United States. The conference was hosted by The RAND Corporation, under the sponsorship of a Ford Foundation grant that supports a variety of projects aimed at expanding ties between RAND and foreign governments and research institutes. The Ford Foundation provided funding for the U.S. conference participants. Conferees from the three other countries were sponsored by the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, the Institut Français des Relations Internationales, and the Royal Institute of International Affairs.

This report summarizes the conference presentations and discussions. It does not attempt to follow the exact sequence of the conference, but rather focuses on the main issues related to Soviet policy toward the West, extended deterrence and Alliance strategy, and the role of arms control. A collection of conference papers will be published in a forthcoming companion report.

The present report should be of interest to analysts working on political and defense issues. Although the views expressed are not attributed to specific participants, they should be regarded as personal and not necessarily representing the policies of any government or private organization. A list of conference participants and their affiliations is provided in the Appendix.

SUMMARY

This report summarizes the presentations and discussions from an international conference on Extended Deterrence and Arms Control, held in March 1986. The conference participants—government officials and defense analysts from the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Great Britain, and the United States—explored ways to maintain and potentially enhance the credibility of Western deterrence through arms control. Extended deterrence is a concept that is of particular interest because it connects the United States and Western Europe in political and strategic dialogue. The participants addressed the following major issues:

- What should be the relationship among strategic objectives, doctrine and force structure, and arms control?
- Has the Soviet Union or the West been more successful at establishing a coherent link among these three elements?
- What path should the West follow in arms control forums?

To answer these questions, the participants examined the major issues related to (1) Soviet policy toward the West, (2) extended deterrence and Alliance strategy, and (3) fashioning a Western arms control strategy.

SOVIET POLICY TOWARD THE WEST

Most of the participants agreed that one of the Soviet Union's primary long-term objectives is to curtail the U.S. presence and influence in Western Europe. The Soviets have developed both military and political mechanisms to pursue this objective. The military threat to the Alliance is apparent in Soviet preparations for three major contingencies: early and widespread use of nuclear weapons, an escalating conflict, and a strictly conventional conflict. The Soviets also employ political means, including propaganda and arms control, to undermine Western cohesion.

While all the participants agreed that the Soviets have made some progress toward achieving these objectives, there were differences of opinion regarding the overall success of the Soviet efforts:

- *One group of participants, primarily Europeans, argued that the Soviet Union has been very successful at undermining Western*

deterrence and Alliance cohesion. In their view, the Soviets have developed a wide range of conventional and nuclear capabilities that challenge NATO's ability to conduct the escalation options called for in flexible response. The Soviets have also pursued aggressive arms control strategies that have resulted in agreements and negotiations on Soviet terms.

- *Another group of participants argued that the Soviet record is more mixed.* These participants contended that although the Soviets have improved their defense capability, they still have problems in several areas: controlling escalation; dealing with domestic resource constraints; correcting infrastructure problems; and addressing developments in the West such as the U.S. Army's Air/Land Battle and NATO Follow-On Forces Attack (FOFA) concepts, technological advances, and the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) program. Finally, the Soviets have experienced recent setbacks in arms control, most notably the failure to stop U.S. intermediate-range nuclear force (INF) deployments.

EXTENDED DETERRENCE AND ALLIANCE STRATEGY

Participants agreed that the U.S. extended deterrence guarantee and NATO's strategy of flexible response continue to be viable and to meet Western deterrence requirements. However, they could not agree on exactly what nuclear forces are required. This lack of agreement reflected different approaches to deterrence, especially differences of opinion about whether deterrence depends on the mere presence of nuclear weapons or on their presence plus specific details about force size and composition.

Participants also had different assessments of the adequacy of U.S. strategic nuclear forces, U.S. nuclear forces in Europe, and British and French strategic nuclear forces:

- *U.S. strategic nuclear forces.* All participants agreed that the current strategic force structure plus the Reagan administration's modernization program provides a credible deterrent. However, they could not agree on the appropriate size and composition of the force: U.S. participants in particular were interested in establishing targeting and force-structure requirements based on details about Soviet assets and capabilities. The Europeans, on the other hand, contended that as long as the United States is confident that its forces are sufficient and capable of carrying out escalation options, the details are of little interest.

- *U.S. nuclear forces in Europe.* All participants agreed that U.S. nuclear forces in Europe are essential for deterring Soviet conventional and nuclear aggression. They felt strongly that some level of INF is required, for symbolic reasons (as a sign of Alliance cohesion) and for deterrence reasons (to threaten Soviet territory from systems based in Europe). The participants were interested in the details of NATO doctrine and force structure, but all agreed that flexible response does not readily translate into coherent force-planning guidance.
- *British and French strategic nuclear forces.* Participants agreed that the British and French nuclear forces had important political value, but they could not agree on the deterrent value of those forces: Some participants contended that the forces have only marginal deterrent value. Others, chiefly British and French participants, argued that their forces were more than marginal because they present the Soviets with multiple decisionmaking centers and increase Soviet attack uncertainties.

FASHIONING A WESTERN ARMS CONTROL STRATEGY

Most participants agreed that it is in the West's interest to continue to pursue arms control agreements. They believe that the West should make some changes, now and in the future, that will enhance its position in various arms control forums:

- *General guidelines.* The West needs to rethink its overall approach to arms control. It should explain to its publics the limitations and benefits of arms control agreements and develop a coherent framework that links strategy, doctrine, forces, and arms control.
- *Guidelines for Geneva.* Participants contended that progress at the START/Space and INF talks should be linked. Europeans in particular were worried about a separate START/Space deal without an INF agreement. Although total integration was ruled out, one participant suggested that the talks might be linked as part of an interim framework agreement.
- *Guidelines for START/Space talks.* Participants expressed the belief that the United States should show some flexibility on SDI as part of a deal for deep reductions in offensive forces. Most participants agreed that options are available that would not undermine Western deterrence or degrade the SDI research program. The U.S. administration should begin to develop its

options, which would include some constraints on the SDI program, while supporting the ABM Treaty.

- *Guidelines for INF talks.* Most participants agreed that the zero option would undermine flexible response and extended deterrence. They believe that the presence of INF in Europe is vital to Western security. In addition, participants objected to the Soviet Union's insistence that British and French forces be part of an INF agreement, because they are independent strategic nuclear systems. However, the participants agreed that some limitations on INF would be acceptable, although they did not offer an exact number.
- *Guidelines for conventional negotiations.* The West needs to reexamine its position presented at the Mutual Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) talks and the Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe (CDE). At the very least, these forums will need some restructuring before any results can be realized.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In March 1986, The RAND Corporation, the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (Federal Republic of Germany), the Institut Français des Relations Internationales (France), and the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Great Britain) sponsored a conference in San Diego, California, on Extended Deterrence and Arms Control.[1] The conference brought together twenty-two prominent defense analysts and government officials from the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Great Britain, and the United States to address the continuing adequacy of and requirements for extended deterrence and related arms control issues.[2] The conference focused on extended deterrence because it is a concept that connects the United States and Western Europe in political and strategic dialogue.

The conference was divided into five sessions:

1. Extended Deterrence and U.S. Strategic Force Doctrine and Modernization
2. Extended Deterrence and Western Doctrine and Forces
3. The Soviet Union and Extended Deterrence
4. Extended Deterrence and the East-West Political Conflict
5. Future Options for Geneva

Most of the sessions included discussions of the U.S.-Soviet Geneva nuclear and space talks, the central issue being the relationship between U.S./NATO arms control policy and broader Western security interests and requirements. The following specific questions were addressed: What are our options? Where can we be flexible? Where must we stand firm?

Geneva was an inevitable topic because movement in the negotiations finally seemed possible. Little progress had occurred in the first two rounds of talks on defensive systems, strategic and intercontinental nuclear forces, and medium-range nuclear forces. However, this changed between September 1985 and March 1986:[3] In October and

[1]A collection of conference papers will be published in a forthcoming RAND report.

[2]The concept of extended deterrence refers to the U.S. guarantee to use strategic nuclear weapons in response to Soviet aggression in Europe. Flexible response is the NATO strategy that, among other things, implements extended deterrence through a strategy of escalation.

[3]The conference reported here took place before such other events as the U.S. statements regarding compliance with the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) II Treaty,

November, the Soviet Union and the United States tabled proposals for considerable offensive force reductions. In November, President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev convened the first U.S.-Soviet summit since Reagan took office. In January and February 1986, the Soviet Union and the United States forwarded proposals for the gradual elimination of all long-range intermediate nuclear forces (INF) in Europe, referred to as the zero option.

Other issues also influenced the discussions about extended deterrence. Many participants were concerned that the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act would reduce U.S. defense commitments to Western Europe. Similarly, concern that the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) program could have a negative effect on stability and deterrence colored many of the discussions.

These events raised numerous questions regarding the adequacy of Western deterrent strategy and forces in the future: What effect would deep reductions in U.S. offensive forces have on extended deterrence? Would NATO's ability to respond to Soviet aggression in a flexible and timely manner be undermined by the zero option or SDI? What should be the role of British and French nuclear forces in deterrence in Europe and in arms control?

The following discussion does not follow the exact sequence of the conference; rather, it focuses on the main themes. The five sessions are described under three broad headings:

- *The threat*: Soviet military strategy and political policy toward the West.
- *The Western response*: Extended deterrence and Alliance strategy.
- *The role of arms control*: Fashioning a Western arms control strategy toward the Soviet Union.

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the renewed debate about interpretations of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, Soviet concessions in June at Geneva, Gorbachev's April and June statements on conventional force negotiations, and the Reagan-Gorbachev meeting in Reykjavík.

II. SOVIET POLICY TOWARD THE WEST

The conference participants addressed three key questions in assessing the overall threat to the Alliance:

- *What are Soviet objectives toward the West?* Most participants agreed about Soviet objectives, although there was some difference of opinion regarding the perceived priority of those objectives.
- *What policies have the Soviets pursued to achieve their objectives?* Discussion focused on the evolution of Soviet military and political policy. Again, the participants generally concurred about Soviet mechanisms to achieve their objectives, but they could not agree on the details of Soviet military policy, such as how the Soviets would conduct a conflict.
- *How successful have they been?* Some participants contended that the Soviets have been extremely successful, but the majority argued that their success is not that clear.

WESTERN PERCEPTION OF SOVIET OBJECTIVES

The East-West competition and the effects of a divided Europe have dominated international events since the end of World War II. One participant defined three major Soviet objectives in this period: (1) consolidation of the Soviet Union's gains in Eastern Europe; (2) achievement and maintenance of strategic parity; and (3) curtailment of the U.S. presence and influence in Western Europe. According to this participant, the Soviets emphasized the first and second objectives up to the 1970s. Upon reaching strategic parity and securing their foothold in Eastern Europe, they turned their attention to maintaining the strategic balance and reducing U.S. influence in Western Europe.

Concern about Soviet efforts to achieve the third objective dominated the conference discussions. Most participants agreed that the Soviet Union has attempted to curtail the U.S. presence in order to weaken Western Europe's ability to withstand Soviet pressure. One presentation also outlined several Soviet subobjectives:

- Depriving Western Europe of independent security options.
- Undermining U.S. mechanisms (i.e., flexible response and extended deterrence) for providing for the security of Western Europe.

- Moving beyond weakening the U.S. presence in Western Europe toward developing a Soviet-dominated security order across Europe, excluding the United States.

There was some disagreement regarding whether the Soviets hope to achieve a Soviet-dominated security arrangement in Europe in the near term. Some participants saw it as an objective that the Soviets would seriously pursue only after success on the other two subobjectives and thus argued that it does not pose a near-term threat to the Alliance. However, others (primarily Europeans) contended that Soviet efforts toward this objective comprise a near-term threat, pointing to the Soviet zero-option proposal as one example. According to this group, the Soviet proposal to eliminate U.S. intermediate-range nuclear forces (Pershing IIs (PIIs) and ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCMs)) and to ban British and French nuclear modernization represents the first step toward the denuclearization of Europe. Accordingly, U.S. agreement with the zero option and removal of the PIIs and GLCMs would pave the way for eventual Soviet dominance on the continent.

Participants also debated Western Europe's place in Soviet policy. Most believed that the United States, not Western Europe, is the focus of Soviet policy. Some contended that Soviet policy toward Western Europe is just one element of overall Soviet policy toward the United States. Others disputed this interpretation and asserted that the Soviet policy has shifted its focus between Western Europe and the United States: From 1979 to 1983, before the INF deployments, Soviet policy was aimed at Western Europe. The introduction of SDI in 1983 shifted Soviet attention back to the United States. Now, with the zero-option proposal, Soviet attention may turn again toward Western Europe.

SOVIET POLICY TOWARD THE ALLIANCE

The Soviets use a mix of military and political mechanisms to achieve their objectives. Participants saw Soviet policy as dynamic, reacting to changes in the West and initiating new concepts and strategies.

Soviet Military Strategy and Force Structure

The Soviet Union has designed its doctrine and force structure to maintain strategic parity with the United States and undermine Western strategy, especially extended deterrence. The participants agreed that since the 1950s the Soviets have developed a formidable

and flexible nuclear and conventional force that threatens NATO's ability to execute the escalation options called for in flexible response. In part, the West's doctrinal and technological challenges have conditioned the pace and development of Soviet doctrine and forces.

The evolution of Soviet doctrine and force structure provides many examples of how changes in the West have helped condition Soviet force development. According to one participant, in the 1950s the Soviet Union, realizing the vulnerability of highly concentrated conventional forces, began to mechanize its ground forces and introduce new dispersal norms to improve survivability. Influenced in part by the high priority the United States placed on nuclear weapons, the Soviets also began to rapidly develop their own tactical, operational-tactical, and strategic nuclear forces in the early 1950s.[1] Then in 1959, they created the Strategic Rocket Force.

In the 1960s and 1970s, similar changes occurred that illustrate a close interaction between Soviet and Western strategy and forces. According to one participant, the Soviets believe that strategic parity forced the West to seek nuclear alternatives below the level of general nuclear response. NATO's adoption of the flexible response strategy conditioned the Soviets to explore escalating contingencies. Examples of changes in Soviet nuclear operations and forces include (1) enhanced strategic counterforce capability and strategic reserves, (2) the development of a survivable SS-20 force to cope with an escalating contingency, and (3) the doubling in size of the frontal nuclear forces.

Finally, in the 1980s, the Soviet Union has increasingly worked to develop the capabilities to dominate the escalation process and win at the lowest level of hostilities, preferably with conventional weapons. The conventional modernization that began in the mid-1960s and continued to the 1970s facilitated a preference for a conventional-only strategy and provided the Soviets with new operational concepts and forces, including greater emphasis on offensive air operations, a reorganized Air Force and Air Defense Force, an enhanced short-warning attack capability, a revival of the operational maneuver groups (OMGs) concept, improved mobility of airborne and air-assault forces, better integration of short-range systems and air operations, and enhanced chemical weapons capability.

The participants concurred that Soviet capabilities suggest planning for three major contingencies: early and widespread use of nuclear weapons, an escalating conflict, and a conventional-only conflict.

[1] *Tactical systems* belong to Soviet ground-force divisions and have ranges up to around 100 km; *operational-tactical* systems belong to armies and fronts and have maximum ranges of 1,000 km. Missiles with ranges over 1,000 km belong to the Strategic Rocket Force.

However, the participants could not agree on the details of how the Soviets would conduct the three contingencies. Differences stemmed from whether participants relied strictly on Soviet writings and doctrine or also on information about forces and capabilities.

The participants debated whether the Soviets plan to conduct a nuclear war limited to Europe in the event of a conflict. According to one participant, the Soviet Union does not make a distinction between a "strategic theater" nuclear war or attack and "strategic intercontinental" nuclear war or attack. The evidence of Soviet interest in a nuclear war limited to Europe is scattered and pertains to only a few options.[2] This discussion implied that once the Soviets used nuclear weapons in Europe, a strategic exchange would be inevitable. However, other participants said that one should look beyond Soviet declaratory doctrine and consider the wide range of options below the intercontinental level, as well as Soviet incentives to match limited options with limited political objectives.

Linked to this discussion was the question of whether escalation control influences Soviet doctrine for fighting a war with NATO, i.e., whether the Soviets would seek to further limit a nuclear conflict already confined to Europe or to limit strikes on the United States. Most participants argued that Soviet forces and command and control appear to have the capability to fight a war of escalation, even if it is not part of their doctrine. However, the Soviets are concerned about the many uncertainties associated with escalation. For example, although the highest priority in a limited conflict would be to hit NATO nuclear assets, effective NATO dispersal of nuclear weapons would vastly complicate Soviet targeting by multiplying the target set from around 80 fixed installations to over 300 mobile units. In addition, conflict limitation could have adverse consequences, because the use of nuclear weapons could constrain Soviet operations and deny opportunities for a quick victory. Despite these uncertainties, the Soviets appear to have the capabilities to match the escalation options called for in NATO's flexible response strategy.

The discussions about limited war and escalation control raised questions regarding the role of specific nuclear systems, the substitutability of one class of weapons for another, and the relationship of these two issues to arms control. For example, the exact value of SS-20s to the Soviets and their substitutability was a matter of great debate.

[2]One participant cited two examples: (1) In 1972, the Soviets proposed negotiations on limiting nuclear war to Europe and providing a homeland sanctuary for the United States and the Soviet Union; and (2) one Soviet military article suggests that the Soviets are interested in using operational-tactical systems in Europe that are not based in their homeland.

Some participants contended that from the Politburo viewpoint, eliminating the threat of INF and undermining extended deterrence might be worth losing the SS-20s, because other weapons could take over their mission. Others believed that eliminating SS-20s would require a major readjustment in Soviet nuclear strategy. They suggested that the Soviets could substitute short-range or strategic nuclear systems, but either option could result in a degradation of capability at the operational-tactical or strategic level.

The participants saw the greatest conventional threat arising from:

- *Surprise attack.* According to one participant, the Soviets are developing conventional preemption options to destroy NATO's nuclear assets in the "initial period of war." The Soviets have taken measures to enhance their ability to conduct short-warning attacks, including development of the capability to destroy 50 to 60 percent of NATO's critical targets through air operations; reorganization and streamlining of the Soviet Air Force and Air Defense Force; prepositioning 60 to 90 days of ammunition, fuel, and other war supplies; reestablishing a high command to control strategic operations in the Western theater of military operations; improving the Soviet capacity to conduct air operations; and developing fire-support operations against deep-based NATO operations. As a consolation, one participant contended that because the Soviets place a premium on surprise, they are unlikely to launch a war in the event of deep crisis, since Soviet mobilization would alert the West and eliminate the surprise. Another participant cautioned that warning signals will probably always be ambiguous, and thus Western response is not guaranteed.
- *Conventionally armed tactical ballistic missiles (TBMs)—SS-21s and SS-23s.* Debate about the threat posed by conventional TBMs did not concern *whether* the Soviets could achieve the necessary accuracy and develop the requisite munitions for effective attacks with TBMs, but *when* they could do so. Many participants expressed the belief that protecting against a TBM attack should not be a near-term (1990s) priority: Although the new-generation SS-21s and SS-23s will have improved accuracy, they will not be sufficiently effective to seriously threaten airbases (except those without sheltered aircraft), hardened facilities, or mobile targets for some time. Moreover, even against effective TBMs, survivability can be enhanced through passive measures such as dispersal and alert, which would be cheap

compared with the expense of an anti-TBM (ATBM) system.[3] Other participants contended that Soviet TBM developments are more advanced and, operating in tandem with high-performance aircraft, pose a near-term threat to all of the assets mentioned above. They advocated not only passive measures but also an ATBM system to protect Western forces and operations.

- *OMGs.* One participant described the OMG as a second-echelon exploitation force. Participants agreed that the OMG threatens the West because it provides the Soviets with the capability to exploit early Warsaw Pact breakthroughs before NATO reinforcements could arrive.

Soviet Political Strategy

Most participants agreed that one of the Soviets' primary long-term political objectives toward the West is to isolate Europe from the United States. Propaganda and arms control are the two most successful means they have employed, often together, to accomplish this objective. The goal of these mechanisms is to draw Western countries into negotiations that could cause conflicts between their NATO commitments and independent national policies toward the Soviet Union.

One participant presented several examples of the Soviet Union's two-pronged strategy toward the West. One set of policies aims at weakening European ties to the Alliance, especially regarding the U.S. nuclear guarantee. The Soviets have sensed European uneasiness about nuclear weapons and have designed a strategy to undermine Western consensus. The anti-INF and neutron bomb propaganda campaigns were cited as examples of how the Soviets try to manipulate European public opinion. In addition, the Soviets use arms control forums to launch proposals such as multilateral no first use (NFU); nuclear-weapon-free zones for Western Europe, the Nordic countries, the Balkans, and the Mediterranean; and bilateral guarantees not to target European countries that refuse to station U.S. nuclear forces on their territory.

The Soviets also pursue policies aimed at weakening the U.S. commitment to the Alliance. Soviet initiatives under this category include various NFU proposals tabled at the strategic arms negotiation talks in the 1970s, the continued reappearance of Soviet demands to include

[3]The ATBM system most frequently discussed was an upgraded Patriot air-defense system.

U.S. forward-based systems (FBSs) in SALT talks,[4] insistence on SALT provisions on noncircumvention and nontransfer, the emphasis in SALT on GLCMs and sea-launched cruise missiles (SLCMs), the periodic reemergence of the British and French nuclear systems in superpower talks, and the walkout on the START talks because of the U.S. decision to deploy INF.

ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET SUCCESSES AND SHORTFALLS

All the participants agreed that the Soviets have made considerable military and political gains against the West since World War II. The expansion and sophistication of their conventional and nuclear capabilities and their adept way of manipulating Western public opinion attest to Soviet skills. Despite this consensus, participants disagreed on the overall success of the Soviet effort.

One group of participants, primarily Europeans, contended that over the past 15 years, Soviet efforts to undermine Western deterrence and alliance cohesion have been very successful. They argued that the Soviet Union is continually on the offensive in East-West relations, while the West is on the defensive. Developments such as the OMG, offensive air, chemical weapons, TBMs, and expanded nuclear capabilities pose serious challenges to NATO's ability to execute flexible response.

In addition, these participants stated that the Soviet political record is equally impressive, if not more impressive, and that it provides evidence of how the Soviets effectively use propaganda and arms control to undermine Alliance cohesion. The Soviets have at their fingertips a vast array of propaganda strategies designed to undermine the Alliance. Participants contended that in the arms control arena, more than any other place, one could see the offensive nature of Soviet policy. They argued that the Soviets have had arms control agreements and negotiations on their terms. They cited flaws in the SALT I and II Treaties and the terms of reference in the Mutual Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) talks as examples.[5]

Conversely, the majority of participants viewed the Soviet military and political record as mixed. They contended that although the Soviets have been successful, even they do not believe they have dominated the East-West military competition. One participant argued

[4]Forward-based systems refer to U.S. nuclear fighter bombers based in Western Europe and on carriers.

[5]See Sec. IV for a more detailed discussion of problems with MBFR.

that the Soviets retain the older options of an all-out nuclear exchange and an escalating conflict because they are uncertain about the effectiveness of any of their three contingency plans. Further, despite their gains, the Soviets are concerned about shortfalls in their capabilities and developments in the West. Participants discussed Soviet concerns about controlling escalation, handling domestic resource constraints, and addressing technological infrastructure problems. In addition, Western operational and force developments such as the U.S. Army's Air/Land Battle and NATO's Follow-On Forces Attack (FOFA), the West's technological edge, U.S. strategic nuclear targeting policy, and the SDI program trouble the Soviet Union.

These participants also argued that instead of being on the offensive, the Soviets have actually suffered several setbacks in their recent efforts to undermine Alliance cohesion. Most important, the Soviets have failed to drive wedges between the Alliance members. Throughout the conference, participants alluded to the unsuccessful Soviet anti-INF campaign. In this case, the Soviets used all the available propaganda and arms control tools, and they still could not stop the INF deployments. Finally, these participants said that although the Soviets may have often led the West to the arms control negotiation table, it was the West that tended to set the terms of agreement.

Despite these different interpretations, all participants agreed that the West still needs to worry about the Soviet Union. Even those who saw Soviet policy as being on the downswing were concerned about the future threat. Most participants found little comfort in Soviet shortfalls. As one noted, the Soviets have extraordinarily exacting standards and they are never satisfied. This is both reassuring (because there is a low probability they will ever be satisfied) and challenging (because they will always keep trying).

III. EXTENDED DETERRENCE AND ALLIANCE STRATEGY

The participants addressed three questions in examining the proper Western response to Soviet political and military challenges:

- *What are Western objectives toward the Soviet Union?* Western objectives were not explicitly addressed, but the participants apparently had an implicit agreement about the goals of U.S. and NATO strategy.
- *What policies has the West pursued to achieve these objectives?* Participants focused primarily on the West's military response to the Soviets. They discussed how U.S. nuclear forces meet the requirements of extended deterrence and flexible response and the role of the independent British and French nuclear forces.
- *How successful has the West been?* Based on assessments of objectives, strategy, and forces, participants debated whether current nuclear forces adequately fulfill Western objectives. Some participants contended that the mere presence of nuclear weapons deters the Soviets, while others believe that the Soviets are deterred by the presence of nuclear weapons and the details of force size and composition.

ALLIANCE OBJECTIVES TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION

Western objectives toward the Soviet Union include both military and political elements. NATO military strategy seeks (1) to deter Soviet attacks on the United States, Western Europe, and other allies; (2) to counter military aggression at any level if deterrence fails; and (3) to terminate a conflict on favorable terms. Two force-planning criteria support this objective:

- NATO must possess sufficient forces to place the full range of high-value Soviet assets at risk.
- NATO conventional and nuclear forces must provide the Alliance with a wide range of response options that can be used selectively as well as massively, and promptly as well as over a period of time.

The participants discussed Western political strategy primarily in terms of how to negate Soviet efforts to undermine Western cohesion. They focused on methods to shore up consensus within the Alliance, rather than on methods to weaken Warsaw Pact cohesion or exploit Soviet vulnerabilities.

ALLIANCE STRATEGY AND FORCES: THE U.S. AND WEST EUROPEAN CONTRIBUTIONS

Western deterrence strategy (as discussed at the conference) incorporates three elements: extended deterrence, flexible response, and independent national policies. *Extended deterrence* refers to the U.S. guarantee to use its strategic nuclear forces in response to Soviet aggression in Europe or to force war termination. *Flexible response* calls for sufficient conventional, theater nuclear, and strategic nuclear forces to provide NATO with a balanced range of response options. The participants were most interested in the options for U.S. nuclear forces because of the role of those forces in the extended deterrence guarantee. *Independent national policies* refers to the British and French policies for employing their independent nuclear deterrents. The conference examined the adequacy of the first two elements and the role of the third in deterrence. Inevitably, some discussion of the role of conventional forces also arose.

U.S. Strategic Nuclear Forces

Several U.S. participants referred to the documents that govern the employment and drive the composition of U.S. strategic nuclear forces, especially National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM) 242 and Presidential Directive (PD) 59.[1] NSDM 242, the so-called Schlesinger doctrine promulgated by the Nixon administration in 1974, defines guidelines for employing strategic nuclear forces: First, the United States must target a wide range of Soviet military forces and installations. The target classes include Soviet nuclear forces, conventional military forces, military and political leadership, and economic and industrial assets. Second, the forces must be designed for escalation control. The United States thus needs a range of nuclear forces and reliable command and control to be able to execute selected options in

[1]For a discussion of these two documents, see Desmond Ball, "Counterforce Targeting: How New? How Viable?" *Arms Control Today*, February 1981, pp. 1–2, 6–7, and Desmond Ball, "U.S. Strategic Forces: How Would They Be Used?" *International Security*, Winter 1982/1983, pp. 31–60.

a limited fashion, including limited nuclear options (LNOs) and regional nuclear options (RNOs). Finally, the United States will refrain from targeting certain Soviet assets. These assets either will be withheld for bargaining war termination or will not be destroyed. A survivable strategic reserve force will be maintained to threaten the former set of withheld assets. PD 59, which came out six years after NSDM 242, basically reiterates the guidance in the earlier document. However, PD 59 places greater emphasis on military and leadership targets, rather than economic and industrial targets, and on increasing the employment options available to the United States.

The U.S. participants in particular discussed the nuclear forces, commonly referred to as the Triad, that are available to meet the operational requirements laid out in NSDM 242 and PD 59. The three legs of the Triad are intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and bombers. Each leg possesses a unique combination of the characteristics contained in the Triad as a whole: prompt launch, positive control, accuracy, hard-target-kill (HTK) capability, selective employment, and survivability. One presentation described the Reagan administration's strategic modernization program and outlined its major accomplishments in such areas as improved command, control, and communications; enhanced penetrability of the bomber force (Stealth and standoff munitions); improved submarine forces with Trident II (D-5) missiles; and increased HTK capability with MX and D-5 missiles.

Flexible Response and U.S. Nuclear Forces in Europe

Flexible response, as defined in NATO Military Committee document MC 14/3, is NATO's strategy governing the employment of forces in Europe. Like U.S. strategic policy, flexible response calls for a balanced range of options, both conventional and nuclear, to respond to all levels of aggression. NATO forces must be capable of direct defense as far forward as possible and of deliberately escalating the conflict up to a general nuclear response, if necessary. The two key components of this strategy are willingness to use nuclear weapons first if the conventional battle is being lost, and the uncertainty in the mind of the aggressor about the timing and circumstances of escalation.

Several participants discussed the range of capabilities in the Alliance's inventory. On the nuclear level, the West has an assortment of systems, from nuclear-capable artillery to tactical missiles, to nuclear-capable aircraft (both land- and sea-based), to INF, to ballistic missile submarines committed to NATO, to U.S. strategic nuclear

systems. Most participants argued that the decision to deploy PIIs and GLCMs has enhanced deterrence because NATO now can strike Soviet territory with U.S. nuclear weapons from Western Europe. Conventional forces are structured to defend as far forward as possible and are deployed in a "layer cake" fashion, with different countries responsible for a forward defense core sector, thus ensuring the early involvement of many nations in the defense of Central Europe.

Independent Nuclear Forces

The strategic nuclear forces of Great Britain and France are separate but are both part of Western deterrence, contributing to both national and Alliance defense. However, the different rationales behind the forces and their link to NATO dictate different employment postures.

Great Britain retains the right to employ its forces independently in the event its supreme national interests are threatened. However, its forces are fully integrated into the NATO military command structure. The British emphasize their role as a "second decision center" in the NATO structure, creating additional uncertainty for the Soviets regarding NATO's nuclear options. Thus, Britain contributes to Western defense because its nuclear forces are assigned to SACEUR, and its conventional forces deployed forward in West Germany act as a link to the strategic nuclear weapons. A modernization program is under way to replace Britain's Polaris missiles with U.S. Trident II (D-5) missiles. By the mid-1990s, Great Britain will have four Trident-II-equipped submarines, which will increase the deterrent value of their forces.

French forces, on the other hand, are not integrated into NATO's military structure, and France does not follow the flexible response strategy. The French plan to use strategic nuclear forces only for protection of their national "sanctuary" (there is some debate over whether the term "sanctuary" refers to French national boundaries or to those boundaries and beyond). No formal agreements exist between France and NATO for nuclear coordination, although no French government has ever ruled out the possibility of participating in the defense of Western Europe in the event of Soviet aggression. The modernization program currently under way includes deployment of the Hades tactical missile, a new generation of Mirage 2000Ns with stand-off missiles, a mobile ground-launched ballistic missile, and a new generation of SSBNs with M4 SLBMs.

ASSESSMENT OF WESTERN SUCCESSES AND SHORTFALLS

The participants agreed that Western deterrence strategy remains viable and meets deterrence requirements. Although they did not call for a reassessment of Western strategy, they could not agree on the appropriate number and composition of the nuclear forces. This reflected different views concerning what deters the Soviets. Numerous questions arose regarding the appropriate size of NATO's nuclear forces and the link between doctrine and force planning.

One presentation proposed two ways to assess the adequacy of Western strategy and force structure:

- *The strategic model.* With the strategic model, the adequacy of Western forces is assessed in terms of force balance and military posture. Analysts who use this approach were referred to as the "detail people" or "targeteers" because they examine such issues as target coverage, counterforce, and HTK capability. Thus, they view the adequacy of forces for deterrence according to the ability of the forces to conduct the nuclear strike missions should deterrence fail.
- *The political model.* With the political model, the adequacy of nuclear forces is assessed in terms of their mere presence, and the force balance and characteristics are not considered. Analysts who use this approach were referred to as "existential deterrers." They believe that the size of the West's nuclear force should not be driven by the number of Soviet targets or the details of their nuclear employment strategy. Instead, the main interest should be in communicating "national interests" through the threatened use of nuclear weapons.

The participants moved between the two schools of thought in assessing the adequacy of the West's nuclear strategy and forces. One participant pointed out that the debate between the existential deterrers and the detail people will continue, but Western planners should avoid shifting too far in either direction. However, the different estimates of NATO's nuclear requirements made by the two schools raise questions about the connection between force sizing and arms control criteria.

Assessment of the U.S. Strategic Nuclear Force

Most participants agreed that the United States needs a full range of nuclear options to deter the Soviet Union. They believe that the

current nuclear forces plus the Reagan administration's strategic modernization program provide a credible strategic deterrent. As one European participant stated, Europeans should support the U.S. modernization program because it provides adequate flexibility to deter Soviet attacks in Europe. In fact, many believe that U.S. force size could be reduced somewhat without seriously degrading the credibility of extended deterrence. One participant noted that the modernization program would provide the United States with the capability to hold an adequate number of targets at risk, even with arms control reductions.

However, participants could not define the appropriate size and composition for ensuring extended deterrence. U.S. participants in particular tried to develop criteria for sizing and structuring the strategic forces, in line with the strategic model school of thought. These participants discussed the composition of the Soviet target base and tried to identify critical targets. While there could be as many as 40,000 targets in all (given the criteria defined in NSDM 242), they estimated that between 8,000 and 10,000 of these would be critical targets. And of these, about 2,000 are related to Soviet strategic nuclear forces (1,500 silos, 45 SS-25s, and 440 SS-20s). Thus, even if Soviet nuclear forces were significantly reduced, the United States would still need a large strategic force to threaten the remaining critical targets.

After establishing some consensus about targeting requirements, this group tried to decide on the required force characteristics. They argued that the mix of Triad characteristics (survivability, HTK, prompt launch, etc.) was good. However, some saw a potential shortfall in the U.S. ability to detect and acquire strategic relocatable targets (SRTs), such as mobile missiles and command centers and Warsaw Pact ground forces. Some participants also debated what the priorities of the strategic modernization program should be. To provoke a discussion, one suggested that because the capabilities to target the Pact ground forces and to conduct selective employment options are important for extended deterrence, the appropriate priorities should be (1) command, control, and communication, (2) ICBMs, (3) manned bombers, and (4) submarines.

However, this exercise did not go very far. Most of the European participants were not particularly interested in the details of the strategic forces: As long as the United States is confident that its forces are sufficient and its forces are not obviously inferior, full target coverage and the details of force size and composition are not important to them. The key requirement is that U.S. nuclear forces provide a range of response options—and to that extent, details matter. One participant argued that the Europeans are more interested in the U.S. capability to conduct escalation options than in the details of its targeting

policy. Another participant tried to explain the lack of interest in details by contending that Europeans generally believe that an all-out nuclear war is the most unlikely contingency and is thus very difficult to plan. Most of the European participants believe that the mere presence and the built-in flexibility of the U.S. nuclear forces meet the requirements for extended deterrence.

Despite their differences, all of the participants were concerned about future developments that could erode extended deterrence. They were primarily concerned about the implications of SDI for stability and deterrence.[2] Several U.S. participants noted that an expanded strategic defense capability would necessitate an increase in offensive forces over the near term, which could be destabilizing. In addition, one European participant contended that U.S. statements related to SDI, calling for the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons, have undermined consensus in current Western nuclear strategy. Another European asked whether it is wise to create such a large gap between reality (current strategy) and the path laid out by President Reagan.

Assessment of the U.S. Nuclear Forces in Europe

All the participants agreed that the U.S. nuclear presence in Europe is essential for deterring Soviet conventional and nuclear aggression. In particular, they emphasized the role of U.S. INF deployments in meeting the requirements of NATO strategy—requirements that are not simply driven by the SS-20 threat. Both U.S. and European participants were interested in the detailed characteristics of these forces and defined two criteria for assessing their adequacy:

- *Symbolic purposes.* Do they provide a credible link to U.S. strategic forces? Is there an element of shared risk among NATO nations?
- *Deterrent purposes.* Do they provide NATO with a range of response options? Do they hold critical Soviet assets at risk?

Differences arose because of the difficulty of translating NATO's strategy of flexible response into coherent force-planning guidance. Participants agreed that the NATO strategy does not provide clear guidance for sizing and structuring forces. As one participant summed it up, the ambiguities in MC 14/3 are either inevitable or sensible: inevitable because of the differences between the U.S. and European

[2]Issues of lesser concern included the U.S. budget deficit and the effects of the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act, the renewed debate in the U.S. government over European burden-sharing, and the role of the U.S. Navy in setting defense priorities.

views of the role of nuclear weapons in security, or sensible because the vague language increases Soviet uncertainty and hence the credibility of the escalation threat. Although most participants agreed that the vagueness of the document was intentional, related to the political bargaining that occurred in its drafting, it has resulted in some serious inconsistencies in NATO strategy. For example, U.S. strategic doctrine focuses on "second-strike" deterrence (deterring a Soviet first strike through the threat of retaliation), yet the United States also supports NATO's flexible response strategy, which implies that the United States would launch a first strike in some circumstances. According to one participant, the West generated its own credibility problems and gave the Soviets areas to exploit by designing a strategy with so many inconsistencies.

Participants could not answer such questions as, What is the proper role for U.S. strategic nuclear weapons and U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe? What targets should the U.S. INF hold at risk? How many and what kinds of nuclear weapons in the theater would provide a credible link to U.S. strategic forces? Most participants agreed that U.S. strategic nuclear forces would bear the brunt of the nuclear targeting in a general nuclear response, but there was no consensus about what Soviet assets INF should threaten. Some participants contended that the West needs to get away from a "force-matching syndrome." One participant argued that it may not be necessary to have complete target coverage against what he considered to be an inflated target base. In his view, NATO should focus on hitting critical targets and get away from the "sterile overall-target-coverage approach." In a similar vein, another participant suggested that the Alliance should be less interested in exact details and instead should try to agree on basic objectives such as the threat and broad employment options. However, even participants who advocated comprehensive coverage could not define NATO's nuclear requirements. As noted by one participant, NATO military planners have difficulty deriving rational force requirements for the flexible response options; in many cases, a compromise has to be made among the different countries.

The participants also grappled with other challenges to NATO's flexible response strategy.[3] The Soviet conventional threat was at the top of many participants' lists. One European participant observed that conditions are changing and nuclear weapons are not providing the broad range of options needed to deal with all contingencies. He suggested that NATO needs to recognize the importance of

[3]Challenges not elaborated on here include the Soviet TBM threat and the proper response, the vulnerability of nuclear and nonnuclear forces, and the implications of Soviet defenses for NATO's selective employment options.

conventional options to address what he calls Soviet "progressive denial efforts."[4] Participants were also concerned about Soviet efforts to undermine Western cohesion. A European participant proposed that if the West could make progress in obtaining cooperation on its defense and security policies, it could thwart the Soviet concept of hegemony in Europe. The West needs to stabilize the NATO framework by keeping the United States in Europe, and it must improve West European security cooperation.

In the end, though, the participants agreed that despite the problems of flexible response, no better alternatives are available. Thus, NATO needs a range of forces (short-, medium-, and long-range systems) to meet its nuclear requirements, even if the exact numerical requirements remain unclear. The participants felt strongly that some level of U.S. INF is required, for symbolic reasons (as a sign of Alliance cohesion) and for deterrent reasons (to threaten Soviet territory with U.S. systems based in Europe).

Assessment of the British and French Nuclear Forces

Participants agreed that the British and French nuclear forces had important political value for Western Europe. The mere existence of the forces, not their characteristics or numbers, is most important. However, participants disagreed on the forces' deterrent value. They distinguished between British and French forces because the former are integrated into the NATO military structure, while the latter are not.

On the one hand, some U.S. and European participants saw the independent forces as having only marginal utility in deterrent terms, given the U.S. nuclear guarantee. Although the forces do increase Soviet uncertainty, they also siphon off money that should go toward conventional forces and present a "nuisance" factor to NATO planners. One German participant suggested that the British and French need to recognize the widening gap between NATO conventional forces and the threat requirements and should develop more appropriate force priorities: Potentially, they should forgo their out-of-area and nuclear commitments. Further, the two countries, especially France, present problems for military planners because they reserve the right to use nuclear weapons independent of NATO target planning. According to another German participant, the British forces at least contribute to deterrence because they are integrated into NATO, but France complicates

[4]"Progressive denial efforts" refer to the growing Soviet ability to dominate every level of the escalation ladder, beginning at the conventional level, thus denying the West its escalation options.

Western planning and could create escalation that is unwanted by the other countries.

On the other hand, British and French participants contended that the forces are valuable in both deterrent and political terms: Although small, the forces could cause considerable damage, and their presence complicates Soviet, not NATO, calculations. In defense of the British nuclear forces, one participant argued that (1) the United Kingdom spends only approximately 3 percent of its overall defense budget and 6 percent of its procurement budget on nuclear weapons; (2) British forces contribute uniquely to deterrence because of their link to NATO; and (3) they, like the French forces, reinforce deterrence by confronting the Soviets with multiple centers of decisionmaking and by increasing Soviet risks and uncertainties. Similarly, a French participant elaborated on the contributions of the French force: (1) The current modernization program does not change the balance between France's nuclear and conventional forces—nuclear forces have consistently consumed approximately 20 percent of the defense budget; (2) France is the only Western country producing medium-range nuclear forces; and (3) France's declared strategic policy looks like the Athens 1962 Guidelines.[5] This participant reminded the group to look at the value of the French forces from a Soviet perspective and not just in terms of their nuisance factor. Accordingly, the forces enhance deterrence by creating even as little as 1 percent uncertainty in the Soviets' minds.

All participants agreed that strategic defenses could change the value or threaten the credibility of the independent forces. One European participant pointed out that if the deployment of U.S. defenses decoupled the United States from Europe, the deterrent value of British and French forces would increase, although these forces could not substitute for the loss of U.S. nuclear forces. However, expanded Soviet defenses would decrease the European forces' deterrent value.[6]

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[5]The Athens Guidelines laid out the broad assumptions regarding the circumstances in which NATO would use nuclear weapons. At that time, the United States and Great Britain assured the Alliance that their strategic nuclear forces would continue to deter threats to NATO.

[6]Most participants agreed that the British and French nuclear forces could adapt to expanded Soviet defenses throughout the lifetime of their new missile systems.

IV. FASHIONING A WESTERN ARMS CONTROL STRATEGY TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION

The participants examined two questions related to arms control:

- *Where does arms control fit in Soviet and Western strategy?* Arms control should support the West's overall strategic objectives. However, it has not always done so, and participants discussed the problems of translating strategic objectives into a coherent arms control position.
- *What is the current state of arms control, and how should the West proceed?* Participants continually returned to a discussion of the Geneva talks and how the West should proceed. Recommendations ranged from general guidance to specific suggestions for arms control forums. The discussions centered on developing a framework for conventional and nuclear arms control, assessing the role of SDI, and determining the costs and benefits of the zero option.

THE ROLE OF ARMS CONTROL

Participants agreed that arms control should support the West's pursuit of its strategic objectives. They pointed to the Soviets' use of arms control to support their military and political objectives as an example. Some participants argued that the Soviets successfully use arms control to limit Western technological developments—as in the ABM Treaty—and to secure gains in offensive forces—as in the SALT Treaties. Similarly, the Soviets manipulate the arms control process to raise public concerns in the West over nuclear weapons and to exploit divisions in the Alliance.

The participants identified Western shortfalls in arms control policy as examples of the difficulty of converting strategic objectives into a coherent arms control strategy. Participants agreed that one problem with the current Western arms control approach is that it is driven by domestic political concerns rather than security objectives. One participant observed that the problem of translating strategy into forces also exists for translating strategy into arms control objectives against which arms control outcomes can be measured. According to one participant, the Nixon/Kissinger approach was effective because it made

arms control part of an overall strategy toward the Soviet Union; somehow, the West has lost that coherence.

Since the Soviets have achieved strategic parity, an increasing disparity has arisen between what is desirable in arms control for political reasons and what is necessary for deterrence. Tension can thus occur between what the arms control community deems desirable and what the strategic and military communities define as necessary to maintain a credible deterrent: Arms control requirements for stability (striving for a one-for-one reduction in forces) are in competition with military requirements for operational flexibility (the need for a range of capabilities). In this case, proposals can be made within the arms control community that are not militarily sound. Soviet efforts to isolate Europe in arms control can then become more successful, because the U.S. bureaucracy is fragmented. It is difficult to reconcile these differences, because arms control has become a central political issue for Western governments, and their publics have come to expect negotiations and agreements. As noted by one participant, it is taken for granted that arms control is essential for East/West relations and public opinion.

Initial discussions regarding the role of arms control tended to find positive attributes for Soviet actions and negative ones for Western actions. This trend broke dramatically when one participant complained that he had not heard arms control scapegoated so viciously since he had attended a meeting of the Committee on the Present Danger.[1] Two viewpoints then emerged: Some saw arms control as a zero-sum game in which the West always loses and the Soviets always win, and some saw the arms control record as being more balanced.[2]

The participants who saw arms control as a zero-sum game contended that the Soviets put the West on the defensive in arms control negotiations. They argued that the Soviets always bring the West to the negotiating table on their terms, and public expectations always force the West to make agreements that may not contribute to deterrence in the long run. The Soviets designed their strategies in the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe (CDE), the MBFR talks, SALT, and other forums to place the West at a disadvantage and to drive wedges between the United States and its allies. One participant observed that when the Soviets' self-imposed boycott of the INF talks in 1984

[1]The Committee on the Present Danger is an organization that advocates increased defense spending to meet the Soviet threat. This group was associated with opposition to the SALT II Treaty.

[2]In general, participants who believe that the Soviets have been successful at pursuing their objectives also tended to see arms control as a zero-sum game.

backfired, instead of taking the offensive, the United States brought the Soviets back to the table, beginning with the Schultz-Gromyko talks in 1985, by giving in on all the Soviet demands.

The participants offered several suggestions for improving the West's arms control strategy. One suggested that the West needs to devise an offensive strategy to challenge the Soviet Union and to change the terms of the current debate on arms control; he further recommended that the West should not focus on short-term problems or on the possible effects of an aggressive arms control strategy on domestic policy. However, he gave no examples of what the offensive strategy should look like. Another participant questioned whether the Western publics really need arms control per se and contended that their real interest may be in political contact with the Soviet Union. He then suggested that it may be more sensible to remove arms control as an issue in East-West relations.

However, the majority of participants saw the arms control record as mixed. The Soviet Union and the United States both have problems in arms control negotiations, and thus both have had their share of successes and failures. As one participant noted, the Soviet military posture and doctrine does not translate into a coherent arms control strategy any better than does Western strategy.

These participants contended that attributing great success to the Soviets' ability to exploit Alliance differences misreads arms control diplomacy in the 1980s: The Soviets were not able to stop the INF deployments, their various arms control offers have consistently been too little and too late, and the recent Soviet zero-option proposal fell on deaf ears in Europe. Further, these participants believe that the concessions made in the recent arms control proposals are not cost-free to the Soviets; for example, if the Soviets give up the SS-20s as a tradeoff for the elimination of U.S. INF forces, they also lose an asset they value.[3] In response to the overly optimistic picture of Soviet arms control ventures painted by some participants, one commented that if a transcript of this session were to be made available to Gorbachev, he would read it and roar with laughter.

These participants also believed that the West's arms control strategy since 1981 has placed the Soviets on the defensive: (1) The West proposed the INF negotiations, (2) the START talks are closer to President Reagan's 1982 agenda than the Soviets' agenda, and (3) the United States is setting the conditions for agreement in the Space talks because of the Reagan administration's interest in protecting SDI.

[3]However, participants could not agree on how important the SS-20s are to Soviet operational plans or on whether the Soviets could use other nuclear systems to substitute for their loss.

However, when the United States adopts an offensive strategy in arms control, it often has trouble sticking to its objectives if agreements cannot be reached.

In response to criticism of the arms control process, one participant asked, "If not arms control, then what? Do we need some regulation of strategic nuclear forces, or are we better off with no regulation? Would Western governments be better able to deal with their publics?"

WHERE IS THE ALLIANCE NOW AND HOW SHOULD IT PROCEED?

Most participants agreed that for strategic and political reasons the West needs to continue the arms control process. One participant noted that the West should not give it up just because it has made mistakes recently. Instead, the West needs to distinguish between good and bad arms control. Some very general recommendations were made on how to construct a "good" arms control approach:

- *Arms control should be viewed as one part of Western strategy.* The West must change the perception, both inside and outside the government, that arms control is at the center of East-West relations.
- *Western governments should begin now to define their objectives in arms control.* At this point, the West does not know what to protect or what to seek in arms control forums. Most participants agreed that the West must develop an arms control strategy that both limits the Soviet threat and maintains the credibility of Western forces. However, trying to draw a coherent arms control strategy from this broad objective will not be easy or quick.
- *The West's current approach to the arms control process needs some rethinking.* Participants suggested two ways to restructure the process: (1) link arms control requirements to force requirements, because agreements or treaties should reflect Western force structure priorities, or (2) adopt a global approach to arms control, not necessarily a single forum, because all weapons threaten security. However, both recommendations present problems: If the West cannot agree on force requirements, how can it define arms control requirements? Because of the size and complexity of the task, a global approach could ensure that no progress would ever be made in arms control. Therefore, participants agreed that restructuring the process will be as difficult as setting objectives.

- *Western governments must do a better job of informing their publics about arms control.* Participants agreed that it would be a relatively easier task for Western governments to explain the aims of arms control to their publics, and this could be undertaken in the near term.

The participants also discussed when the Soviets might be prepared to reach an agreement acceptable to the West. Most of them agreed that it would be premature to reach a categorical conclusion that the Soviets are not interested in arms control. Some argued that the Soviets may be interested in arms control to help them manage the technological competition with the West, their domestic economic problems, and their defense burden. However, most participants did not think the prospects for an early agreement were good, because the differences in the underlying objectives of the two sides are substantial, and there are uncertainties regarding Gorbachev's readiness and ability to enforce the changes in the Soviet position that would be necessary to achieve significant progress. One participant noted that Gorbachev is still learning and may want to reserve an agreement until the next U.S. president has been elected. Another participant contended that Gorbachev's recent proposals are more an effort to gain momentum after the INF setback than a sign that the Soviets want an agreement.

In making recommendations on how the West should proceed, one participant joked, "It's sort of like the fellow who said, 'If I wanted to go there I wouldn't start from here.'"

Conventional Arms Control Negotiations

Debate inevitably occurred regarding the role and progress of the ongoing MBFR and CDE negotiations.[4] Both European and U.S. participants expressed skepticism about the usefulness of the MBFR and CDE negotiations. From their perspective, the exclusion of Soviet territory from the terms of reference in MBFR placed the West at a reinforcement and mobilization disadvantage from the beginning. One participant argued that MBFR has served its primary function, i.e., legitimizing U.S. troops in Europe, and hence it is now dead. Another participant commented that CDE is an interesting concept, but mis-

[4]The MBFR talks, which opened in 1973, seek to establish approximate parity in NATO and Warsaw Pact (WP) conventional ground forces through negotiated reductions. CDE, however, provides a broader framework for negotiating confidence- and security-building measures, not necessarily force reductions, and includes all NATO, WP, and nonaligned European nations.

managed. Another participant questioned whether CDE can address the imbalance of conventional forces in Europe.

However, some European participants tended to be more optimistic about MBFR and CDE. They contended that these forums are important because difficulties in reaching agreement on nuclear arms may make future movement in conventional arms control more likely. According to one participant, MBFR is not dead, because the two sides continue to work at establishing verification measures.

These participants cautioned that the West should not lower the status of conventional negotiations because any war in Europe could include both conventional and nuclear weapons, and thus both forces need to be regulated. They agreed that the West must restructure its approach if it is to see any real benefits from MBFR or CDE. One participant suggested that the West should integrate European nuclear weapons negotiations with conventional talks because, in the European context, the imbalance of conventional forces drives NATO's nuclear weapons requirements. However, most participants discounted this recommendation as infeasible or undesirable, because of the complexities of integrating conventional negotiations (where all countries participate) and nuclear negotiations (where only the Soviet Union and the United States participate).

Nuclear Arms Control Negotiations

The discussion focused primarily on the West's options in Geneva for reductions or limitations in nuclear forces and space capabilities. At the time of the conference, the Soviet Union and the United States had tabled proposals in Geneva. The Soviet position on central strategic systems included a limit of 6,000 missile and bomber warheads (which would also include U.S. FBS warheads), a limit of 3,600 warheads on ICBMs, and a ban on all long-range air-launched cruise missiles (ALCMs) and SLCMs and all new types of ICBMs, SLBMs, and bombers. At the Space talks, the Soviets proposed a ban on all SDI-related research and a ban on the development, testing, and deployment of "space strike weapons." Finally, the Soviet proposal for INF included the elimination of U.S. and Soviet INF missiles in Europe in 5 to 8 years, no restriction on Soviet INF in Asia, and other restrictions, including no modernization of British and French forces and no transfer of U.S. strategic or INF forces to other countries. The U.S. proposal for central strategic forces included a limit of 6,000 ICBM warheads and ALCMs, a separate limit of 350 bombers, a limit of 3,000 warheads on ICBMs, and a ban on mobile missiles. At the Space talks, the United States proposed to conduct SDI research within the ABM

Treaty, to jointly explore a possible "defensive transition," and to not restrict antisatellite (ASAT) weapons testing and deployment. Finally, the INF proposal included phased elimination of all U.S.-Soviet INF missiles worldwide within three years, no restrictions on British and French forces, and no nontransfer restrictions.

The group agreed that the recent proposals had potentially opened the door for some type of arms control agreement. One participant cautioned that the United States' preoccupation with avoiding Soviet tricks may cause it to miss an opportunity to convert the West's bargaining position into some constraints on Soviet forces.

START and Space Talks. Most of the participants believe that progress at the START and Space talks could be made without any degradation of extended deterrence. This conclusion was based in part on a presentation in which one participant argued that the U.S. and Soviet positions are converging and that forces could be reduced dramatically from a SALT-II-constrained force of 13,000 to 14,000 weapons to about 6,000 to 9,000 weapons. He then described alternative outcomes in the START talks that could be achieved through slight modifications to both sides' positions. The recommended "split-the-difference" compromise proposal included reductions down to (1) 6,500 ICBM and SLBM warheads and ALCMs, with sublimits of 4,000 ICBM warheads and 200 modern, heavy ICBMs and (2) 275 heavy bombers, with sublimits of 75 to 100 bombers carrying 15 to 20 ALCMs each and 175 to 200 bombers carrying 10 bombs or SRAMs each. Most participants believe that there is a deal for the taking, provided compromises can be made on FBS, bombers, and new systems, and that compromises should lean toward the U.S. position on these issues.

This raised the question of what the United States would give to obtain such a deal in offensive forces. Most participants believe that no movement will be made in offensive-force reductions without concessions on SDI. This same participant described three options for reaching a compromise at the Space talks: minor constraints on ballistic-missile defense (BMD) development until 1995; moderate constraints on BMD and ASAT development until 1995; and severe constraints on BMD, ASAT, and ATBM development until 2000. He contended that the United States could choose either of the first two options without seriously degrading the SDI program. The group then questioned whether the United States would accept some constraints on SDI. Participants called on the United States to show some flexibility on SDI in order to reach a compromise. According to one participant, the linkage between SDI and START requires that the United States define high-priority research areas in the SDI program, so that arms control options can be developed. Several European participants

appealed to the United States to forgo SDI development and testing that would violate the ABM Treaty.[5] One participant put it bluntly: "If SDI is a feasible system, for God's sake play the card before we reach the stage where transitional movement (i.e., toward a wide defense deployment) becomes confrontational and destabilizing. Conversely, if it's not feasible, then use it before it becomes useless. It is not a card to stay in the deck forever."

Nonetheless, most participants recognized the administration's reluctance to limit the SDI program. One interjected a word of caution that these attractive packages should not be considered close to becoming the U.S. position. On the contrary, the proposals laid out in the presentation are not representative of the spectrum of official U.S. thinking.

INF Talks. The majority of the discussion about Geneva revolved around the then-recent Soviet and U.S. proposals for INF. Because the participants believe that nuclear weapons are crucial to the credibility of NATO strategy and will probably remain so, they were concerned about the implications of zero option for deterrence. These participants were primarily interested in the implications for NATO and British and French forces, but they were also concerned about some of the proposals for phasing out nuclear weapons in the long term.

Most participants contended that eliminating U.S. INF forces in Europe would undermine NATO deterrence. According to them, the decision to deploy PIIs and GLCMs in Europe was not solely linked to the Soviet deployment of the SS-20. Instead, NATO required INF-type systems in Europe primarily to provide the capability to strike Soviet territory from Europe. Eliminating the U.S. INF would greatly reduce the flexibility of NATO nuclear forces because no other nuclear forces could substitute. However, one U.S. participant dissented, contending that since NATO possesses a spectrum of nuclear forces, the military cost of losing INF would not be great.

Most participants agreed that arms control should not single out one class of nuclear weapons. According to one, as long as a zero-option proposal calls for the elimination of a class of weapons, Europe becomes a special case, thus fulfilling the Soviet long-term objective of isolating Europe. Many participants also criticized "zonal negotiations," which split European security from the United States and decouple the INF talks from the offense/defense talks.

Participants also expressed the belief that the zero-option proposal would erode consensus over NATO's nuclear policy. Many U.S. and

[5]Most participants clearly favored a more restrictive interpretation of the Treaty limits that would ban research, development, and testing of components based on "other physical principles" under Agreed Statement D of the Treaty.

European participants believe that it would be difficult for their governments to explain to their publics why NATO no longer needs INF, yet needs to maintain and modernize its shorter-range nuclear capability. Some participants saw an additional danger in the West removing one class of nuclear weapons, because this would open the door for the denuclearization of Europe. As one participant pointed out, NATO argued for INF as part of its modernization; what would be the rationale for eliminating INF if it is not denuclearization? However, most participants did not see this as an imminent threat.

The Soviet proposal has a further liability in that it limits British and French nuclear forces. The Soviets invariably include British and French nuclear forces in arms control negotiations, in the context of either strategic arms or INF. Participants supported the U.S. administration position that these forces are independent and therefore cannot be negotiated by the United States. In addition, the European participants voiced strong objections when one U.S. participant presented a chart of Western INF forces that included the British and French forces. In the European view, British and French forces are national strategic systems and thus do not belong under the heading of INF. The added ban on modernization worried many European participants, because an agreement to ban nuclear modernization would deny Britain and France the right to have nuclear weapons. Britain and France have always taken the position that they will consider restrictions on their forces only if Soviet strategic defenses are held constant and severe cuts are made in the superpowers' offensive forces. Most participants agreed that it was in the West's interest to keep British and French forces out of the negotiations at this stage. However, some U.S. participants pointed out that the exclusion of these forces could make progress at START or INF talks more difficult.

Although they rejected the zero-option approach, many participants agreed that the West could examine the possibility of limiting, not eliminating, INF. One participant tried to construct a bargaining position around the idea of cutting the deployment of INF from 572 to 250 launchers; 150 would remain in the FRG (where the deterrent need is greatest), and 100 would be deployed throughout the five deployment countries. While most participants agreed that such a bargaining solution may be desirable because it would permit some U.S. INF deployments, they did not define it in exact terms.

Participants also debated the relationship among the three sets of talks. Most of them agreed that progress in START/Space and INF would be equally difficult to realize. However, they disagreed about the costs and benefits of a separate deal. Many Europeans believe that the INF talks should be linked with the START/Space talks because a

separate deal on START/Space or INF would raise old concerns about European security interests being secondary to U.S. interests. Most ruled out total integration on grounds of practicality, but they had no suggestions about how to link the talks. However, some participants viewed the costs of holding a good START/Space deal hostage to INF as being too high. One U.S. participant observed that deep cuts and stability at the strategic force level would be compatible with extended deterrence, but a Soviet edge in strategic forces or a U.S. perception of an edge would not. These could be the result of no arms control at all.

One participant suggested that instead of separating the talks, the three negotiations might be relinked in the future. This would raise the issue of constructing tradeoffs across the three negotiations and the possibility of an interim framework agreement, in the context of an overall package. He contended that this result is possible and should be examined.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The Conference on Extended Deterrence and Arms Control explored ways to maintain and potentially enhance the credibility of Western deterrence. Soviet and U.S. proposals tabled in Geneva at the START/Space talks in October and November 1985 and at the INF talks in January and February 1986 were the catalyst for the conference. The participants sought to answer the following questions: What should be the relationship among strategic objectives, doctrine and force structure, and arms control? Has the Soviet Union or the West been more successful at establishing a coherent link among the elements? What path should the West follow in arms control forums?

Most participants agreed that it is in the West's interest to continue to pursue arms control agreements. They believe that although the West has experienced difficulty in translating its strategic objectives into a coherent arms control strategy, changes can be made to improve the West's position:

- *General guidelines.* The West needs to rethink its overall approach to arms control. In the near term, it should explain to its publics the real limitations and benefits of arms control agreements. In the long term, the Western governments should develop a coherent framework that links strategy, forces, and arms control.
- *Guidelines for Geneva.* Many participants contended that progress at the START/Space and INF talks should be linked. Europeans, in particular, were worried about a separate START/Space accord without an INF agreement. Although total integration was ruled out, one participant suggested that the talks may be linked as part of an interim framework agreement.
- *Guidelines for START/Space talks.* The participants believe that the United States should show some flexibility on SDI as part of a deal for deep reductions in offensive forces. Most agreed that negotiating options are available that would not undermine Western deterrence or degrade the SDI research program. While the package actually proposed will probably be different from those presented at the conference, participants argued that the U.S. administration should begin to develop its

options, which would include some constraints on the SDI program, while supporting the ABM Treaty.

- *Guidelines for INF talks.* Most participants agreed that the zero option would undermine flexible response and extended deterrence. They believe that the presence of INF is vital for Western security: It is a sign of Western cohesion and it provides NATO with the capability to strike Soviet territory with U.S. nuclear weapons based in Europe. In addition, participants objected to the Soviet Union's insistence that British and French forces be included in an INF agreement, since these forces are independent strategic nuclear systems. The participants did agree that some limitations on INF would be acceptable, although they did not offer an exact number.
- *Guidelines for conventional negotiations.* The West needs to reexamine its position at the MBFR talks and CDE. At the very least, these forums will need some restructuring before any results can be realized.

Many of the concerns raised at the conference will continue to present challenges to the Alliance, even though the arms control environment will undoubtedly change. Potentially of near-term importance will be the need to reestablish a more coherent link between arms control and the requirements for deterrence. An enduring challenge for the United States will be the need to reassure its European allies of its continued commitment to Alliance security if arms control should lead the two superpowers down the road toward significant nuclear-force reductions.

Appendix

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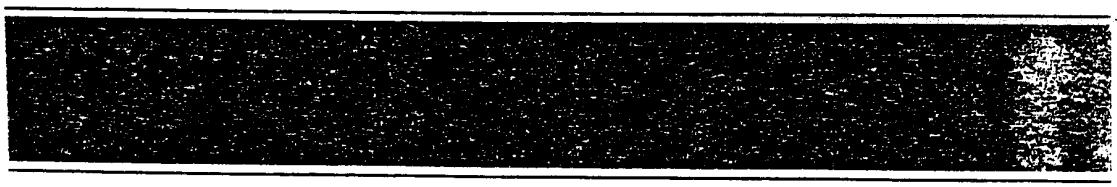
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