

4/12/8

~~SECRET~~

Doc #62

INDEX - Sov T

15 AUG 1978

SECDEF HAS SEEN

87

MIS

RE-EVALUATION OF THE WEST'S MBFR POSITION

Background

● The overall psychological climate surrounding the MBFR negotiations has changed considerably over the past five years.

- In 1973 the United States was under strong Congressional pressure to make unilateral reductions.

- Now this situation no longer prevails, and NATO has collectively decided to improve its deteriorating situation.

● To a significant extent the MBFR talks have succeeded in their original purpose of preventing unilateral Western reductions; at the same time, the talks have had the positive effect of helping to concentrate NATO's attention on its military posture with respect to the Pact.

● The talks are now at a critical stage.

- The East has for the first time made an offer that appears to be consistent with parts of previous Western proposals.

- And the West is in the early stages of a promising force improvement plan that could be jeopardized by the wrong kind of MBFR agreement.

● This paper assesses major changes in Pact and NATO forces since the MBFR talks began, and based on this evaluation argues that we should:

- proceed very carefully in the negotiations over the next several months and not make any hasty responses to the new Soviet proposals, until the consequences for NATO's Long-Term Defense Program plans have been thoroughly considered.

- initiate a thorough re-examination of the current MBFR situation to determine:

-- whether the Soviet proposals offer an opportunity to change elements of the Western position, such as Option III;

-- whether the changes in NATO's defense plans have altered the range of outcomes that might be viewed as acceptable;

-- whether the West's new negotiating leverage should be applied to achieve any fundamental changes in the type of agreement we are seeking.

Office of the Secretary of Defense  
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS  
Date: 12 Feb 2016 Authority: EO 13526  
Declassify: \_\_\_\_\_ Deny in Full: \_\_\_\_\_  
Declassify in Part: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reason: 3.3 (b) (7) (C), (D)  
MDR: 15 -M-5764

5 U.S.C. § 552

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL  
Authority: EO 13526  
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS  
Date: FEB 12 2016

~~SECRET~~



330-81-0902, box 63, NATO, 320.2 MBFR (Jul-Dec) 1978

August 5, 1978

15-m-0264

~~SECRET~~

### Theater Nuclear Forces

● The Pact has modernized its theater nuclear forces in all categories, with resulting increases in the options available for the use of these forces. A further consequence has been the emergence of the view that the Pact's theater nuclear forces (including those in the Western USSR) are equal or superior to NATO's. Pact improvements include:

- Replacement of single-warhead SS-4/5s with more accurate, less vulnerable, MIRVed SS-20s (fewer SS-20 launchers will generate more re-entry vehicles).
- Modernization of Soviet Long-Range and Naval Aviation with the Backfire bomber.
- Improvement of the short-range missile force with the new SS-21 and SS-X-22 systems.
- Continuing deployment of Fitter C, Flogger, and Fencer nuclear-capable aircraft with increased range over previous models.
- Development of nuclear-capable artillery.

● NATO's theater nuclear forces have also been improved. Actions include:

- Deployment of another F-111 wing to the UK.
- Introduction of Lance as a replacement for Sergeant and Honest John.
- Allocation of an additional [redacted] Poseidon warheads to SACEUR, for a total of [redacted]

● Most NATO theater nuclear improvements, however, are programmed or under discussion rather than underway, for example:

- Modernization of the artillery stockpile.
- Large-scale introduction of F-16 and MRCA dual-capable aircraft.
- Development of enhanced long-range theater nuclear capability for better coverage of targets in the USSR. Current candidate systems include GLCM, improved Pershing, and a new MRBM.

● Implications for the MBFR talks:

- Reductions in NATO's theater nuclear forces are much less attractive than they were several years ago as a lever for disproportionate Eastern reductions in conventional forces. Two factors combine to make this so:

-- the Pact's vigorous modernization of its own theater nuclear forces; and

JS 3.3(b)(5)(c)(9)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

-- growing perceptions of strategic force parity between the United States and the USSR.

- Depending on the outcome of negotiations and NATO deployment decisions, limits on Western nuclear elements resulting from Option III withdrawals might jeopardize NATO's planned theater nuclear modernization efforts.

-- The real hazard here is to GLCM, if the Soviets are able to make the new Pershing level (144 systems) apply as a GLCM ceiling. This underlines the importance of adhering to the West's negotiating position that the resulting 144-system limit would apply only to ballistic, not cruise, missiles. While even this limit would inhibit deployment of MRBMs, an alternative now being explored, it would still permit some limited MRBM employment options.

-- Provided that NATO categorically rejects a ceiling on total combat aircraft as a result of nuclear-capable reductions, Option III's proposed reduction of 54 F-4s wouldn't be a problem (more than enough nuclear-capable aircraft would still be retained).

-- the Option III offer to reduce 1,000 warheads would also have little impact, under present projections of desirable force levels.

● Currently only NATO reductions in theater nuclear forces have been offered or discussed at MBFR; in view of the strategic situation, the recent pace of Pact theater nuclear improvements, and European concern about the absence of reciprocity, it would seem appropriate to stop offering NATO nuclear forces in return for Pact conventional forces, and instead to start discussing Pact reductions in kind.

#### Ground Forces Size and Modernization

● The number of the Pact's divisions in the NATO Guidelines Area (NGA) has not changed since 1968. But the Pact's ground forces have increased their holdings of major items of equipment, significantly except for tanks, as shown in the table below. (The Pact medium/heavy tank inventory also grew markedly -- about 30% -- between 1965 and 1973.)

Table 1  
Inventories of Certain Pact Weapons  
In the NATO Guidelines Area

	<u>1973</u>	<u>Current</u>
Medium & Heavy Tanks	18,300	19,100
Light Tanks & Armored Reconnaissance Vehicles	1,800	4,300
Field Artillery and Multiple Rocket Launchers	4,800	6,100
Anti-Tank Weapons	2,800	3,600

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL  
Authority: EO 13526  
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS  
Date: FEB 12 2016

~~SECRET~~

● Qualitative changes in Pact ground equipment have been equally noteworthy, e.g.:

- Replacement of T-54/55 tanks with T-62s and T-64s.
- Introduction of the BMP.
- Replacement of towed artillery with self-propelled versions.
- Proliferation of anti-aircraft defenses.

● NATO's ground forces have also been characterized by increases in equipment holdings, as shown below.

Table 2

Inventories of Certain NATO Weapons  
In the NATO Guidelines Area

	1973	Current	IMPROVEMENT		PACT/NATO	
			PACT	NATO	75	WAGE
Medium & Heavy Tanks	8,300	9,200	+4%	+11%	2.20	2.08
Light Tanks and Armored Reconnaissance Vehicles	1,100	2,100	+139%	+91%	1.64	2.05
Field Artillery and Multiple Rocket Launchers	2,300	2,500	+27%	+9%	2.09	2.44
Anti-Tank Weapons	2,700	5,500	+29%	+64%	1.04	.65

● Modernization of NATO ground forces is proceeding as well, particularly in regard to anti-tank weapons. However, in several key areas deployment in strength of new NATO systems is still at least several years away, e.g.:

- XM-1 and Leopard II tanks.
- Infantry/Cavalry Fighting Vehicles.
- Roland and Patriot.

● Implications for MBFR: Modernization is not under discussion in the MBFR talks; the only danger here is that an MBFR agreement could be used as an excuse to slow NATO's efforts.

Ground Forces Reinforcement Rate

● A critical change in Pact forces over the last five years is in the rate at which we believe they would be able to generate the 85-to 90-division designated threat.

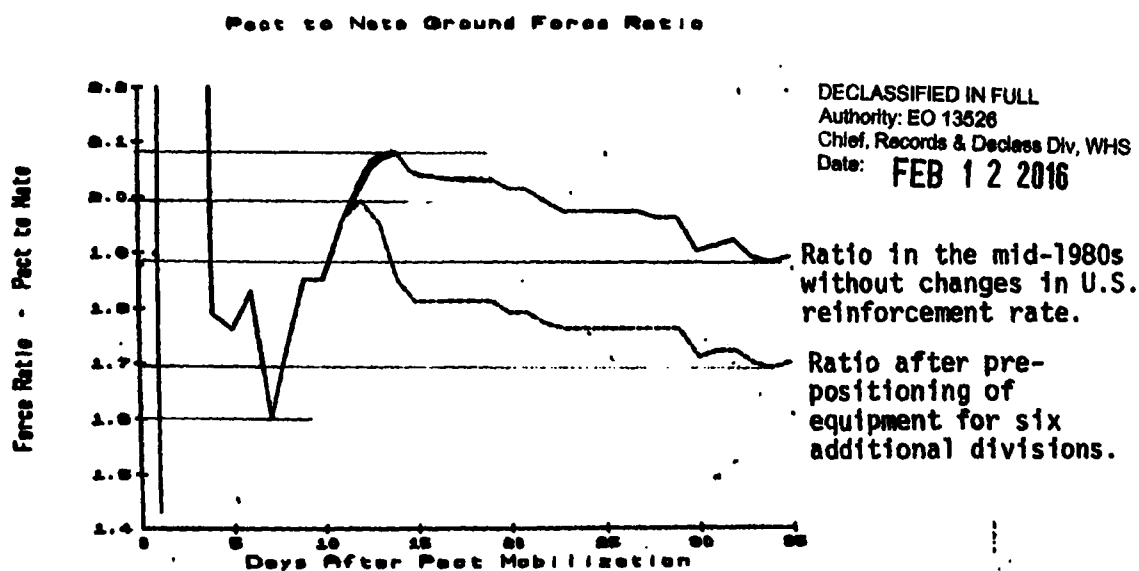
**SECRET**

- When we entered the MBFR negotiations in 1973, our estimates indicated that it would take three to four weeks for the Pact to redeploy its forces in the NGA, to reinforce them with units from the Western Military Districts (WMDs), and to make the other necessary preparations. Moreover, we judged that the Pact would wait for the reinforcements from the WMDs before initiating an attack.

- Now we calculate that this build-up would take about two weeks, and that the Pact might initiate an offensive before the reinforcements from the WMDs arrived.

o The West is also in the process of accelerating externally-based reinforcements, particularly from the United States, but this is an 8-year effort that is just getting started. The graph below indicates the effect on the mid-1980s Pact-to-NATO force ratio of completing the planned increase in our POMCUS stocks from 2+ to 8 division sets.

Figure 1



## o Implications for MBFR:

- Under the current Western Option III, the Soviets could move forces in the Eastern NGA to the WMDs with negligible impact on their deployment rate. Thus, even with the current Western proposal, MBFR will have only a very minor effect, if any, on post-M-day Soviet forces.

- Withdrawn U.S. forces, on the other hand, would be delayed by an additional four to five days if their equipment is pre-positioned, and by about a month if they are returned by sea (if by air they would merely displace other units).

**SECRET**

**~~SECRET~~**

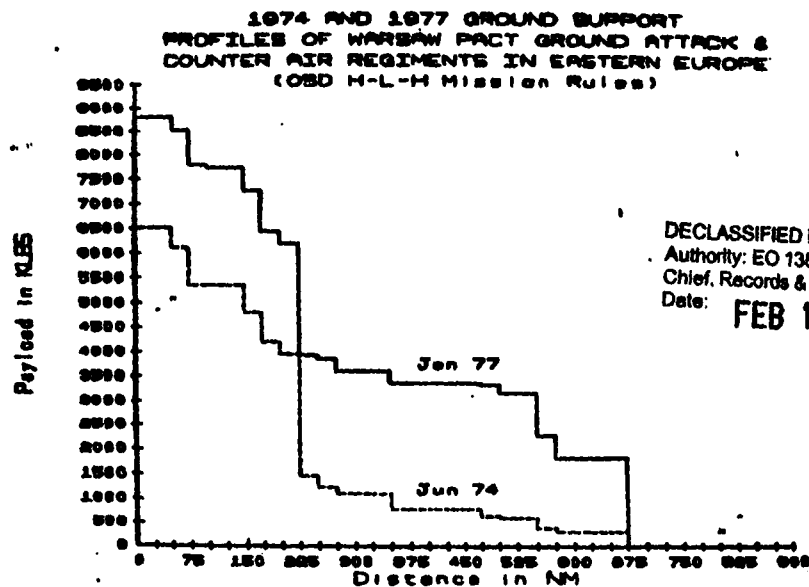
- Even with pre-positioning permitted for withdrawn U.S. forces, consistent with the West's negotiating position, care will have to be taken to insure that our large planned pre-positioning increase is not negated through the talks. Although the Western position envisions no equipment limits on NATO other than those implied by Option III nuclear withdrawals, the East has mentioned overall equipment limits as an outcome of Phase Two, and might also object to increases in U.S. equipment levels under the rubric of non-circumvention.

### Tacair Forces

- Pact tacair force levels in the NGA, and available as reinforcements, have remained roughly constant since the MBFR talks began; they are not expected to increase significantly in the future.

- The Pact's tacair force has undergone significant modernization since 1973, however. One good measure of their capability increase is the improving range/payload of their aircraft inventory, as indicated in the following graph.

Figure 2



- NATO's tacair forces have also been modernized within approximately constant force levels, but to a lesser degree than the Pact's. Consequently, NATO's large 1973 advantage in this area is eroding. To some extent, NATO's advantage in PGM's may temporarily compensate for the declining payload advantage until the Pact acquires PGM's of their own.

**~~SECRET~~**

Other Projected NATO Improvements

● Over the past two years a significant change in NATO's attitude toward the unsatisfactory NATO-Pact military balance, particularly in the Center Region, has occurred.

- The alliance-wide commitment to 3% real defense spending growth through the mid-1980s, contrasts with:

-- only 1 to 2% growth for non-U.S. NATO in 1970-76; and

-- a real decline in U.S. defense spending from FY 68 to FY 76.

- The generally enthusiastic acceptance of the Long-Term Defense Program promises greater and more efficient NATO performance in such areas as readiness, reinforcement, reserve forces, air defense, C<sup>3</sup>, EW, CW, logistics, and R/S/I.

● There are also strong indications that this recent transformation in NATO's attitude has attracted Soviet attention and interest. Whether this accounts for the seemingly more forthcoming Eastern MBFR position is perhaps debatable, but certainly that possibility exists. Examples of Soviet interest are:

- Brezhnev's complaints in a speech to the Komsomol Congress in April about "fabrications" used to justify increases in Western military forces; and

- his specific reference to the Long-Term Defense Program in his speech at Minsk in late June.

Conclusions

● Conditions surrounding the MBFR negotiations have changed considerably since 1973; the essential difference is that time now appears to be on our side.

- We are no longer under Congressional pressure to cut U.S. forces without corresponding concessions from the East.

- Instead, we now have all of our Center Region allies agreeing to correct some of NATO's more critical shortcomings over a period of at least several years.

- Conversely, from the Pact perspective, an early agreement on MBFR could look much more appealing than it did in 1973:

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL  
Authority: EO 13526  
Chief, Records & Declass Div. WHS  
Date:

FEB 12 2016

~~SECRET~~

-- As a means of slowing the overall momentum of NATO defense efforts.

-- As a way to set limits on specific types of Western force improvements (e.g., long-range TNF modernization).

● To the extent that the argument above is correct, NATO should be raising its standards as to what constitutes an acceptable MBFR agreement.

● At a minimum, this means being very careful to avoid jeopardizing NATO's force improvement plans unless the East is willing to offer something of commensurate value in return. Specific programs that should continue to be guarded carefully include, but are not limited to:

- Modernization of NATO's long-range theater nuclear forces.
- Increases in U.S. pre-positioned equipment.
- Expansion and readiness enhancement of NATO-allied reserve forces.

● To gain time for further analysis and discussions with our allies -- and to avoid giving the East a basis for accusing the West of an abrupt switch in negotiating stance -- we should adhere firmly to the basic principles of our present position, i.e.:

- Insist that the "data" issue is important and must be resolved.
- Resist Eastern pressures toward separate national ceilings.
- Resist any efforts to broaden the interpretation of the limits implied by Option III.
- Insure that any "non-circumvention" provision allows essential NATO improvements (e.g., TNF modernization and pre-positioning of equipment) to proceed, preferably by simply excluding any such provision.

● Given the potential pitfalls of Option III and the substantial dilution of the limitation on Soviet armor that would be given in return, we should consider withdrawing the mixed package from the Western offer.

● In a more positive vein, we should seriously consider whether the changed negotiating situation could make it possible to try for an MBFR agreement that would do more for the West's genuine security concerns than the position developed in 1973. This implies both broadening of scope and raising of expectations. Among possibilities that might be considered:

- With regard to theater nuclear forces, it seems reasonable that Pact modernization be traded for NATO's. For example, if the Pact agrees to limit the SS-20, we could limit the GLCM.

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL  
 Authority: EO 13526  
 Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS  
 Date: FEB 12 2016

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

- For the ground forces of the United States and USSR, equitable trades may be harder to generate. The basic problem here is with geographical factors stemming from the current boundaries of the NGA, as well as with verification.

-- As a best case, further study might indicate about equal time (approximately a week) to return Soviet Category I GSFG forces withdrawn to the WMDs and U.S. forces withdrawn to CONUS, provided we pre-position equipment for the latter. More likely, though, a serious constraint on Soviet reinforcement rates would require a broadening of the geographic area.

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL  
Authority: EO 13526  
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS  
Date: FEB 12 2016

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

August 15, 1978

Memo For THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE 15 AUG 1978

*SECDEF HAS SEEN*

Harold:

Attached for your information is an MBFR paper prepared by Paul Wolfowitz and Mike Leonard of my staff for inclusion in the black book for last week's SCC meeting. (If you've been through that book, then you've seen the paper, and can toss this all aside.) Because of the pressure of the PDM reclama sessions and the Status Report preparation, I've only just gotten around to reading the paper. It strikes me as well-written and persuasive, and I think it's worth your time if you haven't seen it already.

*R*

FORM 647 (Rev. 10-1-76) (GPO: 1977-0-250-800)  
GPO: 1977-0-250-800  
GPO: 1977-0-250-800  
GPO: 1977-0-250-800

Russell Murray, 2nd  
Assistant Secretary of Defense  
Program Analysis & Evaluation

Attachment

*I know you saw the  
book but don't know if  
you read this paper.  
Thom*

*(Handwritten initials and a circled mark)*

~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL  
Authority: EO 13526  
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS  
Date: FEB 12 2016