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Soviet crisis decision-making and the Gorbachev reforms

JEFFREY W. LEGRO

All of its [Warsaw Pact military doctrine's] provisions are designed for the solution of two cardinal goals: first of all, to prevent and avert both a nuclear and conventional war; and, second, to provide socialism with a reliable defence.

Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev, former Chief of the Soviet General Staff.²

Introduction

The Soviet Union led by President Mikhail Gorbachev has widely heralded the adoption of a new military doctrine which posits war prevention as its fundamental goal. Yet, as Akhromeyev acknowledges in the above quote, a reliable defence, or preparation for war, is also essential. What is not acknowledged, let alone resolved, is that the two desired goals – prevention and preparation – may come into sharp conflict, especially in a super-power crisis. Prevention of war may make it necessary to defer actions which ready forces for battle or reduce their vulnerability. If war appears likely, however, pressures will arise to initiate military preparations, if not operations. Yet if one side prepares, a spiral may start which could end in an otherwise avoidable conflict or even a nuclear exchange.³ How will the USSR manage this dilemma?

The most thorough students of Soviet decisions in crises posit that policy is largely determined by situational factors such as Soviet perceptions of the balance of interest, the balance of military power, and the likely resolve of the adversary.⁴ However, it is also necessary to examine the institutions and organizational procedures which influence the formation of these perceptions and their translation into policy. The USSR's current internal restructuring suggests that a reappraisal of the domestic context of decision-making which will shape future Soviet behaviour is appropriate.

The Gorbachev era has promised to alter two distinguishing features of traditional Soviet national security policy related to the use of force: the offensive orientation of Soviet strategy and force posture; and the autonomous role of the military in strategic planning and threat assessment. Under the 'new thinking', the USSR claims to have a defensive military doctrine. Political means are stressed over military ones in the resolution

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of international disputes, and there are indications that the role of the armed forces in formulating strategy will be decreased.

How will the proposed changes in military policy and institutional arrangements affect Soviet choices on the use of force in a super-power crisis in Europe? This question is important because it relates both to the operational significance of the new thinking in military affairs and to potential Soviet behaviour in an East-West clash. The following analysis first appraises Soviet crisis decision-making under the 'old thinking' in terms of: (i) the choices regarding the use of force which may confront Kremlin leaders in a crisis; and (ii) the impact of political and military authority on decisions. This analysis serves as a necessary base-line for assessing Gorbachev's reforms and their effect on the trade-offs which the USSR may have to make in a future confrontation.

The offence and traditional Soviet dilemmas

One trait of the USSR's security policy which is central to crisis decisions is the offensive nature of its military strategy and force posture. Its war plans have traditionally emphasized deep offensive operations based on seizing the initiative, surprise, concentration of forces and mobility. Soviet force posture has given this strategy credibility with a superior quantity of mobile ground force systems. Furthermore, the Warsaw Pact's strategy is based on that of the USSR and, in the event of war, Eastern Bloc armies would be integrated within the Soviet national command. NATO, on the other hand, has a defensive posture without the decision-making structure, military capabilities or doctrine which might provide incentives for a major offensive in a crisis. Other things being equal, this fundamental asymmetry between NATO and the Pact leaves the Soviet leadership with the responsibility of the 'last clear chance' to avoid conflict.⁵

This responsibility is further heightened by the interaction of Soviet and NATO military strategies, which threatens to lead to significant escalation should war break out. Soviet military strategy has stressed offensive air and ground operations aimed at achieving victory by disrupting the enemy's rear and preventing a coherent defence, especially by striking at his command and control and nuclear systems.⁶ NATO's Flexible Response strategy calls for the first use of nuclear weapons if it is unable to defend successfully with conventional means. Success for Soviet plans would entail near total pre-emption of NATO nuclear capabilities; NATO's anticipation of this gives its leaders an incentive for early dispersal of forces. Yet, the Soviet ability to carry out pre-emption is lessened after NATO dispersal has occurred, giving the USSR an incentive to strike early. This synergism creates pressure for a quick decision regarding the use of force, while also raising the stakes of such a choice.

This general context of the USSR's prevention/preparation dilemma serves as a back-drop for specific types of trade-offs which Soviet leaders may have to confront in a conflict. Four issues are outlined below which Soviet academic and military analyses indicate could demand a particu-

larly difficult choice between competing goals related to the use of force and nuclear weapons.

DIPLOMACY VERSUS SHOW OF FORCE

A first area of difficult choices involves the relative weight of political and military means to resolve a confrontation. The importance of political means is a constant theme in Soviet analyses of past super-power clashes. The Arab–Israeli 1973 October War is depicted as a successful example of the US and USSR working together to prevent a conflict from escalating.⁷ Similarly, political commentator Fedor Burlatskii portrays compromise and President Kennedy's foregoing nuclear diplomacy as essential to the resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis.⁸

While Soviet writings give negotiation priority in the resolution of crises, 'use of the military instrument' also occupies an important place. Authors tend to view the USSR's warfighting might as crucial for inhibiting 'imperialists' from starting wars or using nuclear weapons.⁹ For example, during the 1961 Berlin Crisis the Soviet resumption of nuclear testing and the dispatch of tanks to confront Western forces at the border are described as cooling 'hotheads' in the US, and forcing the West to get used to a 'new state of affairs in Berlin'.¹⁰

Diplomatic and military means are not considered equal 'tools' in terms of risk, however. This is where the decision-making dilemma arises. Military means may be useful for crisis leverage, but they risk the costs of undesired escalation. M.A. Gareyev, now a Deputy Chief of the General Staff, has noted the difficulty of returning to peacetime once military units have been deployed.¹¹ The notion that it is hard to determine where a particular show of force will lead may have been reinforced when, following the manipulation of Soviet airborne alerts during the 1973 October War, the US moved its nuclear alert levels to DEFCON III.¹²

SHOW OF FORCE VERSUS MILITARY SURPRISE

A second related dilemma involves a possible choice between threats or shows of force which might limit a crisis by demonstrating resolve, and a desire for surprise should military action be deemed necessary. Soviet military thought places a high premium on surprise.¹³ *Maskirovka* (deception) is often cited as an essential element in catching the opponent unprepared. It misleads the enemy as to intention, and, should hostilities erupt, might provide a crucial advantage.¹⁴ At the same time, a show, or limited use of force is considered a useful crisis management tool.

A display of force to indicate resolve in the hope of avoiding large-scale conflict, however, may counteract the maintenance of normal operating procedures useful for gaining strategic surprise.¹⁵ The USSR has rarely, if ever, alerted its strategic forces in a crisis.¹⁶ Is this due to a desire to avoid nuclear war, or to maintain the possibility of surprise, or both?¹⁷ Whether or not strategic deception might be pursued would probably depend on the perceived probability of war and the interests at stake in a given situation.

CONVENTIONAL CONFLICT VERSUS PRE-EMPTION OR FIRST STRIKE IN A NUCLEAR WAR

A third apparent conflict of objectives could arise if a political confrontation were to develop into an armed clash. The emergence of a belief in the Soviet Union that a super-power conflict could be limited to conventional operations has received considerable attention.¹⁸ Strictly conventional operations are desirable because nuclear weapons complicate ground force operations, and entail the risk of a major exchange which could destroy the Soviet homeland. But while military writings reveal a preference for conventional warfare, they also emphasize the importance of the first large-scale, if not pre-emptive, use of nuclear weapons. The initial massive attack is seen as having the ability to cause heavy losses, disrupt operations in the rear, and put the survival of a nation in jeopardy. In short, it could decide the course of the war.¹⁹

The dilemma faced by Soviet leaders is that the destructive and operational consequences of nuclear war make the choice to use nuclear weapons a difficult one early in a conflict,²⁰ yet if they wait too long they risk missing the opportunity to use a pre-emptive strike to minimize damage to their own forces. Such a delay might even lead to eventual defeat.²¹ The solution appears to lie in anticipating when the enemy is going to launch a nuclear attack. Exactly how this can be foreseen is somewhat vague in the literature. One author remarks that preparations would give the launch away, but he admits that in modern times such a warning would be more difficult to detect. Nonetheless, 'it is not very probable that the aggressor would start a war without any preparations whatsoever', implying that enemy movement would be the major indicator.²² The problem with this solution, and the crux of the dilemma, is that in a crisis many precautionary moves taken by the West (i.e., movements of troops and ships, surges in communication signals, and dispersal of weapons) might resemble preparation to launch an attack.

FIRM CONTROL OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS VERSUS TIMELY USE

A fourth decision involving competing goals in a crisis relates to command, control and use of nuclear weapons. The USSR places great stress on firm civilian command and control, especially in the area of nuclear armaments,²³ yet timely action is also a highly-valued principle, one that has gained importance in recent Soviet writings.²⁴

Firm control of military forces, especially nuclear weapons, may hamper effective use in a timely fashion, but, if the past is an indicator, Soviet planners will opt for control. It appears that in a super-power clash Soviet nuclear force alert levels have not been raised. In fact, if anything, Soviet crisis experiences have taught the need to value control. Recent information suggests that one of the most dangerous actions of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the shooting down of an American U-2, was carried out by a local Soviet commander on his own authority.²⁵ Indeed, in Soviet writings the rise of inadvertence as the primary path to nuclear war may suggest an even stronger preference by the leadership for firm control.²⁶

Political and military authority in crisis decision-making

Although many factors will play a role in the resolution of these dilemmas, the relative weight of political and military authority could be a critical factor. The decision-making process itself can be significant because of the often uncertain environment of crises which allows for different interpretations (and the biases that motivate them) of events. The civil-military relationship only matters for decision-making to the extent that the views of politicians and soldiers differ, and to the degree that each has a say in decisions. A common view of Soviet decision-making is that political and military views do not conflict, and, when they do, political authority dominates.²⁷ While this view is in many respects correct, it may need qualification, particularly in crises. Political and military preferences may clash over certain issues, with the military having an important influence on decisions due to its near monopoly of strategic planning and threat assessment.

TENSIONS BETWEEN POLITICAL AND MILITARY PERSPECTIVES

The potential for a clash of perspectives is seen in the two distinct levels which comprise Soviet military doctrine. The socio-political level considers the nature, objectives and initiation of war. This level is controlled by the political leadership and is considered dominant. The military-technical level deals with issues of military strategy, science and operations and is considered the realm of military professionals.²⁸ The two levels reflect the dichotomy between prevention of and preparation for war.²⁹ In peacetime, the two need not clash, yet in a crisis the trade-offs between them are likely to be more intense.

Evidence of tensions between political doctrine and parts of the military literature has involved a number of topics related to a future conflict, including victory in a nuclear war, first use of nuclear weapons, and the weighing of political and military means in a crisis. Brezhnev's 1977 Tula speech touched off a new phase in the evolution of the socio-political level of military doctrine when he declared that the USSR does not seek military superiority. This initiative eventually evolved into an official denial that victory is possible in a nuclear war and a 'no-first-use' pledge. Military writers, however, have expressed contrary views.³⁰ The USSR's no-first-use pledge seems at odds with the heavy emphasis that the first use of nuclear weapons has received in the military literature.

In terms of specific crisis decisions, military authors express concern that prevention may be given priority over preparation. The historical analogy used is Stalin's choices at the beginning of World War II when 'the political measures that were taken to avoid war were not correctly linked with concern over maintaining the armed forces at a high state of vigilance and combat readiness.'³¹ The author argues that political and military methods need to be combined, and rejects the idea that preparation hurts prevention. He clearly implies that, should the two come into conflict, preparation must come first.³² Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov has argued that the military should be given more command authority in peacetime to

allow for a timely response in crises. The political leadership may disagree with his priority of timely response over firm control, and Dale Herspring speculates that this was a reason for Ogarkov's ouster.³³

Differences between political and military preferences should not be blown out of proportion and, in print at least, are more the exception than the rule. It is too simplistic to equate civilians exclusively with the emphasis that the socio-political level of doctrine places on prevention, and military men with the offensive-preparation orientation of the military-technical level. One should note, however, the existence of specific institutional values, and the degree to which these affect decision-making. By Soviet accounts, the Red Army has been the physical and ideological repository of the armed offensive since the Revolution,³⁴ with the defence of the country as its *raison d'être*. Because the military plays a crucial role in assessing threats, formulating options and implementing policy, this offensive bias could have an important influence, particularly when enemy action is vague and decision-making time constrained.

POLITICAL AND MILITARY AUTHORITY IN CRISIS DECISION-MAKING

Research on Soviet civil-military relations clearly highlights the dominance of political authority.³⁵ Historically, the Politburo has ousted generals, never the reverse. Even in conflict situations, political authority has reigned supreme, be it Stalin in World War II or Khrushchev during the Cuban Missile Crisis. This is not an issue contested by the armed forces – as military writers have pointed out, political aspects can dominate military ones even in war.³⁶ Especially concerning release authority for nuclear weapons, civilian authority is undoubtedly decisive.³⁷

Nonetheless, the military retains a certain autonomy that allows it implicit authority. Condoleezza Rice has termed this relationship 'loose coupling', a system whereby the political leadership sets the guidelines of policy and has final authority, but the military has responsibility for option formulation and implementation.³⁸ This responsibility is one reason why professional soldiers can have a significant implicit influence. In addition, the nature of the crisis situation, because the threat of conflict is involved, gives the military increased access to policy.

This is not to argue that the military dominates decisions in crises. In fact, because of the significance of such choices, politicians can be expected to be intimately involved. And when political and military viewpoints explicitly clash, the politician's voice will be decisive. But the military will play a key role in defining the situation – what the nature of the threat is, what the feasible military alternatives are, and how they should be implemented. Thus, to the extent that military perspectives diverge from political ones, they could affect Soviet behaviour.

Military monopoly

A distinguishing feature of Soviet national security decision-making is the armed forces' traditional monopoly of military expertise.³⁹ There have generally been no significant alternative sources of analysis on security

matters. For example, there is no Central Committee department which covers the issues handled by the General Staff or the Defence Ministry. In the US, there is a civilian structure in the form of the Office of the Secretary of Defense which parallels the military command.⁴⁰ In addition, the US defence establishment makes use of civilian institutes, such as the RAND Corporation and the Institute for Defense Analysis, which do extensive research on military affairs. Soviet research institutes have not in the past had the expertise or access to data on military issues, and the Soviet leadership has had virtually nowhere else to turn for strategic assessment except to the General Staff.⁴¹

The military jealously guards this monopoly from intrusions by other institutions, cloaking details of its policy in secrecy. At the SALT I talks, Soviet officers reportedly did not want military matters discussed even in front of the USSR's civilian officials.⁴² Authors from Soviet research institutes such as the Institute for World Economy and International Relations or the Institute for the Study of the USA and Canada must rely on Western sources of military information for their work, and, until recently, never wrote about the military-technical side of doctrine.⁴³ Military studies are taught exclusively in military academies to armed forces personnel. Both in experience and structure, there has traditionally been little military expertise at the civilian staff level.

This exclusiveness is important because military matters can alter political objectives. Gen.-Col. Povaly has argued that the aim of war must correspond to strategic capabilities, concepts and planning, which may require the changing of political objectives even in a conflict.⁴⁴ Although the KGB obviously plays a role in foreign intelligence assessment, it is the General Staff, and its intelligence branch, the GRU, that largely controls and assesses the information on strategic capabilities, planning and military threats. That this information can exercise leverage on political decisions is evident in the realm of budget decisions. Khrushchev remarked to Eisenhower in 1959 that the military was able to lay claim to additional resources, despite political preferences, by predicting inferiority if the funds were not allocated.⁴⁵ Although budgetary politics are certainly different to conflict decisions, this anecdote is suggestive of the way in which the military's authority might allow institutional biases to shape policy.⁴⁶

Military access in crises

The potential adaptation of the Soviet leadership structure for the purposes of managing a conflict may increase military access and influence. In World War II the State Defence Committee (GKO) assumed supreme command of the country. The present day Defence Council is thought to be the GKO's analogue, and would serve as the transitional command organization between peace and war. Thus, it is probably the locus of crisis decision-making.⁴⁷ While the Defence Council's exact composition is unknown, it is clear that military officials play a key role in its operations. At a minimum, the General Staff acts as a secretariat and in so doing is able to

'shape both the agenda and the decisions in ways consistent with their own personal and institutional preferences.'⁴⁸ At a maximum, military officials may serve directly as members. In principle, the military's access to decision-making, given its expertise and control of strategic information, means that its preference for preparation could bias policy in that direction.

THE PAST AND FUTURE OF PREVENTION/PREPARATION CHOICES

The historical record on this issue, to the extent that it is known, however, may suggest exactly the opposite. Military men appear to have been hesitant, and political leaders – especially Khrushchev – belligerent in crises.⁴⁹ For example, there seems to have been a division in the leadership over Berlin, with many feeling that the USSR was not ready for a large-scale war. The spy Oleg Penkovsky asserted that many generals wondered why Berlin was worth such risks.⁵⁰ The decision to put missiles in Cuba was reportedly made exclusively by the political leadership. It has been suggested that Deputy Minister of Defence and Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Rocket Forces Marshal K.S. Moskalenko was replaced by Marshal S.S. Biryuzov because of the former's resistance to the plan.⁵¹

Despite this record, there are at least two arguments why it may not hold true in a future confrontation in Europe (assuming, of course, that old thinking continues to dominate military policy). First, the nature of emerging technologies, which increases the accuracy, range and destructive power of even conventional weapons, makes institutions and the opinions of top military personnel even more important. When decision-making time is short, and the situation during a crisis uncertain, standard operating procedures institutionalized in peacetime could constrain or determine options in crises. One example which may be relevant is the Soviet downing of the Korean Air Lines plane on 1 September 1983, purportedly carried out without the senior leadership being consulted.⁵² In addition, the degree and nature of military influence may depend on the views and relative power of the military man at the top at any given time. A crisis situation involving a minister of defence who believes strongly in pre-emption and has the influence that Marshal Grechko had in 1975 could lead to more assertive military behaviour.

A second consideration bearing on soldiers' attitudes towards the use of force is the military balance. At the time of the Berlin and Cuban crises, the US had superiority in terms of capabilities for a general nuclear war, which is what Soviet military doctrine expected to result from any clash. Military leaders were most familiar with the potential consequences of this inferiority, and it is not surprising that they were wary of a major confrontation. Today, Soviet military thought allows for the possibility of an extended confrontation.⁵³ This change, given Soviet parity at the nuclear level and potential superiority at the conventional level in Central Europe, means that the likely outcome of a conflict may be much more favourable to the USSR, especially – in the military's eyes at least – if the traditionally preferred surprise offensive is implemented.

The offensive, military authority and the Gorbachev era

Gorbachev's new thinking is directly relevant to Soviet choices regarding the use of force because it has promised to change the two features of the USSR's national security structure highlighted above: the offensive orientation of the Soviet force posture and strategy, and the important implicit role of the professional military in national security decisions. How has the new thinking affected these two characteristics?

DECLINE OF THE OFFENSIVE?

Soviet military policy is clearly in a transitional phase, but identifying new developments and judging their significance is more complex. A useful way to disaggregate change in military policy is in terms of concepts, force structure and operational strategy. 'Concepts' refers to declaratory policy on the role and nature of Soviet armed forces. 'Force structure' is the physical characteristics of the military. 'Operational strategy' concerns the methods for employing military forces. In addition to identifying change, the impact of any differences must also be addressed. The central issue is whether the current Soviet offensive strategy will evolve in a way that is less threatening to the West and more conducive to crisis stability. This threat can be judged with regard to Soviet capabilities and incentives in three scenarios: (i) a short-warning attack with available ready forces located in Eastern Europe; (ii) a limited-mobilization attack which adds near-ready forces located in the USSR's Western Military Districts that would require some manpower and preparation; and (iii) a full-scale mobilized attack, which in addition to ready and near-ready forces would include cadre units in the USSR that need extensive manning and training. A review of political and military views and actions will better clarify the nature of modifications in the Soviet offensive.

Political views and the new doctrine

Gorbachev has sought to redefine the Soviet attitude towards security matters. New thinking declares that political means will now be dominant over military ones in resolving problems in the international arena; prevention of war is the guiding theme of Soviet military policy, and, most important for this analysis, military doctrine is now defensive.⁵⁴ Civilian analysts have responded by offering ideas that would entail significant change in the current offensive strategy and capabilities. New proposals have included: calls for unilateral reductions; the need to extend the defensive orientation of doctrine into the realm of force structure, strategy and tactics; adjustments in military forces and exercises; and a liquidation of the forces intended for conducting deep offensive operations.⁵⁵

Gorbachev added meat to the bones of this conceptual framework with his December 1988 UN pledge to reduce unilaterally Soviet forces aimed at NATO.⁵⁶ Given current strategy and force structure, this reduction would detract from Soviet capabilities to launch a standing-start attack against the West. Highly mobile fire-power such as tanks are allegedly

going to be replaced by stationary defence-oriented equipment such as anti-tank, air defence and engineering systems.⁵⁷

Gorbachev's motives appear to be linked to his efforts to reinvigorate the failing Soviet economy. The new thinking in security affairs is driven by a desire to ameliorate tensions and competition in the international arena, thereby allowing future defence resources to be diverted to modernization of the USSR's technological and industrial base. Internally, the new doctrine allows Gorbachev to gain control over the national security agenda (and its budgetary implications), which would otherwise be dominated by traditional thinking and interests.⁵⁸

Military views and the new doctrine

At a general level, military officials voice agreement with the new concepts, and indicate that Soviet military policy is changing. Leading Soviet generals have declared that military doctrine is now defensive, with prevention of war as its main priority. Furthermore, it is explicitly stated that these changes will be reflected at the military-technical level of doctrine in terms of modified organizational structure and strategies. For example, Gen. Gareyev states that the new doctrine has led to revisions in military manuals, academic programmes at military institutions and combat training, with a strong focus on defence.⁵⁹ Army Gen. Moiseyev, the new Chief of the General Staff, notes that military theoreticians have not paid adequate attention to defensive combat actions in the past, and calls for more attention in this area.⁶⁰

However, some military writings seem to diverge from political themes when the specifics of doctrine are discussed.⁶¹ For example, although the Pact has officially adopted a defensive doctrine, military authors agree that this does not rule out counter-offensives, even if they are 'decisive' and destroy, rather than just repel, the enemy.⁶² Head of the Air Defence Forces, Army Gen. Tret'yak, logically claims that it is impossible to turn back an attack without counter-offensive operations.⁶³ Nonetheless, if sufficient offensive capabilities are required to take the battle to the enemy's territory and rout him, a case could be made for retaining the present posture. A sceptic might wonder how Soviet military requirements will be different from the early 70s, when it was recognized that: 'In some conditions the enemy invasion must be repelled before the initiation of the offensive.'⁶⁴ In fact, the restructuring of Soviet forces as announced by Gorbachev would lend a more defensive cast to forces deployed in Eastern Europe, but would leave significant offensive potential in the Western Military Districts of the USSR.

The military does have interests in defence, but they may differ from those of the new thinking because they pre-date Gorbachev's leadership. Professional soldiers have noted that the development of new conventional capabilities would blur the lines between offence and defence, since they allow the defender to defeat the attacker's preparations before the invasion is ever carried out. There is concern that new NATO technologies of the future might threaten the viability of the Soviet offensive force structure

and strategy.⁶⁵ More specifically, it is feared that the deep-strike strategies, such as NATO's Follow-on Forces Attack (FOFA), backed up by highly accurate munitions, would thwart Soviet plans based on the effective movement of second echelon forces into the forward battle area.⁶⁶ The main objective of professional soldiers in the current reformulation of doctrine is not specifically to prevent war by adopting a defensive strategy, but instead to defend against emerging threats to current strategy.

The Soviet military's focus on an effective, rather than strictly 'defensive', operational strategy is reflected in writings which attempt to clarify the meaning of the new thinking in security affairs at the military-technical level of doctrine. Unlike political statements and Gorbachev's reduction plan, these writings indicate that not all aspects of the evolving Soviet military policy will necessarily be positive for crisis stability and Western security. This idea is supported by a review of discussions of four crucial topics: the future of the offence in Soviet strategy; the nature of defensive operations; the new force structure; and force readiness.

First, although in Soviet doctrine defence is now officially considered the dominant form of operations, the offence continues to occupy the place of honour at the military-technical level. Military officials emphasize the need for counter-offensives that seem equal in scale to offensive operations under the old thinking. The new attention given to defence could lead to an enhanced ability to conduct defensive operations (e.g., reducing vulnerability to FOFA attacks), while retaining a deep attack potential. One article suggests that to correct for past negligence of defensive capabilities the percentage of exercises practising defence should be 'far higher than it is now'. A fifty-fifty ratio is recommended as the designated target for training in operations in attack and defence,⁶⁷ indicating that offensive abilities will not be neglected.

The nature of future 'defensive operations' may also be more threatening than the phrase suggests. The general concept of defence in Soviet military thought is seen as a way to create both superiority over an adversary and the conditions to shift to the offence.⁶⁸ Akhromeyev and Moiseyev have emphasized that the new strategy will be an active, aggressive defence which does not entirely cede the initiative to the aggressor.⁶⁹ In the *Soviet Military Encyclopaedic Dictionary*, 'defence activeness' (*aktivnost' oborony*) includes 'hitting the adversary with airstrikes and artillery fire during the time the adversary is preparing for an attack.'⁷⁰ Indeed, Soviet commentators have reportedly stated that new technologies allow the defence to take the initiative and defeat an offensive before it is launched.⁷¹ Such a 'defensive' concept allows for pre-emption and could lead to escalation should NATO precautionary actions be misinterpreted as preparation for attack. Of course, 'allowing for' pre-emption is different from earlier writings where it is portrayed as a crucial element of military success.

Gorbachev's UN speech promises that the USSR will have fewer forces facing the West, but accompanying changes in the concepts for employing these forces will represent a continuing concern for NATO. First, as Gareyev has stated, the less the quantity of Soviet forces, the greater the

importance of creating highly mobile reserves for rapid manoeuvres.⁷² Such mobility, however, represents a threat because it could be used to move forces from the rear to the front and concentrate them rapidly, particularly in a limited-mobilization attack. Second, Gen. Yazov has written that Soviet military policy will emphasize quality rather than quantity, including a more efficient organizational structure and better trained troops.⁷³ Again, a leaner, meaner – and more mobile – Soviet army will not necessarily reduce the threat.

A final theme of the new doctrine which merits attention is force readiness. High-level officials note that the defensive orientation of Soviet doctrine concedes the initiation of conflict to the enemy, thus demanding an increase in the readiness of troops so as to compensate for this disadvantage.⁷⁴ Since even after Gorbachev's cuts the USSR will retain advantages in important categories of weapons (e.g., artillery) in the forward area, an increase in readiness levels, especially if units in the Western Military Districts are included, may reinforce the image of a loaded spring which might easily be released in a crisis. Even more troubling are Moiseyev's statements that not only combat readiness, but also *mobilization* readiness should be improved. Given the present Soviet advantages in this area, such an improvement would make a mobilized attack even more of a challenge to Western security. This development, in conjunction with the others mentioned above, indicates that not all changes in operational strategy will prove to be less threatening to NATO.

DECLINE OF THE MILITARY MONOPOLY?

Gorbachev's leadership also promises to weaken military control of war-making expertise and information. In the realm of expertise, civilians appear to be playing a greater role in military analysis. A new programme is being set up in 'political-military affairs' which is apparently aimed at educating think-tank academics in military studies.⁷⁵ Civilian authors are now writing on topics previously covered only by professional soldiers.⁷⁶ There were rumours that a new section for threat analysis would be established in the International Department under the now retired A. Dobrynin.⁷⁷ Military officers who are alumni of Gen. Chervov's arms-control directorate of the General Staff are working in various government departments, including the Central Committee and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' arms-control and policy-planning departments.⁷⁸ The Committee of Soviet Scientists for Peace and Against Nuclear War is a civilian organization which has influenced Soviet arms-control and security policy by participating in the Soviet response to the US Strategic Defense Initiative and conventional arms control.⁷⁹

Soviet civilian analysts are also pressing the military to release more information concerning military doctrine and the size and composition of the armed forces. One senior analyst and official, Georgi Arbatov, has argued that military secrecy began in the 1930s (during the period of Stalin's 'deviation'), and is not a normal part of socialism. He states that in Lenin's time military affairs were discussed openly, which actually

enhanced, rather than harmed, Soviet defence capability. This openness, he contends, 'strengthened the political positions of the [USSR] by not making it divert excessive amounts of limited resources to military needs, and it helped our state avoid major mistakes in diplomacy and military affairs.'⁸⁰

More important than the desires of these *institutchiki* are the apparent intentions of the leadership. Minister of Foreign Affairs Eduard Shevardnadze declared in a major speech in July 1988 that all departments engaged in military activity should come under the control of a higher authority. He specifically called for an increase in the flow of information to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs so that developments in defence matters could be assessed in terms of their correspondence to international agreements and political positions. Shevardnadze notes that, in the past, the military sphere was not under 'democratic control'.⁸¹ The USSR is apparently going to establish a Commission on Military Affairs in the new Soviet parliament which will oversee the activities of the Ministry of Defence.⁸²

It is likely that professional soldiers are not entirely happy about all the changes and, at least in their writings, are fighting back. Military officials acknowledge the need to listen to proposals from different groups, including troops, veterans and civilians. Yet, when specific notions are discussed an attitude of non-tolerance is apparent. For example, Moiseyev has criticized 'non-competent' articles that question the military threat and the defensive measures being taken to meet it.⁸³ Gareyev maintains that military science is a separate social science discipline requiring specific skills and experience. He cites M.V. Frunze's criticism of the 'Trotskyites', who did not believe there was a need for any separate science.⁸⁴ This analogy may reflect a military belief that issues related to the use of force should be left to those who pursue them as a career – the officers of the armed forces. As one Soviet civilian resentfully stated 'They [professional soldiers] think they are the only ones who understand military matters.'⁸⁵ For the time-being, the military appears to be reacting slowly to the call for *glasnost*, yet the political handwriting is on the wall: under Gorbachev the armed forces will become increasingly pressured to explain positions and share information with other governmental organizations.⁸⁶ In the realm of policy, Gorbachev's force reduction plan was reportedly one of the first times that civilian analysts participated actively in discussions on strategy and force structure.⁸⁷

The impact of the new thinking on Soviet crisis decision-making

The impact of Gorbachev's innovations in national security policy can be evaluated with respect to the aspects of conflict decision-making developed above. The assumption in the following sections is that the USSR's plans to reduce its forces will be carried out as indicated. It is thus necessarily speculative because it refers to the context of decision-making two years hence, rather than the present situation.

THE OFFENCE AND TRADITIONAL DILEMMAS

The influence of the new thinking on the Soviet penchant for the offensive shows varying results in the areas of concepts, force structure and operational strategy. In terms of concepts, both political and military leaders have recognized the importance of paying more attention to defence, albeit for different reasons. The West should welcome this declaratory line, yet what ultimately matters is its effect on force structure and strategy. Announced Warsaw Pact reductions, if implemented as indicated, will significantly limit the ability of the East to launch a successful standing-start attack. In terms of a limited or full-scale mobilization attack, however, the Soviet Union will retain powerful capabilities. Discussions of operational strategy reveal similar mixed trends. The Soviet military is paying more attention to defensive operations and the skills such missions would require, but the theatre offensive is still seen as the path to success in a conflict, and the problem of effectively bringing the powerful second echelon forces located in the Western part of the USSR to bear in a 'counter-offensive' is being carefully studied.

There have been modifications in traditional Soviet military thinking and planning which could have consequences for crisis decision-making. Most important, leaders will have more options than the 'use them or lose them' offensive. If Soviet declaratory statements about restructuring hold true, the USSR will also have capabilities to react defensively should war break out. Thus, NATO precautionary moves need not automatically unleash a Soviet offensive. Given a reduction of Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces, a short-warning attack in a crisis where mobilization has not occurred would be extremely unlikely.

What will not be changed, however, is the Soviet capability to implement a substantial limited and full-scale mobilized attack. Any preparations which bring Category II and III troops up to strength and heading west would represent a significant threat and dilemma for NATO. What would the West do if the USSR were to prepare and move forces forward without initiating hostilities? The tension between NATO's FOFA strategy, aimed at interdicting the forward movement of troops, and its defensive nature would be sorely tested. Thus, while indicated Soviet changes in military policy would improve crisis stability in a short confrontation, there might be greater instability in the realm of reinforcement. A significant Soviet improvement in mobilization could affect the balance of forces decisively. There would be pressures on both to start reinforcement at the first sign of rear area preparations. Such a dynamic, as in World War I, could be tantamount to war.

SPECIFIC DILEMMAS

Political versus military means

The new thinking will not eliminate the difficult choices facing the USSR, but it could lessen the escalatory potential of certain types of Soviet military diplomacy. For example, to the extent that Soviet strategy is not dependent upon rapid deep offensive action in the initial period of war,

Soviet shows of force or precautionary military moves in the forward area (which do not involve mobilization) might be less threatening to the West and, thus, less likely to lead to an undesired escalatory spiral.

Show of force versus military surprise

This dilemma would be ameliorated if seizing the initiative and strategic surprise were to become a lower priority in Soviet strategy. Comments by Akhromeyev and others have suggested that the USSR plans to remain on the defensive for three weeks after the initiation of conflict.⁸⁸ If the Soviet Union is thus prepared to forego a surprise offensive, it may be more willing to demonstrate resolve through a show of force.

Conventional preference versus first nuclear use

A Soviet military posture that is better suited to defend against an attack, particularly by reducing the vulnerability of its forces to modern conventional and nuclear weapons, would be less pressured to pre-empt enemy systems so as to minimize damage. This is not to say that once war appears imminent, pre-emption would not be a desired option. However, in crises where the adversary is taking precautions, but his intentions are unclear, the Soviet leadership will have the option and greater confidence that assuming the defensive will not mean defeat.

Firm control versus timely use

To the extent that Soviet strategy is not dependent upon an early strike at NATO's aircraft, nuclear depots and equipment at POMCUS sites before precautionary dispersal, Soviet leaders would be more likely to exercise their preference for firm control of forces, as pressure for early use would be lessened. Tensions between the two aims, of course, remain.

POLITICAL AND MILITARY AUTHORITY IN CRISES

Under Gorbachev, the military's authority has been weakened in the two areas of expertise and information where it has traditionally maintained a near monopoly. Civilians have been encouraged to contribute to debates on strategy, force structure and threat assessment. The armed forces are under pressure to release more data on the size and structure of military forces, especially to other government entities such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Academy of Sciences. Increasingly, the military is having to defend its traditional position in public fora. Soldiers will continue to have considerable input into decisions involving military use; what is different is that control over war plans and procedures in peacetime are being driven by political priorities that have channelled the military's budding interest in defence into significant modifications in force structure, which in turn require changes in operational strategy.

Conclusion

In short, Gorbachev's reforms do have implications for Soviet conflict decision-making. As the works of Hannes Adomeit and others have

pointed out, Soviet perceptions of the balance, the interests at stake, and the relative resolve in a specific situation will obviously be important. Yet how these perceptions are formed can be influenced by institutional arrangements and decision-making procedures. Under the old thinking, the strong offensive nature of the USSR's planning and force structure and the important implicit role of the military in decision-making could constrain the way Soviet leaders perceive the military threat in crises and the plausible options at hand, thus biasing choices towards preparation. Under the new thinking, at least front-line defensive operational capabilities are to be strengthened at the expense of offensive potential. In addition, Soviet military theory and threat assessment have been opened to input from a wider spectrum of interests. As a result, leaders will have options in crises other than the rapid shock offensive. This is not to say that the USSR would never use force or launch an attack; it retains significant capabilities for a mobilized offensive that could significantly threaten Western security. Thus, as the unreinforced short-warning attack becomes less likely with the implementation of Gorbachev's reductions, the military threat to NATO will become increasingly linked to the magnitude and efficiency of Soviet mobilization.

Notes

(N.B. Legro and Herspring have used different transliteration systems.)

¹ For useful comments on this article, the author is indebted to Hannes Adomeit, Kurt Campbell, Arnold Horelick, Bill Jarosz, Stephen Meyer, Fred Wehling and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Soviet Security Studies Working Group, including Jeff Checkel, Joel Ostrow, Rich Phillips, Jeff Sands, Judy Twigg and Jeanette Voas.

² Marshal S. Akhromeyev, 'The Doctrine of Preventing War, Defending Peace and Socialism', *World Marxist Review*, December 1987, p. 40; in Russian see *Problemy mira i sotsializma*, December 1987.

³ Robert Jervis, 'Cooperation under the Security Dilemma', *World Politics*, January 1978, pp. 167-214.

⁴ See Hannes Adomeit, 'Soviet Crisis Prevention and Management: Why and When do the Soviet Leaders Take Risks?', *Orbis*, Spring 1986, pp. 42-64, and his book *Soviet Risk-Taking and Crisis Behaviour: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982). Douglas M. Hart, 'Soviet Approaches to Crisis Management: The Military Dimension', *Survival*,

September/October 1984, p. 222, notes that 'the Soviet Union is very event-oriented'.

⁵ See Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 43-9.

⁶ Philip Petersen and John Hines, 'The Conventional Offensive in Soviet Theater Strategy', *Orbis*, Fall 1983, pp. 695-739.

⁷ V. Zhurkin (ed.), *SShA i mezhdunarodno-politicheskie krisisi* (Moscow: Nauka, 1975), p. 291.

⁸ F. Burlatskii, 'Chernaia subbota', *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, 23 November 1983, pp. 9-10.

⁹ For example, see Gen.-Lt. D. Volkogonov, 'Voprosy teorii: voina i mir v iadernyi vek', *Pravda*, 30 August 1985, p. 3; Gen. I. Shavrov (ed.), *Lokal'nye voiny: istoriia i sovremennost'* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1981), esp. p. 229.

¹⁰ A.A. Gromyko, *President Kennedy's 1036 Days* (1971), translated by Philip Gavon (Washington DC: International Library Inc., 1973), p. 149. This same point was made in a *Pravda* editorial on 23 July 1962, cited in Hannes Adomeit, *Soviet Risk-Taking and Crisis Behaviour: From Confrontation to Peaceful Coexistence?*, Adelphi Paper 101 (London: IISS, 1973),

p. 24. See also A.A. Gromyko and A. Kokoshin, *Brat'ia Kennedi* (Moscow: Mysl', 1985), p. 180.

¹¹ M.A. Gareyev, *M.V. Frunze - voennyi teoretik* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1985), p. 242.

¹² The notion is expressed in Burlatskii, *op. cit.* in note 8. For the events of the Middle East War see Barry Blechman and Douglas Hart, 'The Political Utility of Nuclear Weapons: The 1973 Middle East Crisis', *International Security*, Summer 1982, pp. 132-57.

¹³ See Gen.-Lt. M.M. Kir'ian (ed.), *Vnezapnost' v nastupatel'nykh operatsiakh velikoi otechestvennoi voiny* (Moscow: Nauka, 1986), which looks at surprise in offensive operations in WWII while stressing the increased relevance of the topic in the current period.

¹⁴ V.A. Efimov and S.G. Chermashentsev, 'Maskirovka', in Marshal N. Ogarkov (ed.), *Sovetskaia voennaia entsiklopediia*, vol. 5 (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1978), pp. 175-7.

¹⁵ In Soviet thought there are different levels of surprise including strategic, operational and tactical. Thus, a show of force which could detract from strategic surprise need not exclude operational surprise. Nonetheless, in a major East-West confrontation in Europe, strategic surprise would be highly desirable in terms of not provoking NATO reinforcement and nuclear weapons dispersal.

¹⁶ See Scott Sagan, 'Nuclear Alerts and Crisis Management', *International Security*, Summer 1985, pp. 129-30.

¹⁷ Low alert levels may also have been due to technical factors and/or a low Soviet estimate of imminent conflict. See Stephen M. Meyer, 'Soviet Nuclear Operations', in Ashton Carter, John Steinbruner and Charles Zraket (eds), *Managing Nuclear Operations* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1987), pp. 487-91.

¹⁸ Petersen and Hines, *op. cit.* in note 6.

¹⁹ Gen.-Lt. M.M. Kir'ian (ed.), *Voенно-tekhnicheskii progress i vooruzhennye sily SSSR* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1982), p. 314; Also see the specific reference to the importance of such a strike in the 'beginning period' of war in Gen.-Lt. A. Yevseyev, 'O nekotorykh tendentsiakh v izmenii soderzhaniia i kharaktera nachal'nogo perioda voiny', *Voенno-istoricheskii zhurnal*, no. 11, November 1985, pp. 10-26.

²⁰ Gen. Ivanov wrote in 1969, 'There is too great a risk of the destruction of one's own country, and the responsibility to humanity for the fatal consequences of the nuclear war is too heavy for an aggressor to make an easy decision on the immediate employment of nuclear weapons from the very beginning of war without having used all other means for the attainment of its objectives.' From 'Soviet Military Doctrine and Strategy', *Voennaia mysl'*, May 1969; trans. in *Selected Readings from Military Thought 1963-1973, Part II* (Washington DC: USGPO, 1982), p. 28.

²¹ Yevseyev, *op. cit.* in note 19, writes, 'the very first massive nuclear strikes can to an enormous degree predetermine the entire subsequent course of the war and result in losses in the rear area and in the forces, which can place the people and the nation in an exceptionally difficult position.'

²² Col. M.P. Skirdo, *The People, the Army, the Commander* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1970), translated and published by the US government (Washington DC: USGPO), p. 116; also Kir'ian, *op. cit.* in note 13, p. 320.

²³ Deceased Soviet Defence Minister Ustinov noted that present conditions and a no-first-use pledge demand 'still tighter control so as to exclude non-sanctioned launch of nuclear weapons, from tactical up to strategic', in 'Ovesti ugrozu iadernoi voiny', *Pravda*, 12 July 1982, p. 4.

²⁴ M.A. Gareyev, *Zashchita otechestva* (Moscow: Znanie, 1987), p. 39.

²⁵ See Raymond Garthoff, 'The Cuban Missile Crisis: The Soviet Story', *Foreign Policy*, Fall 1988, pp. 77-8.

²⁶ Stephen M. Meyer, 'The Sources and Prospects of Gorbachev's New Political Thinking on Security', *International Security*, Fall 1988, pp. 135-7.

²⁷ For example, William E. Odom's conceptual discussion of civil-military relations stresses consensus between the two. See his 'The Party-Military Connection', *Problems of Communism*, September/October 1973, pp. 12-26.

²⁸ The political leadership has had its way in this area as well. Both Stalin and Khrushchev asserted their own views and programmes in the realm of strategy.

²⁹ For an elaboration of this point see Daniel Strobe and Rebecca Strobe, 'Diplomacy and Defense in Soviet National Security Policy', *International Security*, Fall 1983, pp. 91-116.

³⁰ For a thorough discussion of this issue see Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, 'Soviets on Nuclear War Fighting', *Problems of Communism*, July/August 1986, pp. 68–79.

³¹ Gen.-Lt. of Aviation V. Serebriannikov, 'Sootnoshenie politicheskikh i voennykh sredstv v zashchite sotsializma', *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil*, no. 18, September 1987, pp. 12–13.

³² Gen. I. Tret'yak, Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Air Defence Troops, 'Reliable Defence First and Foremost', *Moscow News*, 28 February–6 March 1988, p. 12, also leaves little doubt that if there is a choice between prevention and preparation, the latter should be given priority.

³³ Dale Herspring, 'Nikolay Ogarkov and the Scientific-Technical Revolution in Soviet Military Affairs', *Comparative Strategy*, Winter 1987, pp. 40–41.

³⁴ See M.A. Gareyev, 'The Revised Soviet Military Doctrine', *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, December 1988, p. 31.

³⁵ See Timothy Colton, *Commanders, Commissars and Civilian Authority: The Structure of Soviet Military Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979); Condoleezza Rice, 'The Party, the Military, and Decision Authority', *World Politics*, October 1987, pp. 55–81.

³⁶ Gareyev, *op. cit.* in note 11, p. 242.

³⁷ Col. Skirido writes: 'the decision to employ such devastating arms as nuclear weapons has become the exclusive prerogative of the political leadership. It is the political, not the military leaders, who determine the necessity of employing weapons of mass destruction, who specify the principal targets and when they are to be hit.' Skirido, *op. cit.* in note 22, p. 119.

³⁸ Rice, *op. cit.* in note 35, p. 55.

³⁹ See David Holloway, 'Military Power and Political Purpose', *Daedalus*, Fall 1980, pp. 13–30; and Rice, *op. cit.* in note 35.

⁴⁰ As Rice, *ibid.*, p. 65, points out, the US is more the exception than the rule in this regard. Nonetheless, it is the relevant comparison for this analysis.

⁴¹ The degree to which this is changing is discussed below. The role Soviet scientists have played, especially in strategic arms control, should not be neglected.

⁴² See Raymond Garthoff, 'The Soviet Military and SALT', in Jiri Valenta and William Potter (eds), *Soviet Decision-*

making for National Security (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), p. 155.

⁴³ An example of a civilian analyst writing in the realm of military science is A. Kokoshin, 'Razvitie voennogo dela i sokrasheniye vooruzhennykh sil', *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia*, January 1988, pp. 20–33.

⁴⁴ Gen.-Col. M. Povaly, 'Policy and Military Strategy', *Voennaia mysli*, July 1970, p. 16, as cited in Raymond Garthoff, 'Conflict Termination in Soviet Military Thought and Strategy', Stephen Cimbala and Keith Dunne (eds), *Conflict Termination and Military Strategy: Coercion, Persuasion, and War* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1987), p. 37. Garthoff notes that Povaly at the time was Deputy Chief of the General Staff and head of the Main Operations Directorate – 'the chief Soviet war planner'.

⁴⁵ Strobe Talbott (ed.), *Khrushchev Remembers* (New York: Bantam, 1971), p. 572, as cited in Colton, *op. cit.* in note 35, pp. 244–5.

⁴⁶ See Rice, *op. cit.* in note 35, p. 65.

⁴⁷ Ellen Jones, *The Defense Council in Soviet Leadership Decisionmaking* Occasional Paper no. 188 (Washington DC: Kennen Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, 1984), p. 154.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 44–5; Harriet Fast Scott and William Fast Scott, *The Armed Forces of The Soviet Union*, 3rd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), p. 107.

⁴⁹ Richard Betts has detailed this same phenomenon for the US in *Soldiers, Statesmen, and Cold War Crises* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977).

⁵⁰ Oleg Penkovsky, *The Penkovsky Papers* (London: Collins, 1965), pp. 131–2.

⁵¹ Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1971), pp. 112–3.

⁵² Seymour M. Hersh, *The Target is Destroyed: What Really Happened to Flight 007 and What America Knew About it* (New York: Vintage Books, 1987), pp. 316–41.

⁵³ See Vice Admiral G. Kostev, 'Nasha voennaia doktrina v svete novogo myshleniia', *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil*, no. 17, September 1987, p. 13.

⁵⁴ For an excellent analysis of the new thinking see Meyer, *op. cit.* in note 26.

⁵⁵ Articles that call for or imply the need for such a change include V. Zhurkin, S. Karaganov, A. Kortunov, 'Reasonable

Sufficiency – Or How to Break the Vicious Circle', *New Times*, 12 October 1987, p. 14; V. Zhurkin, S. Karaganov, A. Kortunov, 'O razumnoi dostatochnosti', *SShA: Ekonomika, politika, ideologiya*, December 1987, p. 18; A. Kokoshin, *op. cit.* in note 43; A. Kokoshin and V. Larionov, 'Kurskaia bitva v svete sovremennoi oboronitel'noi doktriny', *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia*, June 1987, pp. 3–13; A. Kokoshin and V. Larionov, 'Protivostoianie sil obshchego naznachaniia v kontekste obecnecheniia strategicheskoi stabilnosti', *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia*, June 1988, pp. 23–31. Comment by L. Semeiko, USA and Canada Institute, in a round-table discussion, 'Reasonable means Sufficient', *XX Century and Peace*, December 1987, p. 3.

⁵⁶ Clarifications of Gorbachev's UN speech indicate that the USSR will reduce its forces in Eastern Europe by 50,000 men and 5,300 tanks. Eastern European countries will allegedly reduce their forces by another 56,000 men and 1,900 tanks. The USSR will further cut forces in the Western Military Districts by 190,000 men and 4,860 tanks. In addition, the USSR and Eastern European countries will cut 9,130 artillery systems and 430 combat aircraft in the region between West Germany and the Urals in the USSR. See Army Gen. D.T. Yazov, 'Na nachalakh realizma i balansa interesov', *Pravda*, 9 February 1989, p. 4.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* These reductions, however, do not remove the danger of both a limited and full-scale mobilized attack. In the first case, the USSR could quickly (one to four weeks) bring to bear significant force in the form of Category II troops located in the Western Military Districts even after the promised reductions. (See Philip Karber, 'The Impact of Gorbachev's Reduction Plan', *Armed Forces Journal International*, January 1989, pp. 54–64.) In a fully mobilized attack (one to two months), where cadre units are brought up to speed, the Soviet advantage is even more important, particularly in situations where the West fails to respond by quickly initiating its own preparations. (See James A. Thomson, *An Unfavorable Situation: NATO and the Conventional Balance*, N-2842-FF/RC (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, November 1988), esp. pp.

30–33.) There is of course a lively debate on the relative strength of conventional forces in Europe. All analysts, however, recognize the harmful effect of tardy NATO preparations and mobilization.

⁵⁸ Meyer, *op. cit.* in note 26, pp. 126–32.

⁵⁹ Gareyev, *op. cit.* in note 34, pp. 30–34. The titles of articles in a recent issue of the restricted circulation journal *Military Thought* indicate a strong focus on defensive-oriented topics. Yet the substance of these articles, like much of the new doctrine itself, has yet to be disclosed, and NATO is left wondering whether the Soviet use of the term defence will really imply a less threatening military strategy. The January 1989 issue of *Military Thought* was exhibited at a winter meeting of US and Soviet defence experts. The titles of articles (the substance of which was not revealed) included, 'Several Questions of the Preparation and Conduct of Counterstrikes in Defensive Operations', 'Manoeuvre in Defensive Operations', 'Tactical Defence', and 'The Problem of Raising the Survivability of the PVO Forces in Defensive Operations'.

⁶⁰ Army Gen. M. Moiseyev, 'Na strazhe mira i sotsializma', *Krasnaia zvezda*, 23 February 1989, p. 2.

⁶¹ For an interesting methodological approach on this point, see R. Hyland Phillips and Jeffrey Sands, 'Reasonable Sufficiency and Soviet Conventional Defense: A Research Note', *International Security*, Fall 1988, pp. 164–78.

⁶² For example, see D. Yazov, Minister of Defence, *V zashchite sotsializma i mira* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1987), pp. 30–33.

⁶³ Tret'yak, *op. cit.* in note 32.

⁶⁴ 'Lectures from the Voroshilov General Staff Academy: Chapter One: Principles and Content of Military Strategy', *Journal of Soviet Military Studies*, April 1988, p. 45.

⁶⁵ The origins of the military interest in doctrinal change are described in Philip A. Petersen and Notra Trulock III, 'A "New" Soviet Military Doctrine: Origins and Implications', *Strategic Review*, Summer 1988, pp. 9–24.

⁶⁶ For a detailed Soviet analysis of the NATO deep-strike threat see Lt.-Gen. I. Perov, *Zarubezhnoe voennoe obozrenie*, February 1988, pp. 7–17; translated in JPRS-UFM-88-088, 5 August 1988, pp. 4–13. Also see Jeff Sands, 'Concern Over

Follow-on-Forces Attack', *Soviet Defense Notes*, May 1989, pp. 1-2.

⁶⁷ Col. G. Miranovich and Col. V. Shitarenko, correspondents, 'Chem sil'na oborona?', *Krasnaia zvezda*, 10 December 1987, p. 2; Kokoshin, *op. cit.* in note 43, p. 24.

⁶⁸ Marshal S. Akhromeyev (ed.), *Voennii entsiklopedicheskii slovar'* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1986), pp. 496-7.

⁶⁹ See Marshal S. Akhromeyev, 'Watching over Peace and Security', *Trud*, 21 February 1988, pp. 1-2. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), *Daily Report*, Soviet Union, 22 February 1988, pp. 84-7; Army Gen. Moiseyev, 'Sovetskaia voennaia doktrina: realizatsiia ee oboronitel'noi napravlennosti', *Pravda*, 13 March 1989, p. 5.

⁷⁰ Akhromeyev, *op. cit.* in note 68, p. 24.

⁷¹ Gen.-Maj. I. Vorob'yev, 'The Relationship and Reciprocal Effects between Offence and Defence', *Voennaia mysl'*, April 1980, as cited in Petersen and Trulock, *op. cit.* in note 65, p. 17.

⁷² Gareyev, *op. cit.* in note 34, p. 32.

⁷³ Army Gen. D.T. Yazov, 'Kachestvennye parametry oboronogo stroitel'stva', *Krasnaia zvezda*, 11 August 1988, p. 1.

⁷⁴ See Yazov, *op. cit.* in note 62, pp. 39-40; interview with Col.-Gen. V. Lobov, First Deputy Chief of the General Staff, *New Times*, February 1988, pp. 12-13; also Gareyev, *op. cit.* in note 34, p. 31.

⁷⁵ Lecture by A. Kokoshin, Center for International Studies, MIT, 2 February 1988. Kokoshin, *op. cit.* in note 43, p. 20, refers to the need for a new scientific

discipline to do military-political research.

⁷⁶ For example, Kokoshin, *op. cit.* in note 43.

⁷⁷ Dennis Gormley, 'Triple Zero and Soviet Military Strategy', *Arms Control Today*, January/February 1988, p. 19.

⁷⁸ Raymond Garthoff, 'New Thinking in Soviet Military Doctrine', *Washington Quarterly*, Summer 1988, p. 150.

⁷⁹ Kokoshin lecture, *op. cit.* in note 75.

⁸⁰ G. Arbatov, 'Glasnost', peregovory, razoruzhenie', *Pravda*, 17 October 1988, p. 6, reprinted in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, 16 November 1988, pp. 6-7.

⁸¹ 'Doklad E.A. Shevardnadze', *Vestnik ministerstva inostrannykh del*, 15 August 1988, p. 36.

⁸² Interview with Army Gen. V.N. Lobov, 'And Only the Truth Will Do', *Izvestiia*, 9 May 1989, pp. 1, 3, in FBIS, Soviet Union, 11 May 1989, p. 86.

⁸³ 'Spozitsii oboronitel'noi doktriny', *Krasnaia zvezda*, 10 February 1989, pp. 1-2.

⁸⁴ Gareyev, *op. cit.* in note 24, pp. 30-32.

⁸⁵ Interview with a Soviet civilian analyst, Autumn 1988.

⁸⁶ Implied in Arbatov, *op. cit.* in note 80.

⁸⁷ Comment by a Soviet civilian analyst at a conference in Moscow, January 1989.

Military officials have explicitly denounced unilateral cuts. (See Gareyev *op. cit.* in note 24, p. 62; Tret'yak, *op. cit.* in note 32.) It is no coincidence that Akhromeyev resigned over the unilateral disarmament which was the result of these discussions.

⁸⁸ As reported by William Odom, 'Soviet Military Doctrine', *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1988/89, p. 130.