

# Military planning for European theatre conflict during the Cold War

an oral history roundtable, Stockholm, 24-25 April 2006

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**MILITARY PLANNING FOR  
EUROPEAN THEATRE CONFLICT  
DURING THE COLD WAR**

AN ORAL HISTORY ROUNDTABLE  
STOCKHOLM, 24–25 APRIL 2006

Series Editors

Andreas Wenger and Victor Mauer  
Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich



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## Preface

On 24–25 April 2006, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and the Swedish National Defence College, in cooperation with the Netherlands Institute of Military History (NIMH) and the Parallel History Project on Cooperative Security (PHP), organized an oral history roundtable on Military Planning for European Theatre Conflict during the Cold War in Stockholm, Sweden. These unprecedented face-to-face discussions brought together a group of former NATO and Warsaw Pact military decision-makers and a small number of Cold War scholars. The ensuing debates focused on the perceptions of the other's force strength and intentions in each alliance, and reviewed Western and Eastern plans for response, including the role of nuclear weapons.

The conference took place in the framework of the PHP ([www.php.isn.ethz.ch](http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch)), a cooperative undertaking of more than twenty partner institutions in Europe, North America, and Asia. The PHP is dedicated to providing new scholarly perspectives on contemporary international history by collecting, analyzing, and interpreting formerly secret governmental documents. The Center for Security Studies (CSS) at ETH Zurich launched the PHP in late 1998, together with the National Security Archive at George Washington University and the CWIHP, both in Washington, D.C. The PHP is coordinated by Prof. Vojtech Mastny, Senior Fellow of the National Security Archive.

The Center for Security Studies is delighted to publish these important contributions both in print and on the PHP website and thanks the editors of the volume, Dr. Jan Hoffenaar (NIMH) and Christopher Findlay (CSS), for their careful editorial work.

November 2007

Prof. Dr. Andreas Wenger  
Director  
Center for Security Studies

Dr. Victor Mauer  
Deputy Director  
Center for Security Studies



## The Editors

**Jan Hoffenaar** is the Head of the Research Division of the Netherlands Institute of Military History and a Professor in Military History at the University of Utrecht's Department of History and Art History. He is the President of the Netherlands Commission of Military History and President of the Editorial Board of the seven-volume series about the 'Military History of the Netherlands, in Europe and Overseas'. He has written numerous books and articles on Dutch military history. His special fields of interest are the Cold War and the Netherlands' defence policy as seen from a national and an international perspective.

**Christopher Findlay** is the academic editor of the Center for Security Studies (CSS) at ETH Zurich. He studied History and English Philology at the University of Freiburg, Germany, and graduated with an M.Phil. degree from the University of Cambridge. He is currently enrolled as a PhD student at the University of Zurich. His dissertation focuses on the role of US evangelicals in foreign policy. His special areas of interest include the social and cultural roots of current conflicts.



# Program

## An Oral History Roundtable:

### Military Planning for European Theatre Conflict During the Cold War

Stockholm, 24–25 April 2006

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*Sponsored by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)  
During its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year*

*Together with*

*Swedish National Defence College*

*Parallel History Project on NATO and the Warsaw Pact*

*Netherlands Military History Institute*

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Monday, 24 April

#### 0930: Opening of the roundtable

1. Words of welcome by Mr Lars-Bergström, Vice-Rector of the SNDC
2. Opening remarks on NATO-Warsaw Pact, NATO-Soviet and NATO-Russia relations – past and present.

*Alyson J.K. Bailes, Director, SIPRI*

*Dr Petr Luňák, Senior Programmes Coordinator, NATO*

3. Explanation of the round-table's concept, structure, and expected results

*Professor Vojtech Mastny, PHP Coordinator, National Security Archive (The George Washington University, Washington, D.C.)*

### **1000: First Working Session**

Moderator (for this and all following working sessions): Professor Robert Legvold, Columbia University, New York

NATO's Threat Assessment and War Plans on the Central Front in the mid-Cold War period (1970s-1980s) (including reference to changing doctrines and plans for conventional warfare, and the role of non-US allies)

Introduction (PowerPoint presentation): *Dr Roger Cirillo*

Presenter: *Maj Gen Neal Creighton*

Responses and discussion.

### **1100–1115: Coffee Break**

### **1115–1230: Second Working Session**

The Warsaw Treaty Organization's Threat Assessment and War Plans on the Central Front in the mid-Cold War period (1970–1980s) (including responses to NATO's changing doctrines and plans, and the role of non-Soviet allies)

*Maj Gen Aleksandr A. Liakhovskii*

*Responses and general discussion.*

### **1230–1330: Buffet lunch at the SNDC**

**1330–1500: Third Working Session**

Exchange of questions and discussion on plans and expectations for the opening phase of a war in Europe (assuming no use of nuclear weapons)

**1500–1530: Tea Break**

**1530–1700: Fourth Working Session**

Exchange of questions and discussion on how each side expected to manage logistical support for its operations

**1900–2030: Reception in honour of the round-table participants, hosted by H.E. Alexander M. Kadakin, Ambassador of the Russian Federation**

Tuesday 25 April

**0930: Fifth Working Session**

NATO nuclear plans on the Central Front: when, why, and how nuclear weapons were intended to be used at the tactical level

Presenter: *Lt Gen William E. Odom*

Warsaw Pact nuclear plans on the Central Front: when, why, and how nuclear weapons were intended to be used at the tactical level

*Professor Vitaly Tsygichko*

Questions and general discussion

**1100–1115: Coffee Break**

### **1115–1230: Sixth Working Session**

The relationship between strategic nuclear weapons and theatre war plans

Presenter for NATO

Presenter for the Warsaw Pact

Questions and general discussion

### **1230–1330: Buffet lunch at the SDNC**

### **1330–1500: Seventh Working Session**

Recap and consolidation of earlier discussion:

Questions and remarks on topics covered, and issues for the future

### **1500–1530: Tea Break**

### **1530–1630: Eighth Working Session**

Round-up of results: what aspects of war plans, logistics, force development, and command and control call for further work and writing?

Concluding remarks by the Moderator

### **1630–1730: Closing Session**

The Way Ahead:

What have we learned from past experiences?

How can we put these lessons to use in the future?

Including remarks by representatives of the PHP, NMHI, and Dr Petr Luňák

General discussion

Thanks and farewell remarks by the representatives of SIPRI and SNDC.







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## Introduction

*by Jan Hoffenaar*

On 24 and 25 April 2006, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), in cooperation with the Parallel History Project on NATO and the Warsaw Pact (PHP), the Swedish National Defence College (SNDC), and the Netherlands Institute of Military History (NIMH) organised a round-table conference on military planning in Central Europe during the Cold War (see Programme). The focus was on the late 1970s and early 1980s, when détente came to an end and the Cold War reached a new peak (Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, martial law in Poland, NATO's announcement of its deployment of medium-range missiles in Europe, Ronald Reagan taking office, his announcement of the Strategic Defence Initiative). The conference was unique because it was the first time that high-ranking officers from countries of the former Warsaw Pact and of NATO held organised discussions of their military planning, the role of nuclear weapons in that planning, and their perception of each other's intentions and capabilities.

The round table was chaired by Professor Robert Legvold, Marshall D. Shulman Professor of Political Science and director of the Harriman Institute at Columbia University. Five former high-ranking military personnel from the Warsaw Pact side attended (from the former Soviet Union, Poland, and former Czechoslovakia) and eight from NATO (United States, United Kingdom, Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands and Norway). There were also participants from the academic community, including Ambassador Alyson Bailes, Director of SIPRI, and Professor Vojtech Mastny, PHP Coordinator (see List of Participants).

The participants had received beforehand a list of subjects and questions to be discussed. The roundtable entailed an exchange of information, as well as the participants asking each other questions and listening to each other, so that by the end of the conference there was more clarity on the most important issues. On the first day, the participants focused

on the plans and expectations for a possible war, without discussing the role of nuclear weapons in much detail. This crucial subject was reserved for the discussions on the second day.

The proceedings were only recorded in English and Russian as spoken by the participants; the interpreters' translations were not recorded. All texts have been transcribed; some have been translated (from Russian into English) and then edited. The following begins with a summary of the most important findings.

## The Operational Plans

The conference began with a detailed overview of the NATO plans in the early 1980s. The plans assumed that the Warsaw Pact had numerical conventional superiority and anticipated a gradual improvement of its armament. The plans, it was repeatedly emphasised, were first and foremost intended to deter the Warsaw Pact from attacking. Should deterrence fail, they were to serve as a guide for the defence of the territory of the NATO member countries. The plans were therefore of purely defensive nature. Counterattacks were only intended to recapture lost territory. All NATO representatives confirmed this; the German representative pointed out the catastrophic consequences of any alternative for the civilian population of his country. A very important new element in the planning, in the event of the Warsaw Pact opening the attack, was attacking enemy troops assembling on the territory of the member states of the Warsaw Pact – the AirLand Battle /Follow-on Forces Attack, or FOFA, concept.

The representatives of the former Soviet Union then made it clear that the Warsaw Pact had never had plans to be the first to attack either. It would not even have been able to do so, as too many Soviet troops were stationed along the border with China, and the fighting in Afghanistan required the deployment of a great many troops as well. It was mainly for that reason, it was said, that the Soviet Union also halted plans for military intervention in Poland.

The Soviet Union considered the United States to be the main opponent in the European theatre of war. If NATO had attacked, the Pact would have therefore launched nuclear missiles at America almost immediately. It would have attacked on the notion, based on past experiences, that attack was the best form of defence. Like NATO, it had stationed its troops as far forward as possible in order to be able to carry out such an attack. However, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the military leadership assumed that there would be no hostilities in Europe because they would almost certainly lead to a world war. These revelations surprised the NATO participants, who in those days had assumed that the Soviet Union was prepared to limit a possible war to Europe, to prevent American retaliation.

## The Perceptions

The Cold War demonstrated, as the chairman put it, “the power of stereotypes”. Both blocs arranged their defences on the basis of the assumed offensive capabilities of the other side. That led to rigidity. One of the participants put into words what everyone was thinking: “I am struck by the similarities of most military staffs because they all hope for the best and plan for the worst.”

The perceptions of NATO within the Warsaw Pact were a subject for questions and discussion. It became clear that the military and the population were actually afraid of an attack by NATO. They believed that such an attack was inevitable from an ideological point of view and that history supported this assumption. Moreover, the Russian participants emphasised, a defensive attitude was considered to be inferior to an offensive one. They could still hardly believe that NATO had no plans to attack the Warsaw Pact. In that light, it is not surprising that the Soviet Union took AirLand Battle/FOFA, with its use of state-of-the-art resources, very seriously.

## The Military Industrial Complex

The Warsaw Pact participants explained how great the pressure from the arms industry was. The greater part of the industrial capability was directly and indirectly employed in making defence-related products. In many cities and other areas, the population was dependent on the defence industry. This was another reason why politicians and the military had to maintain a very negative picture of the enemy. That way, the population would continue to support defence policy. The military profited from it; their jobs were not questioned. Armament had a dynamic of its own, entirely divorced from the requirements of military strategy and logic. The minister of defence of the Soviet Union, Dimitry Ustinov, played an important role in this development, which eventually weakened the country's economy considerably.

## The Degree of Realism

The Warsaw Pact had very optimistic operation plans. These plans assumed that the North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean would be reached in a short time. All participants from the former Warsaw Pact confirmed that these plans had little foundation in reality. At the time, nobody questioned the feasibility of these plans or asked what would be done once the goals had been achieved.

The Polish participant said that he and his colleagues considered the plans "science fiction", especially if nuclear weapons were to be used. The Czech general pointed out the narrow passages and dense woodland between his country and the Federal Republic of Germany, through which he would have had to send his troops. This made offensive operations virtually impossible.

Mention was also made of the logistical problems that would have slowed any advance considerably. In addition, night operations would have been difficult if not impossible, the various units, which hardly knew each other, would not have been able to cooperate, and the reserve troops were poorly trained. Moreover, from the late 1970s onward, both

sides were acquiring new weapon systems that, with their modern technologies, would have rendered any rapid offensive by the opposing side impossible.

## The Nuclear Weapons

Few people were under any illusions about what would happen in the event of a war involving the use of nuclear weapons. NATO's former generals made it clear that in the event of war they would soon have had to resort to using them. The Warsaw Pact had the same expectation at the time.

The United States had brought the nuclear weapons to Europe. Initially, in the 1950s and 1960s, their use was dealt with as a technical issue, with tactics and strategy strictly separated. When better insight was gained into the devastating effects of nuclear weapons, however, while it became clear that countermeasures would not work and the nuclear arms race appeared unstoppable, doubts rose on both sides.

These perceptions led "the United States military to realise that they were going down a blind alley and that more nuclear weapons was not the answer". Nuclear weapons were increasingly serving to deter an enemy attack. A state of "terrible stability" was reached, in which both sides employed the same military logic. The danger of miscalculation was always present, however. Everyone agreed that there are still many gaps in our knowledge of the nuclear aspect of the confrontation.

Besides these general lines of discussion, the participants touched several times on the subject of NATO's deployment of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces, INF (Pershing-2 and cruise missiles). The Warsaw Pact considered these weapons to be destabilising and so threatening that it considered their introduction a turning point. The Americans at the conference said they had deployed the missiles in Europe because the European member countries had asked them to do so. The Americans did not believe that the deployment had been strictly necessary. In addition, they said the missiles were aimed solely at Eastern Europe and not at Soviet territory. Several attendees asked for proof.

Also worth noting were the Russians' statements regarding the Soviet attitude towards the American Strategic Defence Initiative, which had caused such commotion in Europe. The Soviet Union had conducted a thorough study of what this initiative could possibly accomplish, and had come to the conclusion that the project was not feasible for some time yet. The Soviet Union was much more concerned about the deployment of the Pershings and the cruise missiles.

## The End of the 'Cold War'

Various remarks were made about the end of the Cold War. The Russians criticised their own actions. They had already mentioned the uncontrollable development of the arms race. In their opinion, the invasion of Afghanistan should have never happened. The ideologically tinted glasses of the decision-making political elite had blinded the top leadership to the objections of high-ranking military officers, such as Marshal Ogarikov and General Varennikov, and of the GRU, the military intelligence service. Gorbachev did not do much good in the eyes of the Russian participants either. He let things slide, seriously jeopardising the Soviet Union's international interests, in their opinion. His concessions to the West were "non-mandatory".

The Western side's opinion of the Soviet leader was much more positive. Gorbachev and Reagan received praise because they both proved willing to study the enemy images seriously, thinking 'out of the box'.

All the participants were hesitant to draw lessons from the Cold War. At most, they believed it had once again demonstrated the huge importance of having accurate information about the opponent's and one's own capabilities. The participants warned, however, against drawing the wrong lesson from the peaceful end of the Cold War, namely assuming that all major conflicts can be solved without resort to military force. Other cultures do not share the experience Europe had.







# Proceedings

Monday, 24 April 2006

Opening session

**Alyson Bailes**

Today, our business is with the past. The fact is that my institute celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> birthday this year. We were created in 1966. Now, that year was very much part of the Cold War. It was a year when most of you were probably already serving as young officers in your national forces or your respective alliances. Two years later, in 1968, I myself was in Czechoslovakia at the time of the military action there.<sup>1</sup> Four years later, in 1970, I was already working as a British diplomat in Budapest, trying to find some way for peaceful co-existence of the two military blocs. It was the job of SIPRI to report on all the bad and dangerous developments at those times, but also to report on the good things like the gradual growth of military dialogue and confidence building between the two sides. My institute looked at the East-West military question then, in the same spirit and with the same principles with which we look at all security questions now; trying to hear and understand the voices of both sides, not automatically criticising anyone, and not automatically making excuses for anyone either. We are more interested in getting at the facts, the real reasons for things, the chains of cause and consequence, and of course the real costs that had to be paid. Every year in the well-known SIPRI Yearbook, which by the way is regularly translated into Russian and will be launched this year in Moscow on 26 May, we set out the very best facts that we can find in the most impartial way on the size of the military budgets of all states, their arms production, the flow of arms sales between

1 On 20 August 1968, Soviet, Polish, East German, Hungarian, and Bulgarian troops began their invasion of Czechoslovakia to reverse the reforms of the 'Prague Spring'.

them, as well as the number of armed conflicts and the number of peace missions. This pragmatic approach explains why SIPRI has been happy to co-host this living history roundtable and why we have been happy to adopt the event as part of a special programme that will be celebrating our anniversary this year. The new things that we could learn here about the real truth of events that SIPRI was trying to report on at the time will be very important, but also important is the way of trying to learn those things together. The truth in these matters is always stranger and more interesting than anything in fiction, above all because it's a human story, a story about the difficult times that you as human beings have lived through, a way to help understand the rather astonishing fact that the Cold War never became hot. That's why we can all sit round the table together today.

Last week, SIPRI received a birthday present, a very kind and flattering poem, from a partner institute in Calcutta, India. It included the statement that SIPRI is the spokesman of world humanity. Now that is embarrassing because it's a much finer title than we could deserve. But when I read it I realised that one should not smile too much, because it is an ideal that we are struggling for, even in our own limited way. We do like to work with human beings and human realities and to support human beings in working together from different and sometimes difficult backgrounds. And I hope this event will go ahead in exactly that spirit. I hope you will be able to share together the unique human insights and experiences that only people with such special backgrounds and careers as yourselves can bring.

Now we shall be moving on to the real military part and the history part of our proceedings. First, I would like to give the word to another of our co-sponsors, Dr Petr Luňák, representing NATO.

### **Petr Luňák**

I would like first of all to thank all the organisers for organising this event, which I think will be very interesting, not only from a historical point of view, but also from the perspective of current NATO-Russia relations. I work for the Public Diplomacy division at NATO, and our task is to

somehow explain what NATO is, what NATO was, and what NATO is trying to be. Of course, in that effort we are very often faced with many stereotypes as far as the Cold War is concerned in Russia. That is why we are devoting a lot of effort and resources to events like this. We organise seminars and conferences in the Russian Federation. We have an information office in Moscow which also sponsors a number of events of this kind. But on the other hand I must say that an event like this is not typical, because we very often look into the future of our relationship and not so much into the past, and that is quite a pity for me as a former historian. I would like to see more events like this. I believe that the outcome of this conference will help you, but also us in our work of explaining NATO to the Russian population and to the population of most Eastern European countries, where there are still many stereotypes about what NATO was and about what NATO is. I will not continue with outlining what NATO and Russia have achieved over the past few years in their relationship. Let me just stress that it's quite impressive. The work of the NATO-Russia Council, which was established in 2002, is quite impressive. We have a number of specific concrete achievements, and I'm sure that our Russian colleagues will acknowledge that some of these achievements not only exist on paper, but also bring practical results.

### **Vojtech Mastny**

I would like to welcome you here on behalf of the Parallel History Project for NATO and the Warsaw Pact, known as PHP for short. As the name of the project suggests, we started about eight years ago with the goal of studying the power histories of the two alliances of the Cold War, and we do so on the basis of previously classified documents as well as with the use of knowledge supplied by participants. We have made considerable progress in obtaining documentation from both the NATO side and the side of the former Warsaw Pact countries. Much of that documentation is available on our website, but we have also been trying to encourage oral history projects in order to preserve the memories of those who participated in those events of the past. Our main concern is with the military

dimensions of the Cold War, but also with relating those to the political developments, and of course drawing conclusions for the future.

As far as the structure of this roundtable is concerned, we would like to follow the pattern of our previous roundtables. In particular, I am reminded of one that we held in China two years ago with diplomats who were accredited to their respective countries in the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>2</sup> We look forward to a discussion that will be both focussed and structured. It will be structured roughly according to what you can see in the programme. At the beginning, there will be presentations by both sides on some of the larger issues, followed by a discussion. But then we also have a number of specific questions, both of a military-technical and a military-political nature, which we would like to have answered by both sides. We are interested in such issues as how the threat was perceived at the time in both military and political terms, what plans were drawn up as a result of these perceptions, and how these plans were to be implemented in the event of the thing which everybody hoped would never happen and in fact has never happened, namely a military conflict in Central Europe. But it would be of particular interest, not just to us, but also to future historians, to know what would have happened if indeed such a contingency had taken place. I would emphasise that we hope to be helpful not just to those who are present here and want to exchange memories and opinions, but above all we want to be helpful to future generations, through the intermediary of historians. We want to learn lessons from the Cold War, but in particular the right lessons. We also want to avoid the wrong lessons because the Cold War was such an unusual conflict. It is something that can never be expected to happen again, so I think the lessons are mainly those to be avoided rather than those to be learnt.

2 Xiaoyuan Liu and Vojtech Mastny (eds.), *China and Eastern Europe, 1960s–1980s: Proceedings of the International Symposium, Reviewing the History of Chinese-East European Relations from the 1960s to the 1980s, Beijing, 24–26 March 2004* (Zurich: Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich, 2004). See also: [http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/conferences/previous/2004\\_beijing.cfm?nav1=2&nav2=1](http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/conferences/previous/2004_beijing.cfm?nav1=2&nav2=1).

## Jan Hoffenaar

Today, I can say as an historian, is a historic day. Never before have the former adversaries of the Cold War sat around a table to discuss one another's war plans. That this is happening now is an extremely gratifying sign. The adversaries of the past have become discussion partners. The Netherlands Institute of Military History considers it a great honour to have been able to co-sponsor this event and to help to make this unique meeting possible. The Netherlands and its military personnel were on the front line of the Cold War. For 40 years, that position determined all the country's events, capabilities, and activities. The gaze of the armed forces of the Netherlands was turned towards the East. There are, I think, two reasons why this roundtable is so important. In the first place, everyone sooner or later will want to know what actually took place during that exceptional period in world history. Formulated more sombrely, everyone will want to know what actual dangers hung like the sword of Damocles over the head of the world. Secondly, the deep and significant developments and events of the past continue to determine, both directly and indirectly, the developments and attitudes of today.

## First working session

### Robert Legvold

I have chaired two prior events of this kind – oral histories – one of which is very closely related to what you'll be talking about over the next two days. That was an oral history project<sup>3</sup> that examined the failure of détente in the 1970s and the administrations of Jimmy Carter<sup>4</sup> and the leadership of Leonid Brezhnev.<sup>5</sup> It was a meeting that brought

3 SALT II and the Growth of Mistrust: Transcript of the Proceedings of the Musgrove Conference of the Carter-Brezhnev Project, Musgrove Plantation, St. Simon's Island, GA, May 7–19, 1994 (Providence, RI: Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University, 1994).

4 James Earl (Jimmy) Carter Jr., the 39<sup>th</sup> President of the United States (1977–1981).

5 Leonid Ilich Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1964–1982).

together the principals from the US side and those that remained on the Soviet side: Cyrus Vance,<sup>6</sup> Harold Brown,<sup>7</sup> Stan Turner,<sup>8</sup> and Zbigniew Brzezinski<sup>9</sup> and their deputies, and people like Georgii Kornienko<sup>10</sup> and Anatolii Dobrynin<sup>11</sup> and General Starodubov,<sup>12</sup> and eventually, when we turned to the third of the three meetings, which was on the specific case of Afghanistan,<sup>13</sup> Generals Oleinikov<sup>14</sup> and Gareev.<sup>15</sup> Earlier, General Gribkov<sup>16</sup> had participated in the discussion that touched a bit on the Polish events in 1980/81,<sup>17</sup> all of which covered the period that we are talking about now from a political side. In those meetings, we were not able to, and did not look at the developments on the military scene among professional officers and what was going on within NATO or what was going on within the Warsaw Pact. The second occasion was a meeting that looked at the end of the Cold War, during the period of Presidents Reagan<sup>18</sup> and Bush<sup>19</sup> and Mikhail Gorbachev,<sup>20</sup> with again equivalent kinds of participation.<sup>21</sup> I think both of those occasions were very useful, not merely – as the prior speakers have said – because they began to reconstruct history. That's very important so that we can begin

6 Cyrus R. Vance, US Secretary of State (1977–1980).

7 Harold Brown, US Secretary of Defense (1977–1980).

8 Admiral Stansfield Turner, US Navy (ret.), Director of Central Intelligence (1977–1981).

9 Zbigniew Kazimierz Brzezinski, US National Security Advisor (1977–1981).

10 Georgii Markovich Kornienko, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union (1977–1985)

11 Anatolii Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador to the United States (1962–1986).

12 Lt Gen Victor P. Starodubov, chief SALT II adviser to the Soviet General Staff and member of SALT II delegation.

13 In 1979, Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan. They withdrew in 1989.

14 KGB Lt Gen Anatolii A. Oleinikov.

15 Gen Makhmut A. Gareev, First Deputy Chief of the Soviet General Staff, the last Soviet senior advisor to Afghanistan.

16 Gen Anatolii I. Gribkov, Chief of Staff of the Unified Armed Forces of the Warsaw Treaty Organization (1976–1989)

17 In the summer of 1980, workers' strikes and the creation of the 'Solidarity' trade union led to a prolonged political crisis in Poland. There was a threat of military intervention.

18 Ronald W. Reagan, the 40<sup>th</sup> President of the United States (1981–1989).

19 George H.W. Bush, the 41<sup>st</sup> President of the United States (1989–1993).

20 Mikhail S. Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1985–1991).

21 *The Last Decade of the Cold War: From Conflict Escalation to Conflict Transformation*, ed. Olav Njølstad, Nobel Symposium 122 (London: Cass, 2004)



to take advantage of those of you who were first-hand witnesses in the context of documents and as a result build a historical record. Each of those other occasions worked very closely with materials that we had from the archives, documents from both sides. Documents are beginning to appear on military matters as well, and I hope that we can get to some of those in the course of this meeting. But they were important also because they shed light on the dynamics of international relations at any time.

The Cold War was, as others have said, a very special period. I think Vojtech is right in saying that maybe it's the lessons that we want to learn of how you avoid things rather than the direct lessons that you learn or the direct parallels that you create. Nonetheless, I think that even in terms of the general development of international relations, what happened in that context – that is, in the 1970s – the overall deterioration is important to understand today because it didn't happen as a result of a single event. There wasn't a single turning point that destroyed détente in the 1970s, from 1975 through 1981. It was incremental and it was very path-dependent. I must say that on the issues that we're talking about here there was a disconnect, so far as I understand it, between what you people knew, what you people were doing and thinking about and what was happening more broadly in a political sense. On the way over, I was reading one of the documents, a report on the state of the Warsaw Pact forces that Marshal Kulikov<sup>22</sup> sent to Edward Gierek<sup>23</sup> in 1978,<sup>24</sup> and at the same time I was reading a report that I was given, done by the CIA, estimating the central balance in about the same time.<sup>25</sup> They were both January through February 1978. I'm struck by how measured the judgments are in those military documents, in contrast to what was happen-

22 Marshal Viktor G. Kulikov, Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces of the Warsaw Treaty Organization (1977–1989).

23 Edward Gierek, First Secretary of the United Workers' Party of Poland (1970–1980).

24 See: Vojtech Mastny and Malcolm Byrne (eds.), *A Cardboard Castle? An Inside History of the Warsaw Pact 1955–1991* (Budapest/New York: Central European University Press, 2005), pp. 413–14. See also: <http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/colltopic.cfm?lng=en&cid=21198&navinfo=15697>.

25 'The Balance of Nuclear Forces in Central Europe', SR 78-10004 January 1978. See: <http://se2.isn.ch/serviceengine/FileContent?serviceID=PHP&fileid=1FB9265F-035F-6648-36F0-AA4AB8894E0A&lng=en> (NATO Records/NATO Military Planning).

ing in the political field. Because by 1978/1979, people understood that détente really was beginning to collapse or disintegrate or run into very serious trouble, and a lot of it was driven by extreme concerns about the state of the military balance, including the work of the Committee on Present Danger in the United States,<sup>26</sup> criticism of the Carter administration, and concerns on the Soviet side. But in those documents, there's far more restraint in the way in which the situation is judged.

So we want to probe that more deeply. I won't say more now, because what we really want to hear is from those of you who know the issues first-hand. I think it might be useful to go around the table and for each person say just one word – not a lot, because we don't want to take a lot of time. What I would ask you to do is not tell me or us what you're doing now, but tell me what you were doing between 1979 and 1981. I'm going to turn to my right, to Sir Garry, and begin with him.

### Garry Johnson

I was just listening to Alyson saying some of you might even have joined the army in 1966, and I was looking round the table and wondering how many of my senior colleagues round here were colonels or junior general officers at that stage. In 1979–81, I was a colonel in the Ministry of Defence looking at our long-term planning and looking at our ten-year development budget plans downstream to see how we could, in the UK, face up to some of the challenges that you are outlining. I think that's probably all I would say, except that in my last military appointment before retiring, I was the commander-in-chief Allied Forces Northern Europe in Oslo.<sup>27</sup>

26 In the second half of the 1970s, the US "Committee on the Present Danger" lobbied against détente and the SALT II agreement.

27 Gen Sir Garry Johnson was CINCNORTH in 1992–1994.

### **Ross Johnson**

In the years in question, I was an analyst at the RAND Corporation,<sup>28</sup> working on issues of the Warsaw Pact, the Polish military, and all those things going on at that time. Some of those studies were published at the time, and some were internal, classified studies, which are now available.

### **Jan Hoffenaar**

I was a student of Modern History at the Free University in Amsterdam.

### **Jan Folmer**

At that time I was a lieutenant colonel, first serving as a branch chief in the Northern Army Group and later on as a battalion commander of the 41<sup>st</sup> Mechanised Artillery Battalion of the 41<sup>st</sup> Armoured Brigade in Seedorf, Germany. This was the brigade that would have taken up the first fight in any war.

### **Vigleik Eide**

At the time in question, I was first commander of the Army Staff College in Norway and then took over the responsibility for Army Planning for the future organisational structure. That was an interesting time. I also must add that I ended my career as chairman of the NATO Military Committee in the really important time 1989–93 and came to admire the Soviet forces in the beginning, and later on the Russian forces, and their discipline in the withdrawal period.

### **Neal Creighton**

Well, I'll take a pass since I'm the first speaker and I'll talk about what I was doing then.

28 The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decision-making through research and analysis.

## **Roger Cirillo**

I think I was the baby of the group. I was a captain in 1979, commanding an armoured cavalry troop, whose battle position was virtually at the inter-zonal border, at the dead centre of the 8<sup>th</sup> Guards Army. I was the first guy some of you were supposed to see. Later on, I came back. In 1985, I spent two years in an armoured division, three years in the war plans section of Central Army Group and one year working in the office of the commander-in-chief, US Army Europe.

## **Leopold Chalupa**

Well, thank you. In 1979, I was chief of staff Central Army Group, practising my linguistic capability in English, which I had acquired during the hospitality of my British friends as a young German prisoner of war at 17 years of age from 1945 to 1949 in England and in Scotland, and later as a graduate of the United States General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth. I moved from the chief of staff role down to become the corps commander of 2<sup>nd</sup> German Corps, and finally from there I became the commander-in-chief Allied Forces Central Europe,<sup>29</sup> a position from where I still have some friends here today.

## **Alyson Bailes**

I was actually in the British Ministry of Defence as well because, although I was a diplomat, I went there under an exchange scheme and I happened to be in the department dealing with British defence policy outside Europe. I happened to be on the desk that dealt with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as well as the Iran-Iraq War<sup>30</sup> and several other tricky things at the time.

29 Gen Leopold Chalupa was CINCENT in 1983–1987.

30 The Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988).

### **Lars Bergström**

I was a captain in the Swedish Army, commanding an APC company<sup>31</sup> in an armoured brigade.

### **Mojmír Zachariáš**

In 1978, when I was 39 years old, I was a division commander. In 1982, I commanded the 4<sup>th</sup> Army, and starting from 1986, I was the commander of the okrug troops on the Czechoslovak front. General Chalupa was my adversary.

### **Vyacheslav Vasenin**

In 1979, I was a major, chief of the Rear Division, and I was involved in the formation of a division in Chiburgul. In 1980, I dealt with the formation of the 184<sup>th</sup> Division, which was formed to replace the 201<sup>st</sup> Division after it was relocated to Afghanistan. From 1983 to 1985, I studied at the General Staff Headquarters Academy. After I graduated from the academy, I was with the 28<sup>th</sup> Army in Grodno; I was with the 14<sup>th</sup> Army in Afghanistan for two years and participated in the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan; then, I was the second-in-command to the supreme commander of the Turkestan Military Okrug; later, I was the second-in-command to the commander of Air Defence in the Moscow Okrug; then, I was the second-in-command to the commander of the Armed Forces Rear; then, the second-in-command to the supreme commander of the Strategic Missile Forces of the Rear. Then I was in charge of the Rear and Technical Support Department of the General Staff Headquarters Academy.

### **Vitalii Tsygichko**

My name is Vitalii Tsygichko. From 1962 until 1971, I worked for the Research Institute of the General Staff Headquarters, and I was working on modelling a strategic operation in the Western theatre of war; I partici-

31 Armored personnel carriers (APCs), developed to transport infantry on the battlefield.

pated in planning for almost all the operational plans and exercises there during that time. From 1979 until 1985, I was involved in assessments of the military potential of foreign countries, including NATO, China, and other countries. Since 1985, I have been working as the senior scientist of the System Analysis Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

### **William Smith**

I began 1979 as a lieutenant-general, assistant to the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff. That summer I was promoted to general and became chief of staff at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) and stayed there till mid-1981, when I moved to Stuttgart, Germany, to become deputy commander-in-chief of US forces in Europe.

### **Svetlana Savranskaya**

I was in high school, but it's relevant. We had a subject 'Initial Military Preparation', and in that subject we were told that the United States was putting missiles in Europe, and I remember that in 1980 especially we were very concerned.

### **Herman Roozenbeek**

I can be brief too. I studied also in high school at that moment and I was about to start studying History.

### **William Odom**

In 1979, I was a colonel in the White House, serving as the military assistant to the national security adviser, Dr Brzezinski. I had been involved in what was called Presidential Review Memorandum 10, Comprehensive Net Assessment, in which we looked at how the US and the Soviet Union were doing vis-à-vis one another in the world.<sup>32</sup> We looked at military, political, intelligence, and regional balances to understand what really

32 PRM 10, Comprehensive Net Assessment and Military Force Posture Review, 18 February 1977. See: <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/prm/prm10.pdf>.

was underneath the slogans that Bob Legvold was talking about earlier. At the same time, I became deeply involved in reviewing our nuclear weapons command and control employment doctrine from the White House, and defence issues. Then after the Afghanistan invasion – or actually before – I became involved in what we would call the Persian Gulf security framework that led to the creation of Central Command.<sup>33</sup> In the spring of 1980, I was promoted to brigadier-general, and in 1981 I moved to become the chief intelligence officer for the Department of the Army, where I became fascinated with and a deep admirer of the force development on the Soviet side as I saw you make the transition, as it appeared to me, from doctrine in the force structure of General Sokolovskii's time<sup>34</sup> into what we called your concept of a theatre strategic operation.<sup>35</sup> I look forward to hearing more about how that looked from your side, because people used to say, "Well, they're just producing a lot of weapons." But as I saw it, there was a brain behind those weapons deployments, which made them anything but random. I saw a lot of rationality in it.

### Tadeusz Pióro

I am 86 years old. I worked for the Polish General Staff Headquarters, and then I was a representative of the Polish General Staff Headquarters at the Supreme Command and at the Headquarters of the Joint Forces of the Warsaw Pact in Moscow. Then I participated in the international negotiations on disarmament in Geneva, and for the last four years with the army, I served as a deputy head for Scientific Matters of the General Staff Headquarters Academy. Later, in the 1990s, I participated in the secret negotiations between the Polish representatives of the Polish General Staff Headquarters and the representatives of NATO in Warsaw and Berlin.

33 US Central Command, Tampa, Florida, established in 1983, a theatre-level Unified Combatant Command with its area of responsibility in the Middle East, East Africa, and Central Asia.

34 Marshal Vasilii D. Sokolovskii, Soviet military theorist, in the early 1960s promoted the doctrine of strategic (nuclear) offensive.

35 A strategic operation within the theatre of combat operations.

## Vojtech Mastny

In 1979, I was professor of international relations at the University of Illinois, but I was on leave in Washington and was finishing a book that eventually was called “Russia’s Road to the Cold War”.<sup>36</sup> I was trying to figure out how I could write this kind of book without being able to work in the Soviet archives, but I decided to do it anyway because I did not believe that in my lifetime I would be able to get into those archives. Well, as it happened, ten years later I was in Moscow at the invitation of the Diplomatic Academy and studying the documents of the Foreign Ministry and documents of the Central Committee. Then, a year later, in 1981, I was invited to be a professor of strategy at the Naval War College, Newport, which was my first exposure to the military in an academic environment. I must say that it was the most interesting year in my academic life. I was supposed to teach the officers, but much more important was what I learned from them and how it related to my main interest, which is contemporary history. So my involvement with the military history of the Cold War dates from that year.

## Aleksandr Liakhovskii

Aleksandr Liakhovskii. In 1979, I served in the Main Operational Department of the General Staff Headquarters. I served there for ten years. We dealt with planning, including all operations and plans; also, we dealt with other issues related to current foreign policy of that time. As you may remember, at that time there were a lot of armed conflicts in which the Soviet Union participated, I mean the conflicts in Angola,<sup>37</sup> Ethiopia,<sup>38</sup> the Middle East, and Afghanistan; I had to participate in most of them

36 Vojtech Mastny, *Russia’s Road to the Cold War: Diplomacy, Warfare, and the Politics of Communism, 1941–1945* (New York, 1979).

37 In 1975, when Angola became independent from Portugal, a civil war broke out. The Soviet Union participated in this conflict by giving military aid to the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), providing armoured vehicles, aircraft, and advisors, while large numbers of Cuban troops were airlifted by Soviet transport planes into Angola.

38 In 1974, a pro-Soviet Marxist-Leninist military junta deposed Emperor Haile Selassie and established a one-party Communist state. From then on, Ethiopia was supported by the Soviet Union.



directly. Later, I served for 12 years as the first deputy of the commander of the Land Forces Operational Department. I have written several books about Afghanistan.<sup>39</sup>

### **Petr Luňák**

I was doing my last year of elementary school, but my first encounter with the Warsaw Pact strategy actually dates back to 1986, when I was doing my military preparation at university. I remember one of the non-commissioned officers telling us to have enough room in our backpacks to be able to store the gold we would steal from the imperialists, which was quite a shock to all of us back then, because we didn't really know what the overall strategy was.

### **Robert Legvold**

My background is as an academic. I'm at Columbia University, where we have historically had a large programme for the study of the Soviet Union and now the study of the post-Soviet states. My field at Columbia is political science; and within political science, international relations; and within that programme, foreign policy, the foreign policies of first the Soviet Union and now the post-Soviet states. I have no claim to particular exposure during the period I've asked you about – 1979 to 1981 – although I do remember that in either 1977 or 1978, Christoph Bertram was directing the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, and he asked if I would give the opening presentation at the plenary session on the Soviet approach to national security and foreign policy, the link between national security policy and foreign policy. My view at that time was not nearly as fear-laden as what was beginning to happen within the United States, and as a result of that presentation, Christoph came under a lot of pressure from others within the IISS who didn't agree with what I had to say, people like Paul Nitze<sup>40</sup> and others,

39 Inter alia: Aleksandr A. Liakhovskii, *Tragediia i doblest Afgana* (Moscow, 1995), *Inside the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and the Seizure of Kabul* (Cold War International History Project Working Paper, No. 51, January 2007).

40 Paul H. Nitze, leading US arms control expert.

and I nearly cost Christoph his job. It was a measure of what was happening in the relationship at that point.

Now we get to the important things. There's no one who knows the issues that we're talking about better than the two people you'll hear from now, beginning with General Creighton. They were intimately involved with war planning within NATO at that period of time. General Creighton will say more about what he was doing, so I won't provide a further introduction. I'd say one other thing in anticipating the discussion afterwards. I will favour early responses from people who were in command of the Warsaw Pact after General Creighton, and then we'll go back and forth. After the break, we'll hear a presentation from General Liakhovskii on the Warsaw Pact side of it. This afternoon we'll have a chance for a freer exchange with questions that you have back and forth. The time will probably be fairly short for this first session after General Creighton and Dr Cirillo make their comments. The only other comment about procedure is if you wish to speak, just stand your card up. The other thing is that if you want to intervene directly on a point that has just been made, just put up two fingers and I'll adjust my list.

### Neal Creighton

In February 1986, Mikhail Gorbachev, then the general secretary and head of the Soviet Union said, and I quote, "Never perhaps in the post-war decades was the situation in the world as explosive, and hence more difficult and unfavourable, as in the first half of the 1980s."<sup>41</sup> That is the period the sponsors of this conference in Stockholm have chosen as the focus of our discussion for the next two days.

My arrival in July 1980 to become the senior US officer at Headquarters Allied Forces Central Europe (AFCENT), with duty as deputy chief of staff for Operations and Intelligence, coincided with the rising troubles in Poland, where the Solidarity labour organisation led by a union organiser named Lech Walesa became a force that threatened the

41 Quoted *inter alia* in: Benjamin B. Fisher, 'A Cold War Conundrum: The 1983 Soviet War Scare', <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/books-and-monographs/a-cold-war-conundrum/source.htm#HEADING1-17>.

government of General Jaruzelski. Senior NATO officials were closely monitoring the situation and the rising crisis to see how much it might affect Warsaw Pact actions. Other tensions were also destabilising the relationship between NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Just as the 1980s began, NATO had announced its intention to forward-deploy intermediate range nuclear weapons. This was in response to what the nations making up the Atlantic alliance considered as a change in the nuclear balance of power in the European theatre with the recent deployment by the USSR of the SS-20 missiles, with a range that could reach anywhere in Europe from the Soviet homeland. Coupled with all this, 1980 was an election year in the United States. An election that was to see Ronald Reagan ascend to the presidency of NATO's strongest military power. President Jimmy Carter, Reagan's predecessor, had begun a process to rebuild the fighting capability of the United States armed forces, forces that had just spent over a decade fighting our nation's longest war – the war in Vietnam. The cost and effort of that war had taken a large toll on these forces. In addition, during the major combat years in Vietnam, 1965–72, most of the Department of Defense expenditures went towards fighting the war, to the neglect of the development of new weapons and the upgrading of existing equipment.

As NATO entered the 1980s, for almost 20 years its plan for defending Western Europe had depended on what was known as flexible response, meaning it would be prepared to carry out this mission using either conventional means or nuclear means or both. When this strategy was adopted in the 1960s, this seemed to make sense. The Warsaw Pact had a much larger and more powerful conventional capability than NATO and, on the other hand, the nuclear capability of the US and two of its allies – the United Kingdom and France – was clearly dominant. Since NATO's first aim was deterrence, the nuclear response capability serves as a practical basis for dependence on that option. However, by the advent of the 1980s, NATO judged that the challenge had changed. In the years since the early 1960s, the Soviet Union had taken major steps to upgrade its capability to deliver nuclear weapons, both strategically and tactically. The SS-20s were only one of such weapon systems.

As the new decade began, NATO intelligence was telling the civilian and military leaders of the alliance that the balance of the nuclear forces had shifted from favouring the West to favouring the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies. Faced with this perception of the changed threat and with the dynamics of the situation in Poland, the supreme commander in Europe, SACEUR, ordered a major review of the general defence plans throughout the alliance. While such reviews had been ongoing in previous years, this was to be a much more extensive study and would take almost two years to complete.

Since AFCENT war plans were the staff responsibility of the deputy chief of staff for Operations and Intelligence, I was to spend much of my two years assigned to this position involved with the development of these plans. CINCENT,<sup>42</sup> our commander in those days, was the German General Ferdinand von Senger und Etterlin, and he took a keen interest in every aspect of the planning cycle. As with all military planning, one of our first tasks was to develop a clear and well-researched understanding of the situation for both NATO and the Warsaw Pact. It was no surprise to us to find out that the Warsaw Pact conventional capability was still formidable. For example, in the Central Region AFCENT had 26 divisions, and that included 12 armoured divisions, in place in the 650-mile long front stretching from Lower Saxony to the Austrian border. Within days, this figure could rise to 32 divisions with deployments from the UK and elsewhere on the continent. Our intelligence people told us that the Warsaw Pact, counting forward deployed units and units in Western Russia or the USSR, could field at least 90 divisions. Our main reinforcement was scheduled from the United States with five and a half divisions, capable of arriving in Europe within one to four weeks after the alert. In sum, the ground force ratios were about three to one in favour of the Warsaw Pact. Our defensive plan, and we had no attack plans in the early years of the 1980s, had to seek ways to cope with this situation.

As an armoured officer, I was particularly interested in what our information showed us about the ratios of NATO versus Warsaw Pact tanks. We had available within our initial divisions 7,150 front-line tanks.

42 Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces Central Europe.

Our estimate of tanks available to forward-deployed Warsaw Pact units was 13,000, mostly T-64s and T-72s. In the Western USSR, our intelligence people told us, the Pact forces could be reinforced with about 7,000 tanks, half of which would be older T-54s and T-55s. On the air side of the equation, we counted a little less than 2,000 fixed-wing aircraft being available before reinforcement from the United States. This, our intelligence specialists told us, was about equal to what would be available to the Warsaw Pact forces at the outset. The figures supplied to our planners also showed that the Soviet Union had a formidable array of nuclear weapons for use in Europe. We were told that the Soviets at the time had more than 600 medium-range/intermediate-range combination ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles and nearly 500 nuclear-capable aircraft to support theatre-wide nuclear operations. This we compared to what was available to the West, including the French theatre forces, and these showed approximately 190 intermediate-range submarine-launched ballistic missiles and 580 tactical strike aircraft earmarked for Europe. Once we had accomplished the research necessary to accurately portray the situation that existed on the central front, we had to devise a plan that would give us the best chance to (a) deter a Warsaw Pact attack and (b) if deterrence failed, to defend NATO territory. In keeping with the flexible response doctrine, this would include both conventional and nuclear scenarios.

Now I'd like to turn the briefing over to Dr Roger Cirillo, a prominent historian and author in our country. Dr Cirillo is also a retired US Army officer who served on active duty as a staff officer in the war plans division of Central Army Group in the 1980s. That's the period we're discussing here in Stockholm. I've also asked Dr Cirillo to describe our planning process, our guidance from SHAPE, and our planned front-line positions. You will note that our plans in 1982 were strictly defensive, so they show you where we planned to deploy and how we planned to reinforce in Europe's Central Region. After he finishes his portion of the briefing, I will return to provide you with some of my observations and comments on the plans. Dr Cirillo.

## Roger Cirillo

Let me begin with this slide showing a map of the dispositions of the forces assigned to Allied Forces Central Europe in the first part of the 1980s. As the general mentioned, AFCENT was charged with defending NATO's Central Region from Lower Saxony to the Austrian border, a distance of about 650 miles, or a little more than 1,000 kilometres. Our assigned and earmarked forces were composed of troops from seven nations. We did work with the French Liaison Office at AFCENT, which was headed by a senior French general, to develop plans for possible use of French forces, but these were never approved by either NATO or the French government, so we could not integrate such plans into our defence planning. The French at the time of this planning did have three divisions stationed in Southern Germany, a holdover from the days of the occupation of Germany and from France's active military participation in NATO, which was ended by Charles de Gaulle in 1966.

If you look at the map, you will see where our forward deployed forces were located in the north, bordering on NATO's Allied Forces Northern Command, which had its headquarters in Oslo, Norway. In the north was the Dutch Corps. This corps had two and a third mechanised divisions, mostly forward-deployed or located just across the border in Dutch territory. Next was the German 1<sup>st</sup> Corps, consisting of four Panzer divisions, all of which were stationed in the sector. On their south flank was the British 1<sup>st</sup> Corps, with three armoured and one infantry division deployed in West German territory. The Belgian 1<sup>st</sup> Corps, with two mechanised divisions, was the southernmost corps of Northern Army Group, or NORTHAG, one of the two groups of AFCENT. This group was commanded by a British general. Supporting the ground forces in NORTHAG was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Allied Tactical Air Force (2 ATAF), and this was also commanded by a British flag officer.

To the south of NORTHAG was the other army group, known as CENTAG or Central Army Group. This was commanded by an American general and had four corps assigned. The German 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps, which had a mountain division, a mechanised division, a Panzer division, and a parachute division, defended the border with Czechoslovakia from

the Austrian border in the East to the West in the vicinity of the town of Hof in Northern Bavaria. The United States VII and V Corps, each with an armoured division, a mechanised division, and a mechanised cavalry regiment, were assigned the responsibility of defending the areas which AFCENT considered as the major avenues of approach into CENTAG's area: the Meiningen Gap and the Fulda Gap. The northernmost corps of CENTAG was the German 3<sup>rd</sup> Corps with two Panzer and two mechanised divisions. CENTAG was supported by the 4<sup>th</sup> Allied Tactical Air Force, which had a German commander. Both of the two ATAFs, or Allied Tactical Air Forces, in the AFCENT region reported to an American general, who commanded Allied Air Forces Central Europe. He in turn was subordinate to the German commander of Allied Forces Central Europe.

I am sure you have noticed the integration of various command levels of the countries belonging to the alliance. To review that, let me point out again that AFCENT was commanded by a German officer. The two Army Groups were headed by a British and an American officer. The Allied Air Forces Central Europe was commanded by an American officer, and the two Allied Tactical Air Forces were commanded by British and German officers. The corps commanders included three Germans, two Americans, one British, one Belgian, and one Dutch general. At AFCENT headquarters, the German commander's chief of staff was Dutch. His chief of Operations and Intelligence was an American, and his logistics chief was a Belgian. CINCENT himself reported to the Supreme Allied Commander Europe at SHAPE, who was an American. If the defence of NATO's Central Region was to be successful, these key individuals from many different countries would have to work together as a team. Fortunately, NATO had existed for over 30 years by this time, and most of the procedures for this to occur were in place. But they had never been tested by the strains of actual combat emergencies.

The existing NATO general defence plan that we were studying to determine what changes needed to be made called for a forward defence, meaning that, unlike plans that had existed in NATO's earlier years, our forces would defend as far forward as practical to the borders between East Germany and West Germany and between West Germany and

Czechoslovakia. The forward defence concept was driven by both political and military imperatives. Politically, German officials could hardly agree to give up territory, even if it was based on historically sound military doctrine. Forty per cent of the German population lived within 60 miles of the East-West border, and this included many of their cities and key industrial areas. German politicians who had already had to convince their constituents that they should support the stationing of foreign troops in their homeland could not readily agree to war-fighting plans that abandoned a substantial part of their country early on in a conflict situation. On the other hand, there were military advantages as well as disadvantages to this forward-deployed concept. Many of NATO's vital supplies were stored in areas relatively close to the border areas, and many of our supporting airfields were just minutes by aircraft from the East German or Czech borders. In any case, CINCENT was not given the freedom to alter the then existing concept of forward defence. He was directed to base any new plan on this concept, and from all outward manifestations, General von Senger, who frequently met with German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, was a supporter of those in Bonn who insisted on forward defence. As the Central Region planners looked at their general defence plan in the early 1980s, they did so with the realisation that there was little opportunity to make changes in either current troop stationing or in reinforcement plans. The stationing of troops had evolved over several decades and could not easily or rapidly be altered. As for changing the reinforcement plans, these had just undergone major revision in the late 1970s, with the US establishing its programme for pre-positioning division sets of equipment in West Germany and in the Low Countries. Plans for creating the AFCENT reserve corps from the US III Corps stationed in Texas were also well under way. Thus, the main change and thrust in the new plan would relate more to doctrine than to increases in troop lists or stationing.

The most significant doctrine change that entered into the planning process was the newly developed American idea for what the American army called the AirLand Battle. Essentially this idea developed from the study of Russian military doctrine for attacking the national elements. AirLand Battle was developed to extend actual combat from the line of



contact to well into the enemy's rear, attacking their supply lines and their second and third echelons. To do this required an extension and an expansion of intelligence techniques and priorities to better gain information on what was going on behind the battlefield. This required the use of such things as reconnaissance aircraft, special forces, unmanned aircraft, long-range airborne radar, and satellite photography. To effectively use this information, we needed weapon systems such as the US Air Force A-10 aircraft and smart munitions to attack deep targets. As for air planning, the early 1980s saw the introduction of very modern aircraft, including the US F-15 and F-16 fighters and the British-built Tornado. Our planners saw this as a propitious development in allowing us to wage a successful battle for air supremacy over the battle area, something that would be necessary for us to attack well into the enemy rear in order to disrupt his follow-on echelons. In the early 1980s, NATO gained an AWACS capability<sup>43</sup> of its own, which allowed for much better control of NATO aircraft operating in the battle area. Our nuclear planning group that reviewed the existing plans did a study of targeting with the objective of better integrating targets into the AirLand Battle doctrine. Because of SACEUR guidance that allowed us to consider targets for the soon-to-be-deployed Pershing II missiles,<sup>44</sup> we were able to recommend targets much deeper in Eastern Europe.

In the 1981–82 period, AFCENT forces were not allowed to develop counter-attack plans that would violate established East-West borders, so our AFCENT plan did not have any of these. The individual corps did have counter-attack plans, but these plans were only developed to retake ground that had been seized by an attacker, in other words, to eject Pact forces from NATO territory. Finally, our plans were based on a minimum of 48 hours' warning time. A relatively short time, but we had to have some practical planning guidance. Our forces just couldn't stay perpetually on alert. The AFCENT planners used to joke that they hoped that the Warsaw Pact didn't attack in the Dutch Corps at the weekend. At weekends, many of the Dutch soldiers went back to their homes in the

43 Airborne Warning and Control System.

44 Solid-fueled two-stage medium-range ballistic missiles with a range of 900 mi or 1,600 km.

Netherlands, and AFCENT could never check on their ability by calling a practice alert on a Saturday or a Sunday because the Dutch Army would then have had to pay their troops overtime. Such are the unique problems of a coalition like NATO. I look forward to hearing if the Warsaw Pact members had such interesting problems of their own.

### Neal Creighton

While the 1982 NATO general defence plan for the Central Region in many ways resembled plans from earlier years, it was to have a significant effect on senior political and military leaders of the alliance. In 1982, NATO published a book on the NATO-Warsaw Pact comparison.<sup>45</sup> In the introduction, NATO Secretary General Joseph M.A.H. Luns stated: “The numerical balance of forces has moved slowly, but steadily in favour of the Warsaw Pact over the last two decades. During this period, the members of the North Atlantic Alliance have lost much of the technological edge which has permitted NATO to rely on the view that quality could compensate for quantity. It is clear that the trend is dangerous.” Later, commenting on the balance of forces, General Bernard W. Rogers, the Supreme Allied Commander, is quoted as saying,<sup>46</sup> “Under current conditions, if we are attacked conventionally, we can only sustain ourselves conventionally for a relatively short time. I then will be forced to follow the guidance I have received from ministers and ask for authorisation from my political authorities to use nuclear weapons.”<sup>47</sup> One result was that, after an extended period of study lasting almost a year, NATO did adopt new guidance that allowed its forces to plan attacks across the border into Eastern Europe, known as follow-on-forces attacks or FOFA. Commenting on this, General Rogers said, “We must let the Warsaw Pact

45 *NATO and the Warsaw Pact: Force Comparisons* (Brussels: NATO Information Service, 1984).

46 See: ‘NATO Military Strategy and Forces’, CSC 1985, SUBJECT AREA Strategic Issues (<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1985/DRL.htm>).

47 Anthony H. Cordesman and Benjamin F. Schemmer, ‘Interview With General Bernard W. Rogers, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe’, *Armed Forces Journal International*, September 1983, p. 72.

know that if they initiate an attack, their forces will not enjoy sanctuary in their own territory.”<sup>48</sup>

The larger NATO nations continued to modernise their conventional ground forces in the Central Region in the years following 1982. The Germans upgraded with their Leopard tank. The Americans upgraded their tank units with M1 Abrams tanks. Other equipment entering the forces in Central Europe included an improved Challenger tank for the British Army of the Rhine and the introduction of the Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle to American infantry units. Such actions began to close the technical gap in fighting equipment brought on by the Warsaw Pact advances in the late 1960s and 1970s. The imbalanced nuclear situation in Central Europe also had some effect on decisions made a year later. It was in March 1983 that American President Ronald Reagan announced SDI, or Strategic Defence Initiative, a move that was initially intended to protect the American homeland from nuclear missile attack. Soon there was a clamour from two different sources. America’s allies in Europe, understandably, wanted to be included in this protection, while Russia’s leaders regarded SDI as a threat to themselves. Soviet General Secretary Yuri Andropov even publicly called Reagan “insane”.<sup>49</sup>

I hope this presentation was sufficient to provide the former members of the Warsaw Pact with enough information to understand what we in NATO were trying to accomplish in the early 1980s. Enough to stimulate you into a dialogue that will help future historians to better comprehend the world in which we – old soldiers all – lived, worked, and served our respective countries as well as we could.

Dr Cirillo and I have prepared a number of questions which we recommend be discussed at the conference. They mainly concern Soviet and Warsaw Pact views of NATO’s wartime intentions and capabilities where I ask for your views on specific events of the 1980s. I have passed these questions on to our moderator so that he can work them into our

48 Robert Ruby, ‘New NATO Strategy Uses ‘Smart’ Arms, Raises Worries on Cost, Casualties’, *Baltimore Sun*, 6 February 1985.

49 ‘It is time Washington stopped devising one option after another in search of the best ways of unleashing nuclear war in the hope of winning it. Engaging in this is not just irresponsible, it is insane.’ *Pravda*, 27 March 1983.

discussion, and I understand that our sponsors have distributed these questions to all participants earlier this month, so I will not take up your valuable time in reading them to you. So thank you, and I, along with my colleagues, look forward to these next two days here with you at the Swedish War College.

### **Robert Legvold**

Neal and Roger, we thank you. That's a very useful beginning for the meeting. General Creighton referred to a list of questions that he created on behalf of the NATO side. In the same fashion, we invite our Russian colleagues and Warsaw Pact colleagues to formulate a set of questions of the same kind if they have. I'll take the one commentary from General Chalupa, or if there is someone from the Warsaw Pact side, I'll defer to them. Note that in the discussion in this session, the presentation, and then in the next session before lunch and today, we're talking about the balance in war planning on the assumption that the war has not gone nuclear, and talking about it as much as we can without introducing the nuclear dimension. We can do that tomorrow, and General Odom will make the presentation for the NATO side on that issue. General Chalupa, the floor is yours.

### **Leopold Chalupa**

Let me just summarise again the main questions that were addressed. First, what was our assessment of the Warsaw Pact in those days? We believed the political objectives to remain as they were, that is to expand the area of influence of Communism, of the Warsaw Pact, of the Soviet Union, and also, if possible, to gain control of the Western part of Germany. We assessed that the economic objectives were to avoid an economic breakdown, which was slowly becoming visible in the Communist area. We believed that if such a breakdown developed on the political side, the Warsaw Pact or the Soviet Union would possibly take the military option. That is, to launch a major conventional attack after a short preparation time with operational objectives at the River Rhine or the Atlantic coast in the shortest possible time, without nuclear escalation in view of the

US strategic capabilities. Our assessment was conventional superiority, or inferiority from our point of view, of 1 to 3, with a particular advantage regarding the new development of echelonment in depth, in other words, to employ succeeding echelons in an orderly way to replace the attacking forces.

NATO's political concepts and plans were aimed, of course, at preventing a war. My mission was to prevent a war by a credible deterrent against this military option. I think the change of strategy from massive retaliation<sup>50</sup> – the 1967 Harmel report in NATO<sup>51</sup> – to forward defence and flexible response was an important and decisive change in concept. Massive retaliation was no longer credible, because nobody believed that the US president would allow the employment of massive nuclear retaliation just because one battalion of the opposing forces had crossed the Meiningen Approach or the Fulda Gap. Let me recapitulate the concepts of “flexible response” and “forward defence”: Forward defence meant that an aggressor must be convinced that he must expect the strongest conventional resistance once he dares to cross the border. He must be convinced. He must be certain of this. Flexible response meant that he must never be certain when, where, and at what time NATO would employ nuclear weapons. NATO had threatened the initial use of nuclear weapons. You mentioned the political forward defence requirement from a German point of view. Sometimes, I had a little difficulty or discussion with my British colleague who wanted to start the main defence at the River Weser and win the war at the Rhine. But how could we explain to the German population who were first told to stay put – this was the official NATO policy – that you must be reassured we will fight a little on the front and defend at the Weser and then be sure at the Rhine whether we have won the war. They would never have given their support to NATO's effort

50 Massive retaliation is a military doctrine and nuclear strategy in which in the event of an attack from an aggressor a state commits itself, in the case of its being attacked, to retaliate by using massive force disproportionate to the size of the attack. In 1957, this US doctrine/strategy became official NATO strategy (MC 14/2).

51 ‘The Future Tasks of the Alliance’, a report written by Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs Pierre Harmel recommending a strong defence policy, but also a dialogue and constructive cooperation with the Eastern bloc. See: <http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/colltopic.cfm?lng=en&id=15713>.

for defence. The multinational defence set-up was visible here. I was the corps commander in the south.

Maybe just one remark about the flanks. In the north, the operational disadvantage of using a major obstacle as a boundary between two areas of command, Central Region and Northern Region, the River Elbe, of course had to be accepted because this principle was employed in the Northern Region to have both sides of the Baltic Approaches in the same operational area. The operational disadvantages of forward defence were, of course, well known. We had a forward line-up. We couldn't trade space for time for ground operations. We had to react to the aggressor's action. Of course, our plans were all oriented towards reacting to what we assessed a major military option by the Warsaw Pact would involve. We had the difficulty of the NATO alert system.<sup>52</sup> Sometimes "Active Edge" – that was the catchword<sup>53</sup> – was implemented on Sundays and you can rest assured that the commander-in-chief CINCENT was the first in the headquarters to make sure he was available.

The improvements in capabilities mentioned here allowed one important advantage to us, and this was what we called follow-on-forces attacks, or FOFA, with our own medium-range missiles. Against the SS-20s, we had the Pershing and the cruise missiles. They would allow us to interdict the orderly forward employment of reserves and the next echelon, which we found was a major step forward in our defence capability. And of course the new fighter aircraft could also be employed. I must say that there were never operational plans for the attack of ground forces across the border. There may have been some nationally by our American friends. I know that during the Berlin crisis, there was the attack plan of the two US corps along the Autobahn Hannover-Berlin,<sup>54</sup> but in those days, there were no plans for any ground forces attacks.

52 The NATO formal alert system, which allowed measures to be taken that would shift all armed forces and economic and political institutions from peacetime footing to war preparedness. Three main stages were planned: 'simple alert', 'reinforced alert', and 'general alert'.

53 'Active Edge' was the annual alarm exercise of NATO.

54 Gregory W. Pedlow, 'Allied Crisis Management for Berlin: The LIVE OAK Organization,' in *International Cold War Military Records and History: Proceedings of the International Conference on Cold War Military Records and History Held in Washington, D.C.*, 21–26 March 1994, ed. William W. Epley (Washington, 1996), pp. 87–116.

Now just a word on the role of the non-US allies. As you may have seen here, they had a decisive part in the conventional land forces structure of the Central Region. You have seen that six of the nine corps were non-US, as were 17 of about 23 divisions initially on the ground. The modern rearmament of those land forces was similar to the US with the tanks, and we made great efforts in what we called harmonisation programmes and interoperability programmes. We called George Planchett “Mr Interoperability”. In the multinational command staff above SACEUR was the Military Committee of NATO, and this was chaired by a European. General Eide was one of them. I think the support for American forces in Europe by the host nations on the ground was vital, especially of course by my own country, so I would make the concluding point on the non-US forces. A credible deterrent and an effective defensive effort would only have been feasible as an alliance effort. Neither the Americans on their own, nor the Europeans on their own would have been able to present a credible military deterrence and thus fight a credible war in Central Europe.

### **Robert Legvold**

We are now at the point of a break. A quick comment based on what's been said by General Creighton and Dr Cirillo and General Chalupa just now. All three stressed that on the NATO side, there were no plans for attack across frontiers with Warsaw Pact members, and that the basic posture was defensive on the NATO side. In the August 1977 CIA assessment of the balance of forces in Central Europe that I'm looking at, there is the following statement: “The NATO overall military planning reflects the defensive nature of the Alliance, whereas that of the Pact reflects the goal of being able to seize the strategic initiative once war seems inevitable or to launch a rapid counter-attack if NATO should strike first.”<sup>55</sup> The other document is from 1983, and this is a report on the Soiuz 83 exercise in

55 ‘The Balance of Forces in Central Europe’ (SR 77-10100), 1 August 1977, <http://www.foia.cia.gov/search.asp?pageNumber=1&freqReqRecord=PrincetonCollection.txt>.

June of 1983.<sup>56</sup> Its assumption is that Westerners plan to start hostilities by surprise on 10 June. That seems to me to fit in this category of seizing the strategic initiative. My question, as an innocent civilian looking at this, is, what was the comparative state of perceptions? Did the command within the Warsaw Pact not understand that the NATO alliance had no attack plans across borders, or why then were you postured as you were and running exercises of this kind – Soiuz – that assume a Western attack? So I think we'll want to turn to those issues after the break. We'll hear from the Warsaw Pact side on the way they saw the balance and the way in which they were doing the war planning, and General Liakhovskii will make that presentation.

## Second working session

### Aleksandr Liakhovskii

We have just listened to the reports of our colleagues on NATO planning in Europe and predictions in terms of the Warsaw Pact's plans, as well as their reaction to our actions in Europe. All these things were a kind of revelation to me, because when we were carrying out our planning, we assessed their plans and intentions from a different standpoint. Of course, by the mid- or late 1970s, and in the beginning of the 1980s, when Marshal Ustinov was our minister of defence, he was in charge of the whole defence complex and supervised the development of weapons and equipment. I should mention that during the Great Patriotic War,<sup>57</sup> when he was only 33 years old, he had served as the People's Commissar of Armament. From then on for his entire career, he dealt with the development of armaments. After he became the minister of defence, great progress was achieved in this field, as our colleagues from NATO pointed out. This fact gave rise to legitimate concerns that the Warsaw

56 See: Mastny and Byrne, *A Cardboard Castle?*, pp. 480–82. See also: <http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/colltopic.cfm?lng=en&tid=21286&navinfo=15697>.

57 The Second World War.



Pact countries had reached a level of superiority that could have enabled them to fulfil their strategic offensive tasks.

Of course, in their reports, we were presented as an aggressor who intended to attack Western Europe. I must say that the Warsaw Pact was not designed for such plans, and did not have aggressive intentions. We were also afraid of NATO. We were afraid that it would act as an aggressor and would cross the frontier, and therefore we created forward defence zones involving substantial forces, solely for the purpose of retaliation. We planned to repel an attack in defence battles, i.e., to fight back after their first strike, and then, to strike back with our reserve groupings. In reaction to NATO's doctrine of flexible response, we developed our defensive doctrine of air-land operation. We were in a relatively better position because we did not have to transport huge amounts of reserves by air and sea, since our reserves were located at a closer proximity; we could have transported them by land.

I believe that if a war had been started in Europe, it would not have been limited to the European continent. A general war plan was developed for conflict in Europe, and it would have resulted in a total war. Since our main adversary, the US, was a NATO member, a war between the Warsaw Pact and NATO countries would have meant war between the Soviet Union and the US as well. Hence, strikes on the territory of the US were planned, including all the key targets. It was planned to use all forces and assets of the long-range strategic air force. It was naïve to believe that the war would have taken place in the West solely. More important than the military component was the political component, including economic aspects.

As mentioned earlier, by the end of the 1970s, the Warsaw Pact had certain numerical advantages in the area of modern armaments. I think that these facts were exploited in order to obtain more funds for the defence industry and thus to increase the arms race with the Soviet Union. The economy of the Soviet Union and other countries of the Warsaw Pact was less developed than the economy of the Western countries and the US; thus, the arms race resulted in undermining of our economy. As has been mentioned before, NATO published a book about threats; we also issued a book called *Where the Threat to Peace Comes From*. All

computations and balances of forces that were available in the theatre of war are presented in this book.

More than 20 years have passed since then, and, in retrospect, I would like to say that the European theatre of war was not considered the main theatre. I still hear a lot of scepticism regarding this issue. It is true that we deemed the theatre of war in Europe as being important at that time, since the main adversary was located there. However, if you remember, we had a lot of problems in the Far East with China at that time as well. We had to deploy strong forces and facilities to the Far East theatre of war. Had a war broken out there, we could have had huge problems, even bigger problems than in Europe.

Now, in retrospect, we can say that we were afraid of each other so much, meaning, if “they” had initiated, “we” would have responded; and it is so good that nothing like that happened. We thought that neither NATO nor the Warsaw Pact would initiate war. Actually, we were sure and we knew that even though the forces and military facilities had been amassed, a war as such would not take place. The war would have been a catastrophe for European civilization and the whole world, because a conflict in Europe would have been transformed into a world war with all the consequences, as the first nuclear strike would have resulted in massive nuclear retaliation; the consequences would have been disastrous.

I want to stress that we had concerns regarding some steps undertaken by NATO, especially the deployment of Pershing and cruise missiles, because those missiles presented a serious strategic threat for us. They presented a strategic threat, as they had been designed to strike the most important targets (command posts and other facilities) of the Soviet Union within a very short period of time. The Soviet Union did not possess any weapons that would have allowed us to strike the most important facilities of the US. Let me point out that the strategic missiles had to travel for a much longer period of time than the Pershing and cruise missiles. We were very concerned, because at that time, we had no adequate means of defence, and our air defence was not advanced enough to destroy the cruise missiles, which had been programmed to travel at very low trajectories. We had serious concerns about it.

The Strategic Defense Initiative was interpreted ambiguously. It was mainly considered to be propagandistic and provocative; however, some of our supreme commanders treated it seriously and interpreted it reasonably, but we did not find a response to it at once. We believed that the program itself was science fiction. We did not undertake any urgent measures with respect to the program, just as the US had expected. I think that the Reagan administration believed that we would start to develop our own Strategic Defense Initiative. We made some steps to strengthen our air defence and space groupings, but we did not undertake any fundamental measures.

I want to stress that those mutual steps – for example, NATO would undertake some measures, and then the Warsaw Pact would undertake some measures in response – were aimed at maintaining the mutual deterrence to some extent. Neither party wanted to be an aggressor. I am still sure that NATO was created to achieve goals actively, not just for defensive tasks. This has changed to some extent; we are not entirely sure about it yet. For this reason, there are still some misunderstandings between NATO and Russia, because some of NATO's actions are interpreted and assessed ambiguously. Due to this, our main objective is to reach mutual understanding and trust by way of reaching compromises and agreements, and other actions of such kind in order to prevent any conflicts, as we should have done in the Western Europe in the middle of the 1980s. Maybe this conference will contribute to this process. Now, our main objective is to ease tensions in order to prevent an armed conflict. I think that it is the main current objective of both NATO and Russia. Thank you.

### **Robert Legvold**

Before I turn to General Smith, a remark on the question from the NATO side: Were the NATO estimates showing at least a 3 to 1 Warsaw Pact advantage in ground forces available accurate? I think that's a question that goes back and forth to the two sides. My understanding, which I put probably primarily to General Creighton and Roger Cirillo, is that when you say a 3 to 1 advantage overall, if you were to calculate it differently, if

you were to do it in armoured division equivalents, that ratio then comes down, and I'm not sure whether that was a meaningful way in which you did estimates at that time and whether it changed anything when you looked at it. On the Warsaw Pact side, the question is: Did you believe that these estimates of a 3 to 1 advantage were correct? My understanding from the estimates that I see in the documents from that period of time is that the NATO side assumed that you wanted a 3 to 1 advantage in manpower, and that you wanted as much as a 5 or 6 to 1 advantage in tanks and a 3 to 1 advantage in artillery during that period of time. One of the comparisons is with what you had at the Battle of Kursk,<sup>58</sup> when that operation succeeded. That was a 2.5 to 1 ratio in men, a 2.7 to 1 ratio in tanks, and a 3.1 to 1 ratio in artillery. Were you still thinking in those terms? But the basic question is, were NATO estimates showing at least a 3 to 1 advantage in available ground forces accurate, in your judgement? You don't need to respond to that immediately. General Smith has the floor and then General Chalupa.

### **William Smith**

Answer that first and then come back to me.

### **Vitalii Tsygichko**

First of all, I want to stress that it is good that we are reminiscing about what was going on 30 years ago; however, we know from history that we cannot learn from past mistakes, because in new situations, we make new mistakes all the time. Nevertheless, one very important psychological aspect exists. Why did the huge forces in Europe oppose each other for a very long time? And why did no event occur that could have triggered war? In fact, war was not a feasible option at all, and this became absolutely clear when nuclear weapons had been deployed on the territory of the NATO countries. This containment corresponded to the strategic opposition between the USSR and the US. As soon as nuclear weapons had been deployed in Europe, we started to carry out research. Starting

58 The Battle of Kursk (4–20 July 1943), the biggest tank battle in the Second World War.

from approximately 1965, or 1966, we assessed the consequences of the use of nuclear weapons in Western theatre of war. All these estimations showed that it was pointless from any point of view to start such an operation, provided that at least one third of all tactical weapons that had been accumulated at that time would have been used. For example, a book called *Assessment of Irretrievable Losses in the Western Theatre of War in Case of Operations With Nuclear Weapons* was published in 1969. In such a situation, regardless of who initiated an exchange of strikes, any armed forces would be defeated. Hence, provided that both sides applied the weapons, there would have been total destruction: millions of tons of soil would have been thrown into the atmosphere, and the result would have been an ecological catastrophe and the destruction of almost all population in the territory from Western Europe to the Urals.

Then, an attempt was made to assess the level of a possible use of nuclear weapons. This option also appeared to be practically impossible due to escalation: one strike would have caused another one, and this chain was inevitable. Thus, the tactical nuclear weapons were just a means of containment, since nobody wanted to start the war under these circumstances. As General Liakhovskii rightly mentioned here earlier, the political goals of NATO and the US were aimed at undermining our economy, since the arms race had a greater impact on our economy than it did on the economy of the West. This was true; just as there was some bluffing involved on both sides. More importantly, there was an understanding of the impossibility of war in Europe.

I participated in computations of many military exercises that were conducted by the General Staff Headquarters Academy. The exercises were based on the assumption that NATO would launch the first nuclear strike, and then start an offensive. What was our response supposed to be? It was planned that a quick nuclear response would have been followed by a rapid movement of forces. When we simulated such a situation for the first time, it appeared that both groups of forces would have been totally destroyed. We started a discussion about what to do if the war had been started in reality? Our impulsive “hot heads” believed that even if the troops had been affected by radiation, they would have been able to fulfil their assignments and carry out their duties, and move forward for a

certain number of kilometres in order to take up their assigned positions, etc. Later, we found out that that was a bluff, and even simple calculations showed that it was not possible. It would have been nothing but a catastrophe. It was interesting that starting approximately from 1966, at the times when the military exercises were conducted, the consequences of strikes were not calculated any more. In other words, we did not talk about the consequences of strikes, meaning that we would just strike, and that was it. The results of strikes were not even reported. This is a very interesting issue. I want to stress that our General Staff was well aware of the consequences of strikes. Our intelligence worked very well, too.

Now, I want to talk about the issues discussed earlier, i.e., the issues of balance of forces. Approximately in 1965, or 1966, we obtained the information that American scientists had created a model of an operation in the Western theatre of war with the use of regular troops. According to them, Soviet troops would have been able to move up to the English Channel in two or three weeks after the beginning of military operations without use of nuclear weapons. At that time, we started to work on models of a strategic operation in the Western theatre of war. The work was accomplished by the beginning of the 1970s, and our estimations appeared to be approximately the same. In other words, I believe that both sides' assessments of the balance of forces and the consequences of an operation without nuclear weapons – an operation involving only conventional forces – were almost the same.

Evidently, due to this reason, a decision to deploy nuclear weapons in Europe was made. This decision fundamentally changed the situation, and made it impossible to carry out any operation in the western direction. I need to stress that our military leadership of that time had a good understanding of this issue. Nevertheless, ideological doctrines of the era, as well as the mutual aversion of the two camps, resulted in the situation where each side was afraid of the other, and was preparing for an actual war. All the operational plans that had been compiled at that time were tested on models, and were seriously discussed. This procedure was also observed in annual planning. As a matter of fact, all new types of weapons were tested in terms of the consequences. A great deal

of attention was given to intelligence and communications, as our side lagged behind in this respect.

I want to say few words about the assessments of the balance of forces, which was considered very important in the Soviet Union. It was difficult to assess the balance of forces because of the differences in terms of equipment and how it was used. The issue of assessment itself was not easy either. For instance, we estimated combat potentials by assigning a certain weight to each weapons system, and then multiplying the weight by a quantity; for example, a tank was 0.8, and this number was multiplied by the number of tanks, and then compared to the same number of tanks in the West, etc. Later, it appeared that those estimations were not only approximate, but wrong in principle in terms of the different types of military actions, and different types of involvement of the armed forces. The creation of models (a model of strategic operations, a model of front operations, and a model of tactical combat actions) allowed us to assess our combat abilities more realistically. The most important thing is that they laid a foundation for the issues that need to be resolved today. When a new weapon is created, new combat tactics are introduced, and a new approach to many issues is required, namely, the issue of the rear echelon. The issue of the rear has always been of vital importance, and I would like to mention that this issue is directly connected with the pace of advance.

When Marshal Grechko was the minister of defence,<sup>59</sup> a new strategy of air-land operation was developed and became a new doctrine. At that time, new instructions were issued saying that the war should be rapid, and that an adversary should not be given the chance to transport reserves; hence, the pace of advance should be 150 kilometres a day. It was estimated that the rear would not be able to follow up on such rapid offensive, but could only keep up with an offensive of 60 kilometres a day. Provided that we were able to break through the first line of defence, we would have had to carry out a rapid offensive deep into the territory of Western Europe. After a detailed analysis of this issue, we realized that the pace of advance of 150 kilometres was not possible. It would only occasionally

59 Marshal Andrei A. Grechko, minister of defence of the Soviet Union (1967–1976).

have been possible to advance at such a pace, and only on separate parts of the front. But, in general, it did not seem to work as a regular practice. An average advance of 60 kilometres was considered more realistic. Both modelling and extensive research of these issues resulted in a revision of many regulations in the armed forces at that time. For example, the specifications for medical supplies were revised, as it was estimated that the number of wartime casualties would increase dramatically, and these factors were critical for our rear services, since the requirements for replenishment of vehicles, equipment, and ammunition would also increase. These issues were constantly supervised by the General Staff Headquarters and other branches concerned.

I want to stress that during the period from the middle of the 1970s until the beginning of the 1980s, many principles not only of war doctrine, but also of military and technical policies were re-considered. In this context, it is critical to mention that this period led us to the present understanding of the way a war could go, meaning that even a non-contact war may take place, etc. I want to mention that a lot of scientific work was done in order to research new forms of military operations, including operations in the Western theatre of war.

### **William Smith**

I do not always understand perfectly when people speak in English what they say. I understand less from simultaneous translations, but let me tell you a couple of important points I got from the two presentations, which were – I have to say this carefully – more revealing than I thought, in terms of some of the planning and thinking in the Soviet Union at that time. I am struck by the similarities of most military staffs, because they all hope for the best and plan for the worst. And you always assume that the enemy is going to attack and that you're going to be on the defensive, and that's the impression that I got from the Soviets, but as you look at it from a NATO point of view, that didn't seem to make sense. But I will say that certain things impressed me. One was that there was a clear recognition from the Soviet Union that the war would not be confined to Europe. You see, a lot of people in the United States thought that the



Soviet Union would prefer that, because that meant the war would be fought in Western Europe and not in the Soviet Union. That came as sort of a surprise to me. Not that I didn't think the war would expand, but that the Soviet Union wanted it to expand to the United States. Why?

The next thing is that military staffs always, as I said, plan for the worst, but they always see their own weaknesses and the other side's strengths. I was struck by the fact particularly that the Soviets thought that it was going to be a great problem getting their forces forward. From the NATO point of view, it was getting our forces forward to stop this great onslaught that was coming. But the point is that the Soviets saw much more problems. We saw opportunities for the Soviet side, and the Soviets saw some problems that they thought they had to deal with.

Another thing that impressed me is that there seemed to be no desire for conflict from the Soviet point of view in the way this planning was described. And I tell you that I for one believe that the Soviets did not desire war, but what I thought the Soviets desired was an opportunity to achieve their objectives by having massive forces in Central Europe so they could threaten and coerce NATO into taking certain actions without the overuse of military force. It wasn't described that way, and we may have misunderstood it, but it just shows you how actions are looked at as defensive by one side, and as offensive by the other side. But let me stop there and say that I appreciated those comments very much.

### **Robert Legvold**

Aleksandr has stressed this point that for the Soviet Union – beyond the Warsaw Pact – a European war was almost certainly in the context of something more important, a US-Soviet war. This takes us beyond the Carter period, which is the way in which I think a lot of this is currently being discussed, so after 1979–80, into the new Reagan administration, when Secretary of Defense Weinberger actually introduced the notion of horizontal escalation, in which he suggested that the United States would choose another location in order to respond to any action on the part of the Warsaw Pact in Europe or elsewhere. Whether it made sense to think in terms of counter-attacking on the Korean Peninsula or some

other part was never clear at the time. The questions I have for both sides – they are different questions – are, for the Soviet or the Warsaw Pact side, did the Weinberger notion of horizontal escalation make any difference to the way in which you thought about this problem of a European war becoming a US-Soviet war, and for the NATO side, did that ever translate in any way that had any meaning for NATO in the way you did your planning?

### Leopold Chalupa

I would just like to come back briefly to the structure of our presentations and the thoughts that were supposed to be in there. We were asked for a threat assessment of the opposing sides, and I tell you I was a little surprised to hear for the first time that your assessment of NATO in those days was that it was aggressive. One would ask the question, why should we have been aggressive? Maybe we should have been aggressive in Hungary in 1956,<sup>60</sup> where there was a military option, or even in East Germany in 1953,<sup>61</sup> which was a political basis for making considerations which we believed defensible. Now, having heard that you expected NATO to have aggressive plans, one would ask of course from our side: for what? Free Eastern Europe? I don't know. It was clear that it was no good to ask you from your point of view what you believed the credibility of NATO strategy was, forward defence or initial flexible response through the introduction of nuclear weapons. You postulated, if I understood it correctly, the danger that NATO would launch a war, possibly with nuclear weapons, though for what purpose I don't know. With regard to the nuclear weapons, I feel we are a little limited to military capabilities. We don't talk about civilians, who lived there in very dense population areas at times, both east and west of the Iron Curtain. When I had my annual briefings or quarterly briefings about nuclear target lists in the deepest secret rooms of my headquarters, I felt very concerned to approve

60 From 23 October until 10 November 1956, a spontaneous nationwide revolt against the Communist government and its Soviet-imposed policies took place in Hungary. A large Soviet force invaded Budapest to crush the revolution.

61 In June and July 1953, an uprising took place in East Germany that was violently suppressed by tanks of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany and the Volkspolizei.

a target list which I knew would cause tremendous casualties, also among the civilian population. I'm sure SDI was considered provocative, but what did the Cuban crisis<sup>62</sup> mean for the Americans when they had the threat of nuclear weapons in front of their doors? So this is all action and counter-action.

Turning now to your threat assessment of NATO as an aggressive alliance, possibly – you mentioned it once – to win the economic and the armament race against the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. Now, what did you have on your own side as plans? I wonder what were the political and economic aims then in having such a strong military capability forward, as General Smith declared, in the area. To keep the population down? To keep your allies closer to the masters? So I'm not going to even ask then what could have been military concepts in this regard. You mentioned the advance rate of 150 kilometres per day. What do you need it for? In 300 kilometres you would have been at the River Rhine. Of course those were just the estimates we had to make. I could have asked you, what did you think of our very dedicated barrier system? It was very sophisticated. We had our own barrier engineer organisation in the German armed forces, which was solely occupied with preparing pre-loading barrier systems on avenues of approach to create obstacles, and so on. On the ratio of forces, Carl von Clausewitz said in his book on war that you must have at least a 5 to 1 superiority to win a war.<sup>63</sup> Well, this is just always the basis. I think this rough estimate of 3 to 1 against us, or in your favour, was an estimate which, in principle, was a likely one. You could of course always start at certain points of time: what was the superiority? What was it at the beginning? How effective was the alert system in NATO in deployment of forces within 48 hours? Possibly it was more difficult then to put you forward, because we had no prepared pre-positions except barrier systems.

62 The Cuban missile crisis, October 1962, resulted from the attempted introduction by the Soviet Union of offensive ballistic missiles into Cuba. Thirty years later it became known that, in addition to their intermediate-range ballistic missiles, the Soviets had deployed nine tactical missiles in Cuba to be used against any US invasion force.

63 See for Clausewitz' thoughts on numerical superiority: *On War*, third book, chapter eight.

It is interesting for me to hear for the first time that we were aggressive. The only time I experienced this when I was corps commander of the 2<sup>nd</sup> German Corps in the south, opposite Czechoslovakia. In those days, I found myself often described, as a Sudeten German from Czechoslovakia, in the Prague newspapers as this revanchist German general of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps just waiting for an opportunity to move back into his home country. Well, I can assure you that we never had these plans, and I would assure you again that we never had plans to start a war, also because of consideration for our civilian population on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

### Vitalii Tsygichko

First, I want to mention that I agree with everything that was said here before. I want to stress that in general, we should not confuse the actions of the Soviet Union in its own sphere of influence, i.e. the Warsaw Pact, with a confrontation between the East and the West. The events in Czechoslovakia, and previously the events in Hungary, were determined by the policy that all the countries within the Soviet Union's sphere of influence needed to stay there. If one country had left the zone, that could have resulted in a domino effect, meaning that other countries could have done the same. I believe that this issue should be considered separately, since ideological and security aspects prevail in this topic. The question is: "What actions did the Warsaw Pact countries plan to undertake in response to the threats to the Polish government under the leadership of General Jaruzelski?" I think that these events were not planned, since the Soviet Union was in a difficult situation. As General Liakhovskii mentioned, the conflict between Russia and China was of our main concern. We were trying to figure out a possible outcome of the conflict. If this topic is of any interest, I can talk about it in more detail. The most important thing was that we had invested so much effort in resolving our problems in the East. We built airports and roads and deployed troops there. On the one hand, we did not possess any capacities for "reckless schemes" in the West. On the other hand, the domestic situation in Russia was starting to change. Many things were changing slowly, but irreversibly; due to this reason, our leadership did not plan any interference in the events

in Poland. Although there was some pressure in this matter, I believe that military interference would have been unlikely.

### **Mojmír Zachariáš**

No military academy would teach its students only about defence, or about deployment of troops, but not teach them how to advance. At the time we are talking about right now, in the 1980s, I commanded the army and was also the commander of the Czechoslovak front. First, I was supposed to fulfil assignments of our political leadership, and then, of course, the tasks of our military commanders. If you are trying to say that we were aggressors, I would like to ask General Chalupa a simple question in this connection. How do you think we would have advanced to Germany without crossing the borders of other countries? On the German border, there is only one very narrow strip of 2 to 4 kilometres wide, called Všeruby Pass, where it is possible to deploy troops in array – this would be an attack of 3 to 4 battalions – and 60 to 80 tanks. If I had been responsible for the defence of this part of land, it would have been enough for me to have 20 to 30 tanks under my command. As a result, nobody would be able to pass through, provided that I used mines and explosive barriers along with air strikes. The rest of the border is a forest, where advance is only possible in columns via small roads. It is very easy to stop such columns.

The question is: “How would it been possible to advance through such a border?” The width of the strip is approximately 300–400 kilometres. On such a territory of such a width, in the first echelon, I could have had only 4 divisions. I could have had 3 divisions against me: the 4<sup>th</sup> Mechanized Division,<sup>64</sup> the 10<sup>th</sup> Division,<sup>65</sup> the 1<sup>st</sup> Mountain Infantry Division,<sup>66</sup> and the 1<sup>st</sup> Tank Division<sup>67</sup> in the depth. I am talking about another direction now, not the main direction.

64 The US 4<sup>th</sup> Mechanized Infantry Division.

65 The German 10<sup>th</sup> Armored Division.

66 The German 1<sup>st</sup> Mountain Infantry Division.

67 The German 1<sup>st</sup> Tank Division.

The balance of forces at the place of my assignment was like a joke, because forces had to be compared in terms of time, width, depth, quantity, and quality. When I was reading our strategic plan of 1960, which you have been talking about, I noticed that the ratio of balance of forces is 1 to 1, or 1.1 to 1. Does it mean that the ratio of 1.1 to 1 is in our favour? When we make computations, we do not take the qualitative characteristics of the balance of forces into account. The computations were only based on the assigned mission area, but we did not take the depth into account. The strategic tasks had to be fulfilled by the tactical units, the troops in contact, but not through the whole depth of the Warsaw Pact, where a battalion is against a battalion, or a division is against a division. Compared to such a strategic balance of forces, this was quite different. It was not feasible to carry out an offensive.

I do not believe that you had no plans for an advance operation. If that had been true, there would have been no need for plans for strikes against vitally important targets in the depth of the territory of the adversary; all this was a part of the advance. As for us, we had two plans: one for a defensive operation, and in case of its success, another plan for changing over to an offensive operation. Based on these plans, we elaborated and carried out our military exercises. However, there are many other factors that need to be taken into account. For example, if we had intended to advance, we would not have reduced the quantity of our troops. In order to start any operations, we would have mobilized the troops and transported them. It takes several days in order to prepare everything. Let's say, if I had an offensive in mind, I would have had to keep the armed forces in alertness to be ready to fulfil the assignment for several hours. I can continue presenting my arguments, but, frankly speaking, the most important thing was that we worked hard to do our military job.

### **Aleksandr Liakhovskii**

I just want to make a small comment regarding the events in Poland in 1981. Of course, we had problems in China, but the main reason why we did not interfere in those events was that we had troops in Afghanistan. The 40<sup>th</sup> Army was involved in the war with Afghanistan, and we would

not have been able to deal with both conflicts. I will be honest and say that we were watching the events in Poland, and we were even making some plans, but we gave them up later because of the war in Afghanistan. This was the main reason of our non-involvement in Poland. This is all I wanted to say.

### Third working session

#### **Robert Legvold**

I had promised the floor to General Chalupa, whom I will recognise now.

#### **Leopold Chalupa**

Let me just make two initial comments. We often talk about China and problems outside the former NATO area of interest, and of course China would not have been a NATO/Warsaw Pact problem. It would have been a United States and USSR problem, and I from my experience could hardly imagine that European NATO member nations would have been willing to engage in such a conflict, except that they would have had to accept any changes in the American force presence in Europe. My second point: in one of the workshop sessions on the employment of nuclear weapons this morning, we discussed what NATO thought, in its strategy and in its plans, about the employment of nuclear weapons in an escalatory way after difficulties or the danger of the loss of a conventional defence. I was interested to hear that your estimate of our employment strategy was that we would possibly initiate a nuclear war at the tactical and operational levels in the worst case, because I always had the feeling the Soviet Union wanted to avoid a strategic nuclear exchange, as this would immediately have had an impact on their own homeland and their own territory.

The last question is to my friend General Zachariáš. This is already a question of what is described in the text here as 'the role of non-Soviet allies'. But in regard to the possibilities for attack, the ratio of forces in

various sectors and the quality of terrain, either for defence or offence, you could see on the initial viewgraph we saw that, for instance, the 2<sup>nd</sup> German Corps, my corps, had a defence sector three times as wide as, for example, that of the 1<sup>st</sup> German Corps in the North German Plain, which was considered to be one of the main approaches for a possible Warsaw Pact attack, with far more mechanisation than in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps. In principle, we had two divisions, the 4<sup>th</sup> Armoured and the 10<sup>th</sup> Armoured Divisions (armoured infantry), and we wanted to exploit the terrain of the Bohemian and Bavarian forests, which is one area which I agree would not have allowed any big offensive action by either side. But you did not mention one point which was always of great concern to a 2<sup>nd</sup> German Corps commander, Central Army Group commander, and CINCENT, and this is the case of Austria. How much movement could there have been – and we had to be prepared for this – on the Warsaw Pact side to deploy forces from Southern Czechoslovakia via Austria into our more or less open flank? The only cover we had there was the River Danube, which had to be crossed. But this was also one of the assessments which kept us busy, and therefore we had the paratroops, the Airborne Brigade, always ready to occupy crossings over the river. But in principle, I agree that offensive action in this area would have been difficult. We had the Nuremberg approach – Highway 85 – and then further up we had other approaches where the defence sectors were smaller because it was expected that the main effort of the other side would take place here.

### **Tadeusz Pióro**

I would like to say a few words regarding the possibility of bringing our troops to Poland in the beginning of the 1980s. Some people say that it was possible; other people say that it was not possible. Now we have a situation that I personally do not support: General Jaruzelski will be prosecuted for the introduction of special rules<sup>68</sup> in the 1980s. However, this was his main line of defence, and if he had not done so at that time, then Soviet troops would have been sent to Poland. Personally, I agree with

68 Martial law.



those who believe that this could not have taken place. Firstly, the Soviet Union had other problems. Secondly, the events in Poland followed the events in Czechoslovakia. It is obvious that it was a political matter. In fact, this issue appears to have been closed, but it is still not closed.

I want to say few words regarding the plans of the Warsaw Pact in terms of whether they were defensive or offensive plans. I would like to mention that throughout my military experience, when I worked for several years for the General Staff Headquarters, and when I served as a commander of the Primorsky Military Okrug, and also when I was stationed in Moscow as a representative of the Warsaw Pact Armed Forces Headquarters, I was involved in different kinds of military exercises in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Germany. Basically, all the exercises were planned as offensives in all these war games. I want to hand out an operational plan of 1970, which was approved by General Jaruzelski and was in force until late 1980. It is obvious that a phase of defence is not included; only an offensive phase is foreseen. This exercise envisaged a scheme where in case of an attack by the Western European countries, we would have had to come up with a counter-advance, or launch a preventive strike.

Very recently, Professor Mastny gave me an actual operational plan developed by the General Staff of the Czech Army in 1964.<sup>69</sup> This is a plan for military operations by the Warsaw Pact countries against the NATO countries. According the plan, the whole Czechoslovak front, consisting of the two armies, a corps, and some additional forces, had to be in a state of alertness. One operational target envisaged covering 600 kilometres in the advance operation at a pace of 75 kilometres a day in order to reach the French city of Dijon in eight days. As a matter of fact, 130 nuclear bombs and shells were to be launched from a site located 150 kilometres away from the western border of Czechoslovakia. This plan had been approved by Politburo and signed off by Mr. Novotny, the first secretary of the Politburo of the Czech Army. I have to note that under these plans, two days after the beginning of this operation, the Czech troops were supposed to enter a radioactive zone, pass it, and reach Dijon in eight days. I cannot understand why the General Staff Headquarters

69 See: <http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/colltopiccfm?lng=en&cid=15365>.

of the Czech Army developed this plan of such an offensive, because it was not really possible to deploy the army.

I completely agree with the person who presented the arguments about both sides' understanding of the impossibility of nuclear war. Tomorrow we will have more discussions on this topic, and I would like to talk more about it. I am willing to provide data published by the Central Bureau of Radiological Consequences, which deals with the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl Atomic Power Plant. For the past 20 years, the Bureau has been working on statistics of injuries that were caused by the accident. I will tell you about it tomorrow. Now, I want to tell you about the time when we all were experiencing horrible feelings while we were transporting powerful missiles to Cuba, and when the US was ready for nuclear war. In his 18-minute address to the American people, President John F. Kennedy said that in case of a nuclear war, there would be no winners and everything would be eradicated from the surface of the earth.<sup>70</sup> This was true. I believe that the destructive force of nuclear weapons was the main reason preventing the war from breaking out, although there were many causes that could have led to a war.

### **William Odom**

Let me ask you to cast your mind back to 1914 and look at the war plans that were developed, and then the military were told "ask not whether you want to do this, but go ahead and launch your war plans." I think the greatest contribution this group can make is to begin to think about what if we had been told as military people to begin the war. Forget which side starts it – for some reason it starts – what happens then? How do we see the implementation of our plans? I would say that we should take for granted that, once a war starts, you can only do what you are organised to do and what you've practised and what you've created as doctrine to do. Given what we know about our doctrines on each side, how would we have acted? I'd really like to hear the discussion move in the direction of assuming that politicians have made the decision that

70 On 22 October 1962, President Kennedy gave a speech on radio and television in which he announced an arms blockade against Cuba.

we're going to go to war, and we are at war, then what happens in the Fulda Gap and what happens in the Böhmerwald. If we really fear these nuclear weapons so much, will we use them in the early days? Or did we assume there would be a conventional side? I'd really like to hear the people who've been sitting in the positions, such as General Smith and General Creighton and Colonel Tsygichko as a planner and General Liakhovskii and General Vasenin say, if the war had started, what would have been its first two or three weeks. How would you have expected it to go during that period?

### **Mojmír Zachariáš**

I have to make three clarifications. First, I would like to tell General Chalupa that none of the plans I have seen contained any violations of the neutrality of countries such as Austria. Second, Tadeusz Pióro omitted a small important detail concerning offensive operations: The plan of 1960 and the subsequent plans always contained a reference saying that an offensive would only begin after a battle at the frontier and only after we had stopped an adversary and defeated the first echelon. It was only in such a case that we would have started an advance. This detail was very important, since the whole operation was planned in order to protect the borders and stop the enemy first, and then, to switch over to an offensive. The same applied with respect to nuclear strikes, which were planned as retaliation after the first strike of the adversary. Regarding Poland, I should say that the troops were not introduced into the country, but there were divisions concentrated along the Polish border. I know for sure that there were two Czech divisions on the southern border of Poland, and I am confident that there were German divisions on the western border. Everything was in alert, but there was no order to start operations.

### **Vitalii Tsygichko**

I agree with what my colleague has just said. I do not remember any exercise, or any plan, which envisaged a first strike or an initiation of hostilities by us. I need to talk a little more about the political aspect of how

the Soviet leadership considered these issues. I want to stress once again that, starting from the end of the 1960s until the collapse of Soviet Union, our leadership never wanted a war in Europe. They knew that if a war had been initiated, the Soviet Union would have faced serious problems. Our economy was in poor condition, but the level of armament was very high. I can support my statement with the statistical data: the share of the defence industry constituted approximately 80 per cent of all heavy industry. When military operations in Afghanistan had begun, along with the events in the Far East, it became unclear whether our country's economy would be able to survive. However, it was vital for us to ease tension in the West. The negotiations on arms reductions began just at that time. The Soviet Union tried to maintain the status quo. Moreover, its policy was directed toward finding a compromise that would have allowed us to concentrate our efforts on other areas. Military people, as professionals, had to make plans to repel any actions against the country. This was their duty. It goes without saying that the General Staff Headquarters, no matter what the situation was, always took the balance of forces and opportunities of both sides into account. We, as professionals, dealt with the tasks we faced. Once again, I want to point out that nobody really believed that a war in Europe would even take place.

Now, when I reminisce, I could not recall any serious political problems, I mean international political events. As I remember, we had tensions in Czechoslovakia and Poland that made our leaders nervous; nonetheless, we certainly did not even talk about the possibility of a war. General Odom has raised a very important issue: "If a war had started, what would the consequences have been? Would it have been possible to implement our plans, or not? Would NATO have been able to implement its plans?" These are purely professional issues, and I think that it is critical to touch upon them.

I should say that by the 1980s, both the USSR and NATO troops, and especially the American troops, were very well armed, and they possessed modern air-defence systems, good aircraft, medium- and long-range weapons, as well as conventional arms (for example, missiles with

MIRV warheads,<sup>71</sup> elements of which were able to destroy columns of tanks and could lay down minefields in the path of advancing forces). What I am saying is that there were many kinds of new weapons systems, which were completely different from those used during the Second World War. The weapons had huge destructive force and would have caused significant losses in case hostilities had been initiated. It should be noted that if they had been used, not only would the troops on the frontline have been destroyed, but also the rear infrastructure, meaning the roads and all support systems. Besides, instruments of electronic warfare were developing very rapidly, and would have been used to interfere with communication and air force systems, and to impede the management of troops, etc. Both sides possessed such weapons, and they could have had a significant impact on the implementation of combat operations. Our estimations and calculations showed that during the first two days of war, each side would have lost approximately 30 per cent of its air force as a result of the use of different types of air defence systems. Thirty per cent! I should stress that these calculations were applied to different situations, meaning that with such losses, it would have been difficult to carry out an advance, or almost impossible, because 30 per cent loss of the air force is significant. Without a strong air force, or in other words, without air superiority, land forces would not have been able to do much. For example, if NATO had managed to dominate the air space, an advance would have been out of question, notwithstanding the quantity and efficiency of any other new type of weapons. This factor called into question the ability of the Warsaw Pact countries to carry out combat operations over a long period of time.

Nevertheless, all plans and reserves were designed for the two stages of war: Up to 30 days, and up to 60 days. In other words, some of the strategic reserves were concentrated on the borders in order to carry out military actions. Such were the plans. The General Staff Headquarters gave serious consideration to all of the aspects I have just mentioned, and special research was done, especially in the 1980s. The results spoke for

71 Multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle, a collection of nuclear warheads carried on a single missile.

themselves – unlike in the 1960s, when we would have been able to cross the entire territory of Europe in three weeks, it was not possible to do so in the 1980s. Although we had superiority in conventional weapons, the characteristics and methods of their use would not have allowed us to carry out an advance continuously, although such plans existed. As far as we understand, NATO planned to strike the rear units in order to cut off the advancing troops from their supplies. If that had been done in reality, then all of our attempts to carry out an offensive would have been impeded, and we would have had to stop and regroup forces after 200 to 300 kilometres. In fact, the new weapons allowed either side to cut off the opponent from supplies coming from the rear. The issues we were dealing with at that time were re-supplying the advancing troops and protecting the rear echelons from modern high-accuracy weapons and air strikes.

So, first, we just talked about the beginning of the 1980s, when we did not assume a war would break out in Europe. The Soviet Union was involved in other places. An offensive, which would have been feasible in the 1960s, could not have been carried out in the 1980s. Second, estimates of possible losses in the 1960s were very different from assessments in the 1980s. Let us assume that in the 1960s, a division was able to carry out military operations without nuclear weapons for two or three days without being reinforced. But in the 1980s, 30 or 40 per cent of its personnel force could have been annihilated on the first day, meaning it would have required urgent reinforcements. The increase in losses would have entailed a need for more hospitals and increased medical services, etc. Hence, the scenario would have been different. The strategic picture changed dramatically in the period from the 1960s to the 1980s due to the creation of new types of weapons, qualitative changes in troops, and the methods of the use of weapons. This was very important, and in the Soviet Union, these factors were given serious consideration, but there were no resources for a fundamental restructuring of the armed forces because of our involvement in Afghanistan and problems in the eastern theatres.

## Robert Legvold

Vitalii, let me ask you a question before we go on, because you've been very helpful in the second part of what you've said in responding to Bill Odom's challenge. And I think we all ought to try to move the entire discussion in that direction now, that is, what would have happened if we had ever come to fight the war. A more specific question: As I understand the evaluations and the estimates at the time, the Warsaw Pact approach was unit replacement in contrast to the NATO strategy of individual replacement. The estimate by Western intelligence was that even though the overall support ratio to fighting forces was roughly the same as in NATO, the support provided within at the battalion level was very weak and inferior to what existed in NATO. The question I have is, unit replacement systems, such as you were thinking of, made sense in a high-attrition environment, such as where nuclear exchanges had begun, but if you really needed mobility and flexibility for your offensive, why did you stick with your unit replacement system?

## Vitalii Tsygichko

I think that our General Staff Headquarters did the right thing, and experience showed that replacing only a few soldiers significantly decreased the combat abilities of a subdivision. Why would one have withdrawn a division or a regiment? In order to replace it with another well-coordinated regiment; and that required some time. It did not make any sense to replace only part of its troops – for example, 10 per cent of the staff – because a lot of time was required for training and coordinating. The main tactic was to replace an entire subdivision with a new, properly trained and coordinated subdivision, to make sure that replacements were no less able to carry out combat operations than the forces they had replaced. Furthermore, we investigated the psychological impact of casualties on a subdivision and its ability to proceed with combat actions, even when such casualties had been incurred within a short period of time. For example, a division might have been involved in offensive military operations for four or five days and incurred losses of 30 per cent; but if the offensive was a success and the losses were incurred not within

one day, but over several days, the morale of soldiers and officers would have remained at a pretty high level. If losses had been incurred within a very short period of time, however, the combat potential would have dropped abruptly. I believe this is true in any army. In such a conflict, a division would have been able to participate in combat actions for one day before being replaced.

### Leopold Chalupa

Unit replacement is of course an advantage from an operational point of view. But it also has one basic requirement, that you have sufficient forces of echelonment. We didn't have this on our side. We had maybe one III US Corps for the total Northern Army Group. So this was of course an advantage for the Warsaw Pact, which is why we followed the new concept of follow-on-forces attack – I mentioned it before – by air or by missiles to interrupt the units designated for introduction of the next echelon.

I would like to make one basic point, General Odom. In principle, I agree, but when we discuss now the historical timeframe of that area, I think it is not sufficient to discuss how military plans might have been executed and what the result would have been. I think we must also look at what we as the soldiers, the military, have done in order to avoid such a catastrophic war. What have we done, from the NATO point of view, to strengthen our deterrence and to make our deterrence credible with regard to military capabilities? What have we done, for instance, in terms of interoperability to have forces formed from different nationalities, of harmonisation of procedures, and of basic approaches, of the development of new weapon systems – Pershing, cruise missiles – in regard to the new threat of echelonment of forces, in regard to demonstration in exercises to the other side that we would be well prepared? Because I have a feeling already that there was no war threat at all. But if there wasn't, why did we make all those recommendations for the improvement of our forces? Was our intelligence all on the wrong side?



Another important point that we haven't heard anything about is, what would you have expected the reaction of the civil population to have been? In your own territory – the Czechs, the Polish – aside from you, who would only have been involved in escalated nuclear warfare, and of course the civil population in the territory that you would have considered enemy territory. But in principle, to summarise, I think we should also give thought to the question of what the military did in those days and, following on from that, what the military could recommend in the future to avoid a military confrontation, something at which we obviously succeeded in the 1980s, the timeframe we are talking about.

### **William Odom**

I give all of us full credit for having been perfect in preventing war, and I think that at least one purpose of the meeting is to try and think about and evaluate what would have happened had we not been successful at that. And I fear we will spend the next two days praising ourselves for having prevented it and have no better idea of what would have happened had we failed. This prevention business, we've done that for years, and we know a lot about that. We don't know what would have happened if things had failed. It's a question of whether you're going to learn anything about what went on.

### **Robert Legvold**

Gentlemen, I think we can do better than a past American president. I think we can both chew gum and walk at the same time, so we will try to keep both of these topics on the table in the right proportion. General Johnson, you're next.

### **Garry Johnson**

I'd just like to try and explore something in the line of what General Odom was saying from the perspective of somebody who has listened to you great men talking with interest. I served in Germany in the British corps as a mechanised company commander in the 1970s and as an armoured

brigade commander in the early 1980s. Our opponents would have been the 3<sup>rd</sup> Shock Army, coming across the North German plain, and we often asked ourselves those questions that you have just raised, William. What would have happened? There was a shift in our perception at the fighting level. To start with, in the early 1970s, the nuclear aspect dominated our exercise thinking, our field training exercises. There were nuclear killing zones. It was very much going to be how we were going to survive a fight on a nuclear battlefield. By the early 1980s, nobody believed in that any more. We were planning to hold operation manoeuvre groups. We were practising the 'Gegenschlag'. We were practising manoeuvre war, and after five to six days of exercises, when we believed we would have held the first echelon, and your second echelon would have been coming forward and we had no second echelon, at that stage the nuclear became important and at that stage the exercise stopped.

Going back later, after it had all ended, and trying to work it out from the other side, I remember very vividly going to see a mobilisation division of the Volksarmee – three days after unification – which, and somebody said it round the table, was perfectly prepared, perfectly well planned. The deployment procedures were worked out, and it then went to its concentration area, and I said to its divisional chief of staff, "What were your battle plans?" He said, "I don't know. But no doubt the chief of staff would have told the general when we reached the deployment area." "Very good", I said. "What did you train for?" "The advance and the attack." So with regard to the concept of unit replacement, I understood that this division was trained for one thing only. If you had stopped it, the inflexibility of the system would have required it to be removed and replaced at divisional level. And then, I think to myself, how would that have happened in a situation where the roads were clogged up, where FOFA was going on, where the A-10s were up in the air doing some strikes? And, even if you had got that wreck of a division out of the way and pushed another one through, how would you get through roads in West Germany clogged with refugees, farm lorries, broken down trucks, the whole lot? So my question I think is, were we play-acting at the end of this game? Was this all just sort of dreams that people had on maps? Was the reality in all this that no plan survives the first shock of war and

we would have bogged down within about ten days? Seven days? Five days? If that had happened, what then would we have done about the nuclear if we hadn't started off with it? Those are the things I would quite like to explore.

### **William Smith**

No-one I knew at the time in 1981 to 1983 was planning with any assurance that there would be two to three weeks of conventional war. The big question was the uncertainty. You didn't know how your side was going to behave if war began, you didn't know what the other side would do, so you just had to be prepared to escalate the nuclear weapons early. Certainly, we hoped that our follow-on-forces attacks would be useful. But no-one predicted that the war was going to go two or three weeks without using nuclear weapons. We had to be prepared to use them early on in order to survive.

### **Aleksandr Liakhovskii**

Unfortunately, military staff were only involved in planning military operations, while they regarded other issues as none of their business. This caused uncertainty in terms of further actions; nobody had a clue about the further development of events, and nobody knew what would have happened next, as if everything had been implemented in a vacuum. Let's assume that our troops had reached the English Channel in 25 days, and then what? Today, when we plan a certain operation, we just want to reach a certain goal, for instance, invade a country, period. This means that no further operations are planned. I may sound repetitive, but our actions in Afghanistan were a good example. Before the invasion of Afghanistan, there were plans... It was no secret that we had sent our troops into Afghanistan to support the viability of Babrak Karmal's regime, which had been established with our help. When the former leader of Afghanistan, Hafizullah Amin, had been removed, the troops were introduced into the country. We believed that the troops would be located in garrisons in the key parts of Afghanistan and their presence would support the viability of the regime of Babrak Karmal, who would gradually find advocates and

gain force to control the situation in Afghanistan independently; then, we would withdraw our troops. Plans remained just plans, and, in reality, everything turned upside down. The Afghans attacked our garrisons and columns and blasted our communication systems.

However, nowadays, we believe the danger of a large-scale war in Europe is much smaller than in the 1970s or 1980s. There is no obvious danger of a global confrontation or a world war. Nowadays, we face the danger of smaller wars, which have already occurred lately in different parts of the world; international terrorism is their consequence. We all experience the consequences of terrorism, which destabilizes the whole world, because terror and diversion are the main methods of small wars. What is so horrifying about small wars is that their methods significantly affect civilians and civilian life. I think that as a result of our joint work, recommendations should be made in terms of our current situation, and they should be based on our historical experiences and the fact that we managed to prevent a huge conflict. Now, we need to plan limited operations in a very careful manner, and prepare forecasts for the development of the political and economic composition of countries where we intend to carry out military operations. Strange as it may seem, poor forecasting, or lack of the same, results in a worsening of the situation and escalation of tensions in the whole world.

### **Robert Legvold**

It is our intention in the last session tomorrow to come back to the question of the relevance of what we're learning from this discussion in the context of general war among major powers for war in its contemporary context and contemporary national security issues. So we will return to that, Aleksandr, tomorrow afternoon at the end of the session.

### **Neal Creighton**

Well, going back to Bill Odom's question, if you're going to make a plan you have to have an objective. You don't just start all-out war. As I was listening, I was thinking, what situation would have driven somebody to come and tell SACEUR to attack? Possibly something like Berlin in

1948<sup>72</sup> or possibly something like Hungary in 1956. Perhaps if something had happened in Poland in 1980 or 1981. Suppose that on one side or the other – let’s say NATO, our side – our political masters said that we had to attack. Then you would go ahead and plan your attack with that objective. It would be limited. You’re limited by a number of things. One of the first things we would be limited by was the organisation of NATO, because Britain, the United States, and Germany don’t say, let’s go to war. You’ve got to get everybody in there who is going to approve your going to war, and it’s not going to be an easy process. So you have to have your political process, which says to go to war, and then you go to war, and let’s say a Berlin crisis had happened again in 1980, or something like that. You would plan your attack on Berlin, and you could only do a limited attack. For us, the limiting factor would have been logistics, quite frankly. Things like ammunition, etc. Even on defence, we only really had basically about 30 days’ worth of ammunition and other major supplies. In an attack, you would have had much less than that. So you would have to plan an attack around that and make it a limited objective. I’m sure that CINCENT or SACEUR or everybody else would be telling the political masters the consequences, but I’m following your scenario. I’m saying that somebody on either side would take the offensive, and looking at it from our side, I think that you could say conceivably that could have happened. That could have been the only time. Now the questions that comes out of that is, was it a limited attack? Could you have made it a limited attack? Could you have gone to Berlin? Could you have gone to Hungary? Could you have gone all the way to Poland, without starting a global war? I’m just trying to help with the scenario. You could have actually taken some offensive action based on that. Limiting factors would be the political problems that you had and the logistics to do it and, just like the general said, you don’t just plan the attack. You’ve got to say what’s going to happen after we make this attack.

72 In June 1948, as a reaction to the growing economic cooperation between the Western zones in Germany, the Soviet Union imposed a blockade against the Western sectors of Berlin. The Western powers, led by the United States, responded with a massive airlift of supplies to the encircled Berliners. In February 1949, Stalin decided to lift the blockade.

## Ross Johnson

Again, following up on Bill Odom's suggestion to talk about assuming that a war starts, for whatever reasons and from whatever side – let's say from the NATO side – what would have happened operationally in the next few days? General Zachariáš, if I understood you correctly, you were asked to plan in operational terms for something that you thought was not doable, or certainly not easily doable. I wonder if I understood you correctly, and I wonder if you have an opinion as to whether this was so difficult a mission because of the equipment and so on of the Czechoslovak armed forces. Was this a mission that the Soviet forces, the Central Group of Forces elements in Czechoslovakia, could more easily have carried out?

And I have the same question for General Pióro. If we look at the map, and there have been such diagrams in the Western military press,<sup>73</sup> I think we know from the Polish military literature that this doesn't begin and end with Jaruzelski. We go back to General Spychalski<sup>74</sup> and General Hocha,<sup>75</sup> and in his writings one finds such things indicated. But it's a bit of a puzzle, isn't it? The Polish Army was the third-largest army in Europe, probably better equipped than the other non-Soviet forces, though not as well as the Soviets. With all due respect to our Danish and Dutch colleagues, was this the best use to be made of the Polish Army in a theatre conflict, and if so, whatever the answer to that, was this mission doable, as you understood it, from the point of view of the Polish General Staff? Was it a mission that could be carried out? If so, OK, but if not, then what was going on? As the question has been asked, was this just a make-believe exercise?

## Robert Legvold

General Zachariáš, did you want to respond?

73 Nicholas Watt, 'Poland risks Russia's wrath with Soviet nuclear attack map', *The Guardian*, 26 November 2005.

74 Gen Marian Spychalski, Minister of Defense of Poland (1956–1968).

75 Gen Hocha, chief of the Polish General Staff.

## Mojmír Zachariáš

I would like to answer all these questions, but I want to express my ideas first. I have already mentioned that our task was not easy, because it was based on the assumption that NATO would initiate military operations. Our objective was to stop the adversary, General Chalupa, and, following the combat actions on the frontier, to start an offensive. I have already talked about the difficulties at the state border, but I want to clarify the issue that could be unclear for all of you and which Tadeusz Pióro talked about a little. He stated that we had 16 divisions in 1964. However, there was a reference in the document saying that a division had to be formed after the mobilization, which usually lasted for three or four days; and there was a need for coordination, which took a week, or ten days, and then, the division had to be transported to the front. When a division is formed, soldiers do not know each other, a commander does not know his soldiers. Under such conditions, it is extremely difficult to manage the troops and give orders.

Unfortunately, the strategies do not take into account the natural conditions or human psychology. For example, if there had been floods in Czechoslovakia, it would not have been possible to move troops in any direction. In winter, on slippery roads, tanks would get stuck. I used to be a tanker myself. There were many occasions when we were stuck, and we had to stop the further movement of troops. In foggy weather, movement of troops is not possible, because it is easy to get lost. It is possible to perform military operations during night-time, but it is very difficult and frequently results in friendly fire. We did not train for combat on Sundays or during night-time, because compared to the equipment of the Western troops, our night vision equipment was of very poor quality. We were not able to operate during the wintertime, because the blanket of snow often reached 50 centimetres. When a tank moved through the snow, it created a snow barrier in front of itself and stopped every 100 or 200 metres. Natural obstacles such as dense forests and swamps should also be taken into account. How could you carry out an offensive if you know about all these difficulties and you are not sure of the preparedness of troops!

Another issue concerns the nuclear weapons. It was our intention to use the nuclear weapons solely in response to the first nuclear strike of our adversary, in case we knew that such a strike had been launched. Our troops had to be prepared for it, and they had to be on alert. I believe that NATO had intelligence about the location of our troops and ammunitions. We talked about the pace of advance of 100 kilometres. If you calculate everything thoroughly, I believe that these estimations were too ambitious. Even now, it is impossible to have such a pace of advance during an exercise, provided that it takes place at the borderland where there are obstacles and barriers. On top of it, natural conditions such as fog, rain, snow, and flooding may cause delays, and even an advance pace on the order of tens of kilometres a day would be too much.

### **Robert Legvold**

Thank you. General Pióro, did you want to respond to Ross's question?

### **Tadeusz Pióro**

We really considered those operational plans to be science fiction, meaning that in reality, they would have been impossible to implement, especially with the use of nuclear weapons. In 1961, during the Berlin Crisis, the situation there became tenser, and in September, it was decided to conduct a war game in accordance with the actual plans of the Soviet General Staff Headquarters. That was in Wünsdorf, at the same place as the supreme commanders of the Group of Soviet Forces in the German Democratic Republic. It should be noted that the generals, who, for the time of the war game, were designated to the positions of army group commanders, commanders of the front headquarters, commanders-in-chief of the fleet, and air force commanders, took part in this exercise. As far as I can remember, 15 people represented our country, Poland. At that time, I was a commander of the Primorsky Okrug headquarters, and in this war game, I was designated as a commander of the army headquarters. We were not allowed to take typists or assistants with us, so we had to write everything ourselves, and we ourselves prepared orders in a written form. Everybody, including the army group commanders, front



commanders, and headquarters commanders, turned their orders in to a Special Office. This was the way the war game was implemented.

The Polish Front used the same scheme of advance, which was approved in 1970 – I have given you a handout of it. It looked as if it was entirely possible to conduct such an operation in real life. This plan envisaged the use of huge numbers of nuclear weapons; moreover, it was planned to hit Hamburg with a hydrogen bomb. It was also envisaged that the troops would move through the radioactive zone; it was 1961, and these issues were approached differently, due to lack of experiences. Soviet Defence Minister Marshal Malinovskii was the commander of the headquarters; General Antonov<sup>76</sup> and ministers participated as well. In addition to the entire Group of Soviet Forces in Germany, the Polish and Czech Fronts, as well as three East German army corps took part in this war game. It is an interesting fact that those German military corps were in the second echelon until the end of the war game. The exercise lasted for three weeks, and, in three weeks, we almost reached the Atlantic Ocean with a triumph – the pace of advance was terrific. After the war game, we had a big dinner, and drank a toast to peace without war. That was the end of the war game.

Such exercises were conducted constantly. I believe the same type of war game was carried out in 1970, but I am not sure of it, since I was not with the army at that time. We, the operational officers of the Polish General Staff Headquarters, did not think about whether it was possible to implement such actions in reality; we just did not think about it. We planned and tried to fulfil the plans, as if it was possible to carry out such plans in the real world. We did not consider the results of what could have happened in the future.

### **Aleksandr Liakhovskii**

I just want to add that we had approximately the same war game on maps in 1978, and I participated in it. As the general just told us – we did not

76 Gen Aleksei I. Antonov, Chief of Staff of the Unified Armed Forces of the Warsaw Treaty Organization (1955–1962).

think a lot about the consequences. For example, just drop a hydrogen bomb on Hamburg – and that's it.

### **Petr Luňák**

I have a question now for General Zachariáš. We have war plans from the Czechoslovak People's Army from the 1960s and from the 1980s.<sup>77</sup> From what you have been saying so far, it seems that these plans are not worth the paper they're written on. This was probably just dreaming by the Soviet command. But all these plans were actually signed by Czechoslovak President Antonín Novotný in 1964 and by Husák in 1974, 1978, and 1986. I actually have two questions. First, when you discussed these plans with the Soviet command, and you were high enough in the hierarchy, did you raise some of these questions about how realistic the plans were? If so, what was the Soviet reaction? My second question is, did you raise these objections to the Czechoslovak command, if you indeed ever discussed it? You said when we discussed it some time ago that basically Novotný and Husák signed something without really knowing what they were signing. But nevertheless, were these questions ever asked as to whether these plans were realistic, and what was the answer?

### **Mojmír Zachariáš**

It is difficult to answer this question. I am a military man; I believe that other military people understand me. When I got an assignment, I had to make plans, and if needed, to carry them out. As far as I remember, in the 1980s, when I was the army commander and the commander of the front, there were two plans. The first one was for a defensive operation; the second one was for an offensive. When we were getting ready for the exercises, first we had to plan a defensive operation at the borderline, and then, the initiation of an offensive. I do not think that I had the right to object to these plans, because no discussions were allowed in the military. I had to work on the plans, and after I had gotten an

77 Petr Luňák, ed., *Plánování nemyslitelného: Československé válečné plány 1950–1990* [Planning the Unthinkable: Czechoslovak War Plans, 1950–1990] (Prague: Dokořán, 2007).

assignment, I needed to write a scheme by my own hand, make a decision, then develop the scheme for my army and give assignments to my subordinates. I had to fulfil my task either on a map, or on paper. No questions were accepted.

I did not answer your question regarding the Soviet Group of Forces that was stationed in Czechoslovakia. I was in charge of it as a commander of the Czech Front, and they were always in the second echelon. We were in the first echelon. Only if we had managed to cross the mountains and invade the territory for the second echelon would it have been possible to send this group of troops into battle. The same kind of thing was to happen in a defensive operation. The first echelon was my army, the second echelon was a group of Soviet troops.

I will talk about the issue of the Polish Army, and why it had only an option of advance. There was no other opportunity! Why would Poland be involved in defensive operations? The German Democratic Republic was in front of it, and the first echelon was there. That is why it was planned to use the Polish army at the beginning of hostilities, meaning to deploy the troops and move forward as far as possible, and use it as the second echelon. Why would we have carried out a defence, if we did not have an advancing adversary? The same situation applied in the case of the middle group of troops of the Soviet army.

### **Aleksandr Liakhovskii**

I want to answer the questions that were raised here twice. The first question is: "How would the people of the Soviet Union and other countries have reacted to military operations on their territories?" First, I want to stress that the Soviet people, now called the Russian people, were very afraid of war. That was one of the reasons why people supported the idea of building up the nation's military. However, the country's military strength meant a restructuring of the whole economy. The ruling elites, including our minister of defence, factory heads, nuclear engineers and scientists, and people who worked for the military and atomic industry, were interested in further expanding the military. The nuclear industry was a huge corporation with hundreds of thousands of workers, engi-

neers, etc. Entire towns worked in the military industry. In other words, the mechanism was working, and it had to work. What if all those plants had been stopped? What were the people supposed to do? We produced weapons in great numbers and did not know what to do with them. The propaganda about the constant threats from the West was one of the reasons why we needed to continue strengthening our military industry. This policy was unreasonable and was one of the main reasons of the collapse of the Soviet Union. We should have stopped and admitted to ourselves that we had accumulated enough weapons for the next ten years. I am sure that if we had stopped all that and concentrated our efforts on the national economy, as China did, history could have developed in a different way.

### **Leopold Chalupa**

We do have the NATO Council even now where political decisions are made. And we do have the Military Committee – General Eide was the chairman for several years – where the national chiefs of the Defence Staff or their permanent representatives sit together and agree on those basic military approaches which then go down the chain of command. As you know, there is an integrated command structure down to corps level on the army side. From corps level downwards, this was national. That is my first point, and this of course brings us to the question you put forward about the role of non-US allies or the role of non-Soviet Union allies. This is also a matter of reliability. When I think of the German Democratic Republic's army corps, I think there must have been a political reason not to put them in the front echelon, because they would be Germans fighting Germans, which would also have been very difficult for our own forces.

Of course, it's very interesting now to think about the plans and to think about it theoretically, to think about how useful they were or not. But in principle, we should also go away from here with the answer to the question of what the military contributed that made it just a theoretical discussion and not just a discussion after war. General Johnson, I appreciate what you have said. I think Nigel Bagnall was still the Army

Group commander when I visited a brigade exercise in the field at CINCENT and the brigade commander, young and tough, briefed me that he had just decided to create a fire field to destroy a little town because very important lines of communication went through it. When he was finished, I said, "Well now, imagine you are not fighting here east of the River Weser, but between Carlisle and Newcastle in your own country, and what would you have done now to coordinate with the burgomaster, with the territorial authorities, so that the village, or the little town, would have been cleared beforehand or the population told to stay put in their basements?" I just want to indicate there are also some additional considerations when you are planning operations in your own country with your own population.

I feel that the political task we had, and this is the military task which we've got down on the table, was not to fight the war, but to make sure that we had plans and that we indicated to the other side the credibility of our capability to prevent a war. We planned always to defend against a conventional attack. General Johnson, I remember that when I was in Hamburg, at the Führungsakademie, in the 1960s, when we had the killing zones etc., we didn't always worry about the civil population. But then with the advance of nuclear armament on your [Warsaw Pact] side, especially the near-parity in the strategic weapons arsenal, we had of course to reverse these plans, and we came to this decision of deterrence by forward defence for various reasons, with operational disadvantages and initial use of nuclear weapons or nuclear installations with flexible response. And I just want to make the point that I think that, when we look at history, we should not decide theoretically how good or how bad our planning was. As we sit here now, I have the feeling we both were afraid of each other, because everybody thought the other one would attack soon, and this was the basic thought of keeping peace in the end, not fighting a war. But I think that we should go through what we have done as military, within our capacities, to fulfil the missions which we got, to help to maintain peace and prevent the war being fought, as we are discussing now, and find out for our own interest how well, or not, we planned in those days.

### **Svetlana Savranskaya**

I have a question for Aleksandr Antonovich Liakhovskii. You just said that in 1978, you participated in military exercises. In those exercises, how many days of conventional operations were expected before a nuclear strike?

### **Aleksandr Liakhovskii**

Frankly speaking, I do not remember. It was so long ago. This was not even an exercise, but a war game. The role of the Warsaw Treaty countries was played by some generals, commanders of okrugs, and commanders of the Groups of Forces were involved. The NATO side was played by other people, for example, the commanders of the Central Group of the Armies; and they played these games on maps. Again, I do not remember all the details, since this was 30 years ago.

### **Robert Legvold**

Aleksandr, as someone of my advancing age, I can sympathise. General Pióro.

### **Tadeusz Pióro**

I forgot to mention something about the war game. Marshal Chuikov, who participated in the Battle of Stalingrad during the Second World War, acted as the NATO supreme commander in this war game together with a group of Soviet generals and colonels; the army commanders played into their hands. I think this was the main reason why we managed to reach the Atlantic Ocean so fast in that war game.

### **Unidentifiable Russian Speaker**

Chuikov had the fastest pace of advance when he was approaching Berlin. He only had to stop because gasoline was not delivered on time.

## Robert Legvold

Let me put a further question to both sides. General Pióro has spoken a great deal about the situation in the early 1960s, and Aleksandr spoke about the situation after 1978, but if you look at the documents, you see that there is considerable evolution over this period, from 1961 to 1968, to 1978, and then the period that Neal and Roger were reporting on, which is really post-1979 into 1980, looking at the 1980s and the way things were going to change. After the break, maybe we could come back and speak a little more specifically about what was changing and how it affects the kind of conversation we've had, that is, what would have happened. I have some questions to put to you that would be more specific in that context.

But the one question that's on my mind goes back to a point that Neal made. In terms of imagining, I gather you have in mind principally NATO on the offensive, NATO attacking, and you could only plan for that if you could think of the specific situation. Yet the entire mental framework for thinking about the balance in your basic defensive task was the assumption that the principal thrust would come from the German-Soviet forces through Fulda in the north, and that you had to prepare for that attack. That's the way you expected them to do it. Now maybe it's so obvious, in the way in which they exercised or the way they were deployed, that that's the only way they would have fought the war. One of the questions is, was this accurate? Was this where the main thrust was going to come? What was going to be the role of dealing with NORTHAG? What was really going to happen with the Czech forces and then the Soviet military forces coming out of the Carpathian military district? Did NATO have it right in thinking in those terms? Did it make sense to think in those terms if the only way in which you could do serious planning was in terms of specific cases, as Neal said?

## Roger Cirillo

As somebody who operated at the lowest level and then moved as a staff officer to the highest level, the thing that always amused me was the difference in the amount of intelligence we had on the other guy at differ-

ent levels. My question would be, how did you rate the intelligence that you had specifically on units, dispositions, capabilities of equipment and things like that which an operational commander would need to make a good plan?

### **Robert Legvold**

Unless there's an immediate answer to that question, we can come back to it after the break.

## **Fourth working session**

### **Robert Legvold**

This is now the last session for today before we turn tomorrow directly to the question of war with nuclear weapons. Let me begin with a couple of questions, even by way of challenge, to the NATO side about the period that General Creighton and Dr Cirillo described at the beginning. Then I'll invite members from the Warsaw Pact side to pose some questions to the NATO side, asking what they would like to know. I know that Vitalii has a point he would like to make and a question that he would like to raise and then we'll go back and forth to see if we can pin down further questions between the two sides. On the issue of the 1979–82 period, the assessment of the central balance done by the CIA – I haven't seen what the Pentagon was doing or what was coming out of Brussels – says that by the fall of 1977, and this is a phrase from the actual CIA assessment, “deterrence was not fragile from NATO's point of view”, and that the balance was in relatively good shape according to the way in which the estimates were done at that time.<sup>78</sup> The concern was the evolution that I referred to before the break. If in the 1950s and into the early 1960s, the essential relationship was one of massive retaliation on the Soviet side, then by the 1960s, and particularly as you get around to 1967 or 1968,

78 See footnote 55.



you get this new version as I understand it of the two echelons, where Eastern European forces are integrated differently and more ambitiously into the first echelon, and you began to see advances in both doctrine and weaponry on the Warsaw Pact side. Increasingly, the issue for NATO was becoming a conventional plus nuclear response in those circumstances.

As I understand it, by 1979, 1980, as you were looking forward, what you were concerned with was the degree to which your theatre nuclear and tactical nuclear option was being eroded by developments on the Warsaw Pact side. The assessments that I've looked at point to the likelihood that the Warsaw Pact would develop artillery-delivered tactical nuclear weapons, which they were not able to do before, with low yields. It wasn't clear whether they would actually be able to do low yields in an early stage. Also, that they were developing tactical aircraft that would be far more effective for the roles assigned to them. And the complementary fear was that they were keeping the same numbers – I'm speaking now about the conventional side – but making qualitative advancement in the equipment that they were using. So the question that I put to Neal and to others on the NATO side is, how much has changed, what precisely are the problems you're addressing with AirLand Battle and follow-on-forces that have changed so much since 1977/1978, when deterrence was described as "not fragile", unless there was a major technological breakthrough on one side – that's the phrase that's used. Otherwise it was fairly secure. Neal, did you want to respond?

### Neal Creighton

Yes, we're going back to my talk. Basically, I mentioned that the SS-20 had come in at that time, so that was basically changing the nuclear balance within the European theatre as we saw it, so that was a major event, and then in 1979, NATO made the decision to deploy theatre nuclear weapons. The end result of that was for the Pershings to come over, which was a big decision. Now it's not exactly the way that you said. What had happened, particularly with the United States' forces, was that our involvement in the war in Vietnam really was very debilitating on our armed forces. It was debilitating not only for equipment, but I can tell

you, right after that war I was the commander of a brigade in Frankfurt, Germany, and we went to an all-volunteer army. We stopped the draft and within about six months, I had to spend more time trying to get my people out of jail – they were getting into fights and things like that and using drugs – than I did training. So that was a period when we had gone downhill, and we realised that, and so from the early 1970s on, we began to bring back our forces and the rest of NATO did too.

So by the time we got to 1980, we were bringing much better equipment, but while we were off fighting the war, the Warsaw Pact, and the Russians in particular, had really improved their equipment, so we lost that technological superiority that we thought we had in the 1960s. And in the early 1980s, we continued that, and it started really with the Carter administration. They made the plans, but by the time the plans could come about, the Reagan administration were in there, so they get most of the credit for building up our armed forces. So I think we felt much better about being able to fight the war in the 1980s than we did in the 1970s. We felt that we were moving the right way and every year, and I have worked on it on both sides of the Atlantic, we tried to build up our forces and build up our capability to fight a conventional war. That's when we came up with the idea of storing our equipment forward.

The biggest problem that I saw that we had in the United States was ammunition. We would all be in our wartime headquarters at the various places, and we would run the games against the Warsaw Pact, and in those games in the early 1980s – of course we were the ones who had structured the games – what would happen is that for a couple of weeks we would hold the Warsaw Pact attack very close to the forward defence on the borders of Germany. Then, as you got towards 30 days out, we began to run out of tracks for tanks, we began to run out of ammunition, and we had about 30 days' supply of ammunition for our NATO forces. Most of it would then have to come from 12 ammunition factories in the United States. All of it had to come by boat because ammunition is so heavy. You could fly some of it over, but you need to move most of it by boat. Most of the factories were down in New Orleans, Texas, Mobile, and all those places down there, so the boats would have to go right by Cuba. So we looked at that and said "My God!" and that's one

of the reasons Cuba became so very important. We wanted to protect our supply lines. So it changed. I don't think our problem was equipment in the 1980s; we were getting all that. Our problem was being able to fight a conventional war for an extended period of time. So things had gotten a lot better, but still what happened – and as I quoted General Rogers there, he'd say "We can only go to a certain point and I'm going to have to go to my military leaders there and say I'm going to have to use nukes." Now whether General Rogers believed that or not – I guess there's a couple of you round here who know him better than I do – but that was the deterrence factor. I don't know if it really was deterrence, but anyway that's how we sat in the 1980s, and the 1980s were a much better period for NATO than either the late 1960s or the 1970s.

### **Robert Legvold**

Just so that I as a consumer, as a civilian, understand this: Are you then saying that the reason SACEUR commanded the review that you were just describing was primarily because of the SS-20?

### **Neal Creighton**

That was a major factor.

### **Robert Legvold**

What were the other factors?

### **Neal Creighton**

Well, the other factors were that we knew that the Russians had upgraded their tanks. They'd upgraded their airplanes and everything else while we had just maintained pretty much the same type of equipment through the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s. General Rogers came over there in 1979 – and that's the period we're talking about – and he was the one who looked at it. But we were pretty well occupied with other things before that, and that's when the Warsaw Pact, at least in our view, had made major advances, and we had not even stayed level.

## **Robert Legvold**

Again on the estimates on tanks, because I remember that the Warsaw Pact began introducing the T-72 in 1974, and by the period you are talking about – 1979 – they had deployed 1,300, and you were anticipating as many as 5,000 by the mid-1980s. You were just beginning to deploy the Leopard II and the Abrams and the Challenger.

## **Neal Creighton**

That's right, and in fact I was in charge of making the distribution when I was on the Army Staff and planning out. What we did was we put them into Europe first, into our front-line forces over there. We had worked on that tank – and I'm not very proud of this – the Abrams from about 1964 till about 1978 or 1979. It was a long process, which went back and forth.

## **Leopold Chalupa**

Once we changed from the concept of massive retaliation to the concept of forward defence and flexible response with the selective initial employment of nuclear weapons, the requirement was to improve our conventional capability. We had efforts go on in various countries. The British had a new tank, and there was the M1 and the Leopard II. I was chief of plans division in the German Army Staff, and I don't know how often I was in the United States – Bernie Rogers was the chief of the army in those days – to harmonise our efforts to get more standardised equipment. And it was difficult because – well, can I say this? – no American soldier wanted to ride in a vehicle marked “Made in Germany”. We finally succeeded at least in having the same ammunition or the same calibre of 120mm. This was the basic requirement for having flexibility and cross-boundary support. We had great discussions on harmonisation, as I mentioned before, procedures, employment concepts, and doctrine. We put forward improvements, and this is what I meant, what were the results, what were our contributions to improving this deterrence capability? AWACS was planned and introduced to improve our

air surveillance – not as our friends in the air force initially said, to count the tanks; this was not possible – but to monitor the area in the enemy territory right in depth.

We then come to the improvement of our capabilities on the artillery side. We had developed the M-109 155-mm howitzer with nuclear capabilities. We finally developed, also as a counter-measure to SS-20, the Pershing and the cruise missiles and the concept of follow-on-forces attack, which was also an improvement on our deterrence capabilities. But we had to accept in an alliance like ours that there were national interests, and therefore it was very difficult. In all the negotiations I had in the Pentagon with the Army Staff, the only area where we could really get together was a decontamination pump of 2 ½ litres. This is where we had a solid basic requirement. But I think that overall, the efforts to improve our capabilities started when we changed our overall strategy in NATO. But, as you know from your national environments, to develop a weapons system, apart from trying to find friends to develop it with you – the European Fighter is one of those projects on the aircraft side – takes a long time, and therefore it took time to come forward. We also developed new mine systems which were more effective in creating obstacles on the ground to block forward movement, etc. So in total, I would say efforts were underway from the late 1960s when we changed, but it took time. In the meantime, you had changed to a volunteer army. Germany still currently has the draft, now with a draft time of 8 months, and it is very difficult to envisage who you can train or what you can train in terms of the quality of soldiers, but all these things would not have been possible without a conviction in our society that it is worthwhile to maintain military forces and to follow concepts.

### **Robert Legvold**

If I understand what you're saying, the low point, in terms of NATO's capabilities and increasing concern about the balance and the capacity to meet its defences, is roughly a period from 1975 to 1982/1983, when the new things begin to come on line. I don't want to lead the discussion back to the political dimension, because I think that with Bill's original

challenge we're now talking about the right thing for this group. During the last part of that period – late 1978/1979 until 1981/1982 – the Soviet political leadership was describing this period as extraordinarily dangerous. Go back and look at the documents now and look at Andropov's statements before the Political Consultative Committee meeting of the Warsaw Pact. Ogarkov<sup>79</sup> described this period as the most dangerous since the two years leading up to 1941.<sup>80</sup>

### Vitalii Tsygichko

I would like our colleagues from NATO and America to clarify some questions that were of interest to us while we were planning and doing research in the military field in the 1970s and 1980s. First of all, in what situation would NATO have used nuclear weapons? Were there any criteria, and how were these criteria justified and explained? At what stage and under what scenario of the operation was the use of nuclear weapons possible? Was there a list of measures, apart from nuclear weapons, aimed at counteracting the advance of Soviet armed forces? Let's say, on the third, or the fourth day, the first line of defence had been destroyed. Were there any methods to stop the offensive besides resisting it? For example, we played a scenario where a North Sea dam was blasted, and part of the German territories to the south of it would have been flooded. In this scenario, any advance of troops would have been impossible. Was that an accurate assumption, or just our fantasies? We seriously considered the destruction of West Germany's infrastructure in order to stop the movement of troops. Did you consider the same kind of options? For example, roads could have been protected with atomic charges. I mean, what kind of measures would have been undertaken in case of an actual war? Were our assumptions in this respect correct?

79 Marshal Nikolai V. Ogarkov, Chief of the General Staff of the Soviet Union (1977–1984).

80 On 23 August 1939 a non-aggression pact was signed between the Soviet Union and Germany. However, on 22 June 1941 German troops invaded the Soviet Union.

## **Leopold Chalupa**

I think the principal answer is rather easy: loss of conventional defence. Breakthrough, not in the sense of maybe a company having come through the defensive lines to occupy some observation hill. Breakthrough means a loss of the defensive capability. This would have been a reason for escalation. But we had a very stringent release procedure. By the time this would have finally reached the top and those who finally took the decision – the American president, the British prime minister and, if the French were really involved, the French prime minister – some time would have passed; therefore our observation down on the ground was always, are we getting in a situation where we are now in danger of losing the conventional defence? And this was the situation as we would see it. We had no other measures: no gas, no biological warfare. These were not available, and they were not being sought either. I think also that if the reserves were all employed, in a breakthrough situation with all our remaining reserves employed and possibly airfields destroyed, so that close air support was lost, this would have been the situation where as the commander responsible, you would go forward and ask for nuclear escalation.

There have been no plans to make Germany somewhere where the Warsaw Pact movements of 150 kilometres in one day would be stopped. We had a very well organised territorial organisation. I can speak about it because it was my command area which would have been responsible for initiating our barrier system on German territory and all the things that were pre-planned, and that took into consideration the civil population living there. As you know, NATO policy was for civilians to stay at home. Don't get on the roads and create more danger for yourself than staying at home in your bunker, but this of course had other implications for our defensive initiatives.

## **William Smith**

I'd first like to talk about what Neal said. Firstly, we thought NATO could defend for two or three weeks. I never really believed that it would come to that because my view of the Soviets was that while we looked at

nuclear weapons as a last resort, but were willing to use them first, the Soviets looked at nuclear weapons as more closely aligned to conventional weapons, and it was not as big a decision to use them in their case as it was in ours. And I always felt that if they got into trouble, if we were somewhat successful early on, that they would be very much tempted and would possibly use nuclear weapons first, because they never had a no-first-use policy.

Secondly, on FOFA. I always saw that as part of two things: one, it was part of the forward defence. That was a good way to give meaning to forward defence, because for the first time NATO was willing to go forward. One of the reasons it was willing to go forward was because technology was progressing to the point where we could reach out further more effectively. FOFA started out as attacking the follow-on-forces with nuclear weapons. When General Rogers got there, he saw the advances in conventional weapons, and what was interesting to me was that it was in the nuclear planning decision that they decided we were going to do this with conventional weapons to the extent that we can. So there was a big movement to try to do this more with conventional weapons because with technology there was more precision, they could be accurate, there was less collateral damage, and all those reasons. But FOFA was really, in my view, carrying out forward defence more effectively with more modern weapons.

My next point briefly is about 1979 to 1981 being the most dangerous period. It really didn't look that way to me. To the United States, at least from my point of view, it looked better, because following seven or eight years' lag after Vietnam, President Carter, who came into office with the idea he was going to cut military forces, decided he couldn't do that, so the US military forces were getting stronger and improving. And so our position was improving relatively, and I didn't see it as any worse than it had been in the early or mid-1970s. Why did the Soviets think it so bad? I think one of the reasons was that the United States turned down the



SALT agreement in 1979, or rather the Senate did.<sup>81</sup> One of the reasons they turned that agreement down was that they said it benefits the Soviets more than it does us, as Bill Odom is going to say tomorrow. A lot of people looked at that whole arms control as a way to get more nuclear weapons rather than fewer nuclear weapons. The Soviets had a good position, and they felt that in the absence of a SALT agreement, the United States would build more forces than they could, which I think is another part of the problem that we have. As we know, the Soviet Union was in more trouble at that time than we thought. Some people at the top of the Soviet Union knew that and so they recognised that relatively they were becoming weaker as the United States got stronger and therefore they said, “Look, this is not a very good period for us.”

### **Robert Legvold**

On that score I should be clear. When I was asking Neal about the period of quasi-vulnerability on the NATO side, that was in terms of judging the military balance, whereas the statements from the Soviet leadership – Andropov and Ustinov – were clearly talking about a political context. And even then, as I read them, these are now documents from the archives, so they are consistent with some of the things they were saying publicly, it was difficult to know whether they were really judging the situation as creating an imminent danger of conflict or whether it was their way of stressing the fact that the overall political environment had deteriorated to that extent. So I don't want to put too much weight on it. I guess the question for the Warsaw Pact side though would concern that estimate – Ustinov saying this was a very, very dangerous period and Kulikov in some of his reports picks up the same language – and whether there was a sense of increased urgency in the Warsaw Pact during this period.

81 The Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, SALT I (1972) froze the number of strategic ballistic missile launchers at existing levels. SALT II (1979) was the first nuclear arms treaty which assumed actual reductions in strategic forces to 2,250 of all categories of delivery vehicles on both sides. After the deployment of Soviet troops to Afghanistan, the US Senate never ratified this second treaty.

## Garry Johnson

I've been very interested in this dangerous period business from the perceptions of the Soviet Union. It seems to people perhaps like us that the high water mark of all this uncertainty was around the deployment of the INF,<sup>82</sup> because the political risks that were taken and the political courage that had to be shown in the European capitals to go along against the wishes of the public with what was seen to be, in many cases, a very bellicose forward movement by the United States, that was really when we stared the thing in the eye and after that it seemed to my generation that we were over the hump.

But to come back to the point you made about were there other preparations to be made about flooding the Lower Scheldt, or what have you, or turning German roads into waste grounds. The complexity of the measures that were devised, not just within NATO but by the individual countries, as General Chalupa was talking about, in the territorial command in Germany was immense. And in my own country, our war book was that thick. It was like a railway timetable and from the moment it started, the detail of the complexity of what would happen at each stage of NATO response, down the line, through the civil system and the military was extremely complex. And more than that, it was extremely well practised every year. If you come back to the business of nuclear war, we have talked a lot today about do we throw a nuke at them when they've taken Wünsdorf or whatever. It's not at all like that, and the WINTEX exercise series that went on every year was hugely serious, hugely complex, and hugely committed to getting these things right. And the Crested Eagle nuclear procedures exercise, which the technicians worked on in between, was equally good. There was a sense of unreality about the thought of nuclear war. There was a real sense of preparation to do it correctly if it had to be done.

82 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces: nuclear (and conventional) ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges of 500 to 5,500 kilometers (300–3,400 miles).

## **Aleksandr Liakhovskii**

General Smith has mentioned that the US treated the issue of nuclear weapons very seriously, but stated that the Soviet Union's position was thoughtless. At the same time, General Chalupa said that any commander who assumed that he was losing a battle could have made a decision to use nuclear weapons. Well, it was translated as "to make a decision." There was a misunderstanding. The use of nuclear weapons must be a political decision. First of all, this is not a decision that any commander can make, because this is a very complex issue. We regarded this as a political decision; only the highest leadership of the country could make such a decision, and only in case no other option was available. We did not address this issue in a thoughtless manner. Again, this was a very serious matter, since the fate of the whole planet would have depended on such a decision. I wanted to clarify one more thing with General Chalupa. The way things have been presented here is that the Warsaw Pact countries were only involved in offensive operations, but NATO was carrying out only defensive operations. Is it true? Were you satisfied with the role of people who did not intend to carry out active actions? Why did you need to strengthen forces and arms that would ensure success of an advance operation? In what way and on what basis did you plan to use the mine and nuclear belt you had created? You created belts of mines and nuclear charges along Rhine. You made shafts and stuffed them with nuclear charges; it was during the period of threats. In what way did you plan to introduce them and what was the expected result?

## **Leopold Chalupa**

Well, I don't know. I do not recall speaking about a nuclear belt or whatever. I would just initially say the release authority which came down from presidential level in the United States was a very strict procedure initially to the regional commander, like SACEUR. He could delegate it then to a sub-regional commander – a major region commander as we were called. We could delegate it to a principal subordinate commander, which was the Army Group, or the Air Command. From there on the release authority would be very restricted. It would be limited to this employ-

ment, especially on the initial use. All the other employments would have been restricted to higher command decisions anyhow, anything above tactical or operational use. I must have caused a wrong impression. We had a well-prepared territorial defence system with regard to storage sites for mines, or pre-planned ammunition, but not nuclear, to blow craters in the roads if necessary, to stop advances, or to pre-stocked war supplies. As a matter of fact, 21 days was the national aim to pre-stock war supplies, ammunition, rations, and whatever. But we had no sophisticated belts of nuclear weapons that we expected to employ. As a matter of fact, you must know, nuclear weapons were always under the control of our American troops. None of our non-US forces had nuclear weapons immediately available. There were storage sites which were exclusively under United States control until such a time as release authority would have been given and ammunition could have been taken out of them. So I'm sorry if I caused the wrong impression here.

### **Robert Legvold**

What is not clear from the conversation at this point on the NATO side is the detail with which, and the stage at which, and which weapons would be used when it came to the early stages of nuclear escalation, the tactical weapons. In the material that I've seen in response – I was just looking for it now – the Pentagon was under mandate at some point, and I can't find the year, from Congress to specify the circumstances under which tactical nuclear weapons would be used. I'll locate that and bring it back for us tomorrow and there is then a list of the way they'd be used, including at the outset the categories, which appear to be principally political as a way of demonstrating resolve. Sort of the shot across the bow in the way in which it was conceived in the list that was supplied in response. But it seems to me there were a lot of stages before you began to use theatre strategic nuclear weapons.

### **Vitalii Tsygichko**

I want to say a few words about the perceptions we had in the 1980s. Our colleagues from NATO say that they did not consider this period a danger-

ous one. In reality, Mr. Andropov made statements about the dangers and difficulties of that period. We were very well aware of what was going on in NATO. In addition, the balance of forces in general and the situation in the world spoke for themselves, meaning that there was no danger for us from the side of NATO. Why were such statements made? There were serious internal problems in the country. The war in Afghanistan led to the deterioration of our country's economy, and problems with China were of a big concern, too. We needed to mobilize people for the difficulties that our country was about to face at that time. Politburo members understood that the country was going to face serious difficulties, and in fact, a huge decline in the living standard occurred very soon afterwards. Why did it happen? We had a perception that our enemies were everywhere around us, and this mentality of a possible attack resulted in the bloated defence industry. These [Andropov's] statements reflected the reality of our attitude towards NATO and America. At that time, neither side contemplated war because they both had a lot of internal problems. The whole matter was about internal politics, meaning that they wanted to unite the people by talking about external enemies and dangers. China did the same.

Nowadays, some people also want to talk about enemies, as if our internal problems somehow are connected with what is around us. Such ideas are deeply rooted in people's psychology, not only in Russia, but in the West, too. I sometimes hear such ideas even from high-ranking military officers, for example, "Well, we sit here doing nothing when we need to put a big group of troops together. Moscow is only 250–300 kilometers away." This is complete nonsense, because we have no reason to start a war. We all want to live on one planet peacefully, and there are no political reasons for going to war; however, the mentality that emerged during the Cold War has proven to be resilient, and it is still difficult to break this stereotype. The realities of the modern world are still interpreted within the framework of the paradigm of the Cold War period. Sometimes, it is very astonishing to listen to the views of our politicians who adhere to the old principles and categories, as if they had no clue about the changes in the world. I believe that our joint task is to create a new vision of the modern world, as well as to promote such views.

## **Robert Legvold**

Let me ask one of the questions that is on the list that the NATO side has prepared and which seems appropriate at this point. First of all, what kind of a challenge did NATO's new doctrine – that is, AirLand Battle and FOFA – present for the Warsaw Pact? How serious was the challenge, and in what way did it shape your response? What were you doing in response to it?

## **Vitalii Tsygichko**

I have already mentioned that changes in NATO's war doctrine changed the views of our General Staff Headquarters on war strategy. The situation we had before was a dead-end situation. On one hand, we envisaged the use of nuclear weapons, and on the other hand, we were very well aware about the unfeasibility of such a war. We needed new approaches. By the way, NATO had given us a motivation to change our military concepts. A lot of work was published on the unfeasibility of conducting a total and destructive war, as well as on the new flexible approaches. They also presented the idea that neither side wanted mass destruction. In the 1970s, we came up with a new doctrine of air-land operation. I believe that this was a reaction to the changes in NATO's war strategy. I should say that in our high-level circles of military people, as well as in the Academy of General Staff Headquarters, there were many opponents of the changes, and many discussions on this issue, until a more or less justified position was elaborated. I do not feel like talking about it in more detail right now, since we will talk about it tomorrow. The most important thing is that it was related to the issue of the use of nuclear weapons at the offensive and defensive tactical levels.

## **Robert Legvold**

But on that score, Vitalii, as Bill Smith was saying, when Rogers came to Europe and looked at it, he converted the nuclear component to a conventional component, so the question is really how you responded

to the enhancement of the conventional capability. Unless you want to respond to that, Bill has something he wants to say on that score.

### **William Odom**

A question: if you were to compare the impact of AirLand Battle on the General Staff with the impact of SDI, which one caused the most important reaction on your part? In other words, which did you consider the most serious in the next five or ten years?

### **Vitalii Tsygichko**

First, I want to talk about the Strategic Defence Initiative. When President Reagan set forth this initiative, we felt a little nervous about it because we were not sure whether or not it was technically possible. If it had been implemented, then all of our agreements on anti-missile defence as well as the agreements on the reduction and the balance of nuclear forces would have become void. We asked some specialists to estimate whether it was feasible, whether America was technically able to implement it, and how much it would cost. Approximately six months later, some findings appeared. First, it was estimated that it was impossible to implement the system entirely from technical standpoint, at least in the near future. Second, it was also scientifically impossible. Furthermore, it would have cost huge amounts of money, far beyond the Reagan administration's defence budget.

Once, I was involved in the calculation of the funds that would have been required for defence against a massive Soviet nuclear attack. These were astronomic amounts of money; moreover, we could easily have overcome any anti-missile defence systems using false warheads and other measures. In other words, it was just a big bluff. I happened to be working for a month at a company in America at that time. I talked to many people working in Reagan's initiative, and had a chance to talk to Mr. Taylor, the father of the atomic bomb. I told him, "You guys are bluffing!" He answered. "Look, Vitalii, this is good money for good physics! You do not understand it." This was it. The initiative ended. A year later, there was a propagandistic show from both sides. It was an exchange

of propaganda that was not taken seriously. As for “flexible response”, this issue was treated very seriously, and much effort was invested in the development of our regular air defence. The successful development of our S-400 missiles<sup>83</sup> helped to resolve many problems. I believe this was a kind of motivation for us in terms of the further development of our air defence, meaning all of the components of the air defence, including radar units, command post units, etc.

### Vojtech Mastny

I have two questions. One way of looking at this debate about offensive or defensive planning is to ask what was the meaning of what happened in May 1987, when Gorbachev made the decision to change the planning and explained it to the Warsaw Pact Consultative Committee as a reversal. A reversal of what? So my question is, what really changed as a result of those decisions made in 1987 in terms of the operational planning and the whole concept of defensive versus offensive.

My second question is entirely different and has to do with the importance of the China factor and considerations of a possible military conflict with China. From the documents I have seen from the Warsaw Pact meetings, this was taken very seriously. The Soviet leadership, and Brezhnev in particular, argued at various times that China was becoming a silent partner of NATO. Also, there was a Soviet war game in which China was indeed on the side of the West in a military conflict.<sup>84</sup> Whether or not the exercise was based on the knowledge of any NATO plans to that effect, it reflected genuine concern on the Warsaw Pact side. So my question is, was a two-front war, where the Soviet Union would have to fight both in Europe and the Far East, envisaged as a serious possibility?

83 The S-400 Triumf is a new generation of anti-aircraft/anti-missile weapon system, developed since the late 1990s. The first division equipped with the S-400 entered active service in 2007.

84 The war game is referred to in the memorandum of conversation between East German Defense Minister Heinz Hoffmann and Marshals Ustinov and Kulikov, 14 June 1982. Mastny and Byrne, *A Cardboard Castle?*, pp. 462–65. See also: <http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/colltopic.cfm?lng=en&id=21289&navinfo=15697>.



**Robert Legvold**

I'll start with Aleksandr and then Vitalii. Aleksandr please.

**Aleksandr Liakhovskii**

Problems with China were given serious attention.

**Robert Legvold**

Oh, I'm sorry. I hadn't seen the sign, so Aleksandr, I'm going to turn to General Vasenin.

**Vyacheslav Vasenin**

I want to raise a couple of issues. It has been stated here that NATO possessed sufficient supplies for 21 days. This is questionable. First, I think that NATO possessed a very good infrastructure, including pipelines going from the shore zone through NATO countries' territories practically to the locations of divisions. As for air power, each of NATO's air bases was supplied through a separate pipeline. This was a very effective supply method, because we did not have the same thing in the territory of the Warsaw Pact countries. We had just started creating pipeline troops at that time, and NATO had a significant advantage in this respect. I do not think that a lack of gasoline could have been a problem for the NATO countries. We have to talk about this issue once again.

Second, I want to discuss the issue of ammunitions. It is obvious that you also expected to incur significant losses, close to 30 per cent. If the Americans had lost 15 per cent of their air force, they would not have suspended the use of the air fleet until they had found out why so many aircraft were being lost. We always tried to protect our rear echelons. In the 1980s, it was considered to be very important to defend and protect our rear echelons, because the destruction of the rear units, such as the rear bases of the front, army rear bases, and the management offices, would have created a lot of obstacles and problems. At that time, we conducted not just military strategic exercises, but exercises with the main objective

of developing defence skills with the help of primitive devices such as V-reflectors, as we did not have modern devices.

Later, new modern devices appeared that allowed us to elude any strikes, including strikes against columns on land and vessels on rivers, etc. We also planned things like the creation of false temporary bridges, etc. I know that NATO had the same kind of planning, and we looked at their plans as the examples to follow. Issues of transportation were of major importance. Three components of transportation, namely communications, transport, and logistics, have to be taken into account at all stages of decision-making. When we conduct exercises, we usually let a commander of the intelligence department talk first. However, to the best of my knowledge, NATO considered logistics the second most important issue, while we would have given it the eighth place in terms of priority. I want to hear more about the statement that NATO's levels of reserves were low.

### **Robert Legvold**

Let's go back to Vojtech's two questions, and then we will come to General Vasenin's question. So will someone on the NATO side be thinking about this question in terms of why ammunition, materiel, logistics were so important from that side. The two questions you will remember are, firstly, what did Gorbachev's reframed posture in 1987 mean – offence/defence – and secondly, how was the China factor built into your defence thinking?

### **Aleksandr Liakhovskii**

I want to start from the Chinese issue, because I do not want to talk about Mr. Gorbachev. He was a part of the chain and the main player who accepted defeat in the Cold War. He was responsible for the measures that resulted in the collapse of the Soviet Union. There is an aphorism by Chinese philosopher and military commander Sun Tzu, who said that you need to win before you start your battle. Mr. Gorbachev and his companions-in-arms succeeded in destroying the Soviet Union without a war. Everything he did was aimed at the collapse of the Soviet Union,

and I do not even want to discuss it. As for the possibility of war with China, we planned everything in this respect very seriously. Not coincidentally, a considerable group of troops and forces was established in the Far East; several armies were deployed there, and a good infrastructure was built. The Baikal-Amur Mainline, which took a lot of efforts and funds to build, was constructed because in case China had attacked the Soviet Union, it could have cut off the Trans-Siberian Railroad. In this scenario, we would not have been able to transport people, arms, or equipment to the Far East. We developed military strategies and tactics to combat China's huge masses of infantry. They could have brought an army of 25 million to the front line. Fortunately, all issues were settled politically, and no war was started; moreover, we managed to restore our traditional friendly relations with China. I would like to say once again, we took the danger from China very seriously because it was a real danger.

### **Vitalii Tsygichko**

In 1979, we calculated the war potential of China and its chances in a war with the Soviet Union. By the way, a decision to deploy troops was made at that time. We needed detailed data about China's military capacities. I should remind you that, during that period, China was one of the world's poorest countries with huge internal problems; however, they had the biggest army in the whole world – 12 million people. Their arms, military equipment, and air force were outdated. For all practical purposes, they had no air defence in place, and they only had very old T-55 tanks manufactured in the Soviet Union years ago. The most important thing was that they did not have transportation systems in the north. The Primorsky Region was the only place where they were able to concentrate their troops. We anticipated possible operations by the Chinese troops to come from three directions in particular – from Primorsky and Sendjan regions, and from Mongolia. We concluded that they could not create a large grouping of troops in the Primorsky direction due to natural conditions. It would not have been possible to group more than 1.5 million troops there. The Sendjan direction would have presented difficulties for them as well, because there were no roads there, and they would have had

to move through a desert. There was just one road, which could have been easily blocked with the help of our air force. The same situation prevailed in the direction of Mongolia. Based on models and analysis, we came to the conclusion that China was not ready to start a war.

Aleksandr Antonovich, you just talked about a huge number of soldiers, but they could not have been deployed there at that time. Nowadays, they could do it, but at that time, it was impossible for them to do so. There was a danger of war, but not to the extent that the Soviet Union estimated it. I was invited to the Military Department of the Central Committee as an author of this paper, and I was asked a lot of “why” questions. I explained each figure and how it had been obtained. Nonetheless, a political decision had already been made earlier, and it was not possible to stop the process. It should be noted that, during the time when our troops were stationed there, the relationship between Russia and China was improving gradually. After 1985, the whole infrastructure fell into disrepair, because the troops were withdrawn, and nobody took care of the air bases, and now they are covered with tall grass. Now, we have a concern in this respect. We fear that Chinese illegal immigrants may settle in those small towns and live in our country illegally. I know that hundreds of Chinese people are deported annually from those places back to China. This is the other side of the coin, meaning that when we make decisions, we do not anticipate their ultimate consequences. For this reason, Chinese aggression should have been stopped in another way with fewer costs to the country; the resources should have been spent for the benefit of the country.

### **William Odom**

I just want to add a little from the Chinese side to this since we moved to a new theatre. In December of 1978, when diplomatic relations between China and the US were normalized and Deng Xiaoping<sup>85</sup> came to Washington, he asked for a private conversation with President Carter. He didn't want anybody but interpreters. President Carter insisted that

85 The de facto leader of the People's Republic of China from 1978 to the early 1990s.

Brzezinski be in attendance. Deng came in and told President Carter, “Now we have a strategic relationship, and in that regard, I want to use it to tell you what my plans are. We intend to invade North Vietnam to teach them a lesson.” President Carter was sort of shocked and he said, “Well, aren’t you worried about the Soviet Union? The Soviets have nearly 60 divisions on your border now and they only had 15 ten or fifteen years ago.” These are the big resources that Aleksandr and Vitalii have been talking about. And he said, “Yes. We thought about that. And if they start using those forces we will use nuclear weapons on Moscow. We have decided through our calculations that while we don’t have enough nuclear weapons to handle all of the Soviet Union we can at least hit the capital.” Carter said, “What will you do after that?” He said, “Well, if they start coming in with their new tank formations we will declare People’s War. We will surround them with people and we will dissolve them.” I think that when President Carter heard they were going to launch a nuclear war, he just about swallowed his tongue. He really didn’t like nuclear weapons, and that was quite a shock. I just thought I would add that, so if you want a sense of what the Russians were facing on the other side at the time, that’s a piece of historical trivia.

### **Robert Legvold**

Let me share with you from a document that we have. That is a memorandum from a conversation that Marshals Ustinov and Kulikov had with Heinz Hoffmann, the GDR defence minister, and they’re reporting on a war game that was run on 14 June 1982.<sup>86</sup> It starts by saying – this is in direct response to the question about a two-front war, not just the China threat, but a two-front war – “War was initiated in the Far East by China 40 days ago with the active support of Japan and Korea. So far, the US has not yet participated in the war in the Far East. A total of 290 divisions have been deployed in that area against the Soviet Union. The adversary managed to intrude into the territory of the Soviet Union in the People’s Republic of Mongolia. A lot of the stock has been taken by

86 See footnote 84.

Chinese troops. Incursions were effected up to a depth of 500 km in the direction of Ulan Bator. On the fortieth day of the war the Soviet troops formed for a counter-offensive in the Far East.” I won’t read more, but the end of this game, which Ustinov and Kulikov are describing to Heinz Hoffmann, envisages several air and sea landings on the Danish islands, in Lower Saxony, and even in France. You might be interested in it. The question I have for NATO is: Did you folks ever have any idea that they were playing this kind of a game?

### **Leopold Chalupa**

I would like to come back from China to Europe again. Aleksandr, you’ll allow me to say one word about Mr Gorbachev, about how we see him. And of course our assessment is that he was realistic in recognising that either in the medium or in the long-term timeframe, the Warsaw Pact, and especially the Soviet Union, would not be able to overtake the West, especially the United States of course, economically or militarily. Also, the problems of reliability of the Warsaw Pact partners increased. He didn’t make this decision which we were always afraid of. He would not take a military option, and therefore by opening the borders – just think of East Germany, of Berlin, of Hungary etc. – he ended the Cold War by these decisions, usually called glasnost and perestroika. From our perspective, he was the person chiefly responsible for us not having a Hot War. The way in which we continued the close cooperation between NATO and Russia will be a subject of conversation for tomorrow’s discussion.

My second point is war reserves and the problem of escalation. Twenty-one days was an aim, a target, which we had pre-planned for the decisive reserves, especially for the mass supplies, such as ammunition, fuel, etc. It was not available in all areas, nor with all countries. I don’t know whether we suffered such a lack of fuel, because of course our troops did not have to proceed 150 km a day. We needed it for flexibility on the battlefield, for operating reserves. Maybe we would be better off now with our former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder at the head of Gazprom. What I wanted to say is, the lack of ammunition and lack of capability to move forces around could also have caused a situation recommend-

ing or requesting the initial use of nuclear weapons. The target lists – as I just mentioned – initially contained targets with political implications too. I have great problems to see that maybe a major centre of traffic in East Germany would be hit by a nuclear weapon in the escalation. Rear area defence was a great problem on our side, and I don't know whether it was on your side, because from our point of view you wouldn't need to expect them, except air attacks or missile attacks. You wouldn't expect ground force attacks in your rear areas, which was different of course on our side. As I mentioned before, we had a territorial army system that was intended to deal with these difficulties.

Third point. One gets a little the feeling, William, that the AirLand Battle was invented in the 1970s and was the new approach of NATO. But land-air cooperation is something that I studied at the Führungsakademie in Hamburg and at Fort Leavenworth at the United States General Staff College. Cooperation between land and air forces even in tactical measures was always a principle, and the development of attack helicopters, for instance, so that the ground commander could also have a limited means of air support, was all along these lines of air-land cooperation. The addition which came then was, what could we do against the threat of the echelonment of forces on the other side that was to introduce planned reserves or the relief of echelons. How could we interrupt this? This was then left to the AirLand Battle concept, which in principle, in the longer range, was restricted to air forces, which were active in this field before. So all I wanted to say is that it was a further development of an old military principle as soon as we got things flying through the air which could also support from above.

On SDI – Strategic Defence Initiative as it was officially called – I would say we had European reservations, as you know, because we felt that just to save the US strategic capability was a contribution to deterrence, but of course not a contribution to calm down our European populations by saying they will be protected and we won't. I think it was nevertheless a great improvement of our deterrence capability. We improved our air defences with the Gepard weapon system and the Roland missile air defence weapon system. I once took Bernie Rogers to visit the German firing site at the Baltic Sea, where we demonstrated to him the Gepard

and Roland weapons systems, and he said, “Leo, this is a very important and a very effective improvement of your system.” We tried to convince him that we should come to a closer cooperation. I’m sometimes a little tickled when I hear we are surrounded by enemies. We have a saying in Germany, now we are surrounded by friends, as opposed to in the old times. But of course then you must also have some imagination to see the Chinese as a real enemy if you are to talk about being surrounded by enemies. This was just an addition.

### **Garry Johnson**

A fairly simple answer, General, to your question about why we had a problem with maintaining our stocks. It’s called the workings of the market economy in a democratic state. Eighty per cent of your industrial production was going to the military. Something between 2.5 and 4.5 per cent of Gross Domestic Product in a NATO country goes into the defence system. Of that, 60 to 65 per cent goes towards personnel costs, and you’re left with the remainder to buy your warlike materials. Once a year, NATO come round and say: “Here are your targets to achieve,” and one of these is 30 days of warlike stocks. Another one might be bringing in improved equipment. The generals will go for equipment and take a risk on stocks.

If I could illustrate this with a very simple anecdote. I once asked Colonel General Seleznev, commanding the Leningrad Military District,<sup>87</sup> how he liked commanding a district in the market economy in the Russian Federation. He said, “Well, the man in my position in the old days would ring Moscow and he’d say I want 50 tanks. And he’d get the answer: Certainly, Comrade Colonel General, when would you like them? Now I ring Moscow and I say I want 50 tanks, and Moscow says: Certainly, Colonel General, how will you pay for them?”

87 Sergei Seleznev, commander of the Leningrad Military District (since 1991).



## Vitalii Tsygichko

Retaliation, as you said, had to occur on the 21<sup>st</sup> day. This is the exact day of retaliation in response to the first strike.

## Neal Creighton

To try to answer General Vasenin's questions. I think my other two colleagues have answered most of them, but you talked about our rear areas. That was really what I worried about most at the time. If you look at where we were and our 650 miles, it all goes back to Antwerp and Rotterdam in our planning. It brings you just down to a very small area which is not very far from your air power. We did work with the French and we worked out detailed plans, but we could not depend on those plans, and they were to use the French ports, so everything that we worried about was in a very, very small area, and that includes the pipelines and almost everything else. But you talked about defence of the area – we put a lot of effort into our air defence of that area when General von Senger was there. That's one of the main things he was interested in, and so we upgraded that and that also went along with the AWACS aircraft that helped us to control an area. So we tried to defend it.

But one other thing – and you talked about the losses of our aircraft and you talk about a 30 per cent figure and a US figure of 15 per cent – but there's one factor that you didn't consider which used to drive me crazy in the exercises when I was at AFCENT. That is because the most capable airplanes we had were the ones that we would use to deliver nuclear weapons. And there was a nuclear withhold on those aircraft. So I could not call on the F-16s and all the top aircraft to support the front-line troops, and I remember going back to the United States after that, to a meeting of all the division commanders, where I got up and I said, "You know, the fellas over there in Europe are not going to get much Air Force support in our front lines over there." Nobody said anything after that, except the Chief of Staff who said, "Neal, don't say that any more!"

**Tuesday, 25 April 2006**

**Fifth working session**

**Robert Legvold**

We turn now to our second day, and in particular this morning to incorporate the nuclear dimension of the war planning and likely events in the period that we're looking at. The sessions have been divided into, initially, war with the use of tactical nuclear weapons and then, a separate session, but I'm not sure that they won't actually be integrated because we have two presentations, on the strategic nuclear dimension. We'll begin this morning with General Odom, who will make the initial presentation for the NATO side, and then Dr Tsygichko will do the other side.

**William Odom**

My task is to offer an overall context for a dialogue today on nuclear weapons. I know some aspects of this topic, but there are huge gaps and holes in my understanding. But I think that together, the people from the NATO side here today can fill in a fairly complete picture. I propose to lay out very briefly, and very probably not all that systematically, two issues. The first is rough force and technological developments over the entire Cold War period. The second issue is to discuss briefly how targeting was an issue for the US in the evolution of its employment doctrine.

The 1950s was a decade of rapid change and learning. The United States still held a very large nuclear advantage, but the Soviet Union had already detonated a nuclear device and the US monopoly therefore would not last indefinitely. The American public slogan for our nuclear doctrine was "massive retaliation" at the strategic level, but at the same time, we were pursuing the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe by the late 1950s. The research and development in procurement programmes pursued both capabilities in that decade. The Strategic Air

Command, which I will refer to briefly as SAC later on, got the lion's share of the budget in that period to build its bomber fleet. Close behind it came what would become the ICBM fleet<sup>88</sup> and the fleet of SSBN nuclear submarines<sup>89</sup> capable of launching SLBMs.<sup>90</sup> These three would provide us with what would become known as the Triad: a naval, an air and a ground component.

In the early 1950s, nuclear weapons testing began to provide us with a lot of technical information about nuclear effects and particular the nuclear effects of yields smaller than the 20 kilotonnes we used on Nagasaki and Hiroshima.<sup>91</sup> Effects against tanks, artillery, trucks, and other pieces of military equipment. At the same time, we were making advances in weapons design at the low yield size, at the 1 to 5 kilotonne range. We discovered that fielding these weapons was practical. Both developments led to the view that low-yield nuclear weapons could be used effectively on the tactical battlefield. In 1957, in Germany, the 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division was reorganised and adapted to employ tactical nuclear weapons. It was the first so-called Pentomic Division, having five manoeuvre units instead of the normal three manoeuvre units or regiments. The three regiments became five battle groups. I served in this division's tank battalion at the time and spent several months on training exercises practising this new tactical nuclear doctrine. It looked ineffective to me as a young lieutenant then, mainly because we had too few tank units and the infantry units lacked armour protection and adequate mobility to operate very effectively with the tanks. I am not sure how long these exercises continued – I was re-stationed back to the United States – but in the 1960s, as the US Army became engaged in Vietnam, its attention to tactical nuclear weapons declined. I think General Smith knows more about that decline than I do.

88 Intercontinental ballistic missiles.

89 Ship, Submersible, Ballistic (missile capability), and Nuclear (power), a nuclear-powered, ballistic nuclear missile-carrying submarine.

90 Submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

91 On 6 August 1945 the nuclear weapon 'Little Boy' (13 kt) was dropped on the city of Hiroshima, followed on 9 August 1945 by the detonation of the 'Fat Man' nuclear bomb (21 kt) over Nagasaki.

General Creighton and I both completed a course at the Armoured School in the late 1950s on tactical nuclear targeting. It opened my eyes to a number of things about these weapons. First, armoured forces probably could operate successfully on a nuclear battlefield, but the vicissitudes of nuclear targeting, fallout, residual radiation, tree blow-down from airbursts, which I didn't understand before, the effects on forests and a number of other such effects promised a great deal of uncertainty. Second, these effects, if misestimated, could create more obstacles to effective combat operations than they could provide advantages. Third, managing logistics in the rear areas seemed almost an impossible challenge without very long intervals between nuclear use, such as days and weeks. And in exercises, we weren't allowing for those kinds of intervals.

In the 1960s the Kennedy administration promulgated a new strategy – we talked about it yesterday – with flexible response to replace massive retaliation. Defence budgets for nuclear force structure were not guided by the requirements for flexible response used in Europe, but rather, as the secretary for defense emphasised later in that decade, assured destruction. It was publicly sometimes seen as a strategy, but for Secretary McNamara it was a measure of how many weapons he needed. It was not an employment doctrine. But it looked much more in line with massive retaliation than it did with flexible response. Also in that decade, we continued the ABM programme,<sup>92</sup> an R&D programme.<sup>93</sup> There was, I think, a false start at deployment – some of the radars were deployed – but it never became more than an R&D programme. McNamara said publicly that he wanted to cap the ICBM fleet at about 1,000 missiles. Calculations had shown, he believed, that this would provide assured destruction, and he wanted to sustain the bomber fleet and the nuclear submarine missile launching fleet – the SSBNs as I said already – that would have been fielded by the 1970s. At the same time a MIRV capability – multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicle, which meant several warheads on an ICBM – for both ICBMs and SLBMs was

92 Anti-Ballistic Missile.

93 Research and Development.

also devised, permitting a much larger number of nuclear armed warheads to be fielded than missile launchers.

In the late 1960s, strategic arms control negotiations were begun, adding a new factor to the sizing and shaping of these nuclear forces. The primary consequence, however, was not reduction of such forces, but legitimisation of the increases. The first treaty, the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty of 1972, for example, was designed to fit Soviet planned future force levels, which were much higher than those existing at the time the treaty was signed and much higher than the US had. The ABM treaty was also signed at this time, which allowed one site to be deployed on each side. That allowed the Soviet Union to catch up in the R&D area and to actually begin its deployment around Moscow, while the United States essentially dropped everything but a very small R&D programme for ABM. Thus, a continued strategic weapons build-up was codified and SALT II further advanced it to higher level. No other significant arms control agreements was signed until Gorbachev's time, beyond our focus today, which ends in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Now, against this review of changing nuclear weapons employment concepts and advances in delivery systems, let me shift to the second topic, which is no less important for understanding how we saw it on the US side. That is nuclear targeting. What did the US, and we were interested also in the Soviet military leadership, envisage as the proper targets for nuclear attack? And how did that change over time? And what were the prevailing views by the late 1970s and early 1980s? I can only offer my own private observations and explanations, but others on the NATO side may see these things differently, and I'm sure they will make that clear and expand and enlighten this topic far more than I can.

Now the Strategic Air Command, or SAC, and most of the regionally deployed nuclear forces planned to attack only fixed targets. Primarily, this was because we did not have the reconnaissance capabilities to locate mobile forces, that is, ground military forces, during a war. In other words, once the war starts and forces begin to move, how would you locate them accurately enough to use nuclear weapons? So they essentially fell out of the targeting category. Although there was attention to a strategic nuclear reserve force, how they would be targeted was not clear to me at

the time when I was doing a staff review during the Carter administration from the White House right down to the missiles. But as far as I could determine at the time, they were seen mainly for re-targeting targets, re-firing at targets that had not been fully destroyed in the first lay-down. Of course, this would require reconnaissance capabilities which might be in doubt after a first use, but that was where the thinking was at the time. Ground forces were still considered untargetable because no one could see a way to find their location in a timely fashion to allow an attack before they moved again.

It was my personal conclusion in the late 1970s that this reconnaissance limitation virtually determined all our targeting capabilities. It confined what we could target. Earlier, when the tactical nuclear forces were deployed in Germany, that had not been true. We had looked at it more or less as artillery or close air support. A number of methods for locating, channelling, and attacking ground mobile forces were used. This could work, however, only at very short distances. That is, not far beyond the forward line of contact between the two sides. The greater the depth from the forward edge of the battlefield to the forces you wanted to hit, the less likely it was that you would accurately locate them.

The fixed targeting viewpoint dominated our strategies from the beginning at the strategic level. This began to change in 1980, when President Carter signed Presidential Directive 59, which initiated a new targeting doctrine. But it also directed that the Pentagon begin to acquire, develop, and do the R&D and field reconnaissance means for targeting follow-on echelons of the Warsaw Pact and also in Korea – any place where a regional theatre could be up against large ground forces. The idea was that if you could do that, then the Strategic Air Command was also directed to begin to develop the means to support theatre war and to respond to targeting requests from theatre staffs. I'm not prepared to say how far that directive was followed or how far down it got, but it was, on paper, the official doctrine by September 1980.

The public commentary on PD 59, and there was quite a bit at the time, gave the impression that it mandated so-called counter-force targeting. That is, hitting silos in the Soviet Union before their missiles were launched in an effort to achieve a disarming first strike. That inter-

pretation is absolutely wrong. I know the thinking in the White House at the time, and by the secretary of defense,<sup>94</sup> quite well, and both were concerned as to how to avoid having no choice but to execute large pre-planned attacks on fixed targets, which would be mainly military industries, command and control, and third, as a lower priority, population. The answer to avoid this dilemma, in PD 59, was to use some of the strategic nuclear weapons to support theatre operations in a dynamic fashion. For example, SAC could be asked to launch very limited attacks on large armoured forces coming into Eastern Europe from the Soviet Union in order to prevent a collapse of NATO's defence on the central front. Or against North Korea if they were overrunning South Korean forces. Secretary Brown described it as a "countervailing strategy", in the event that our conventional forces failed to hold a Warsaw Pact offensive. It was not a shift to a greater willingness to use nuclear forces, but rather to avoid being left with only the option to launch large numbers of warheads on the Soviet Union proper. At the same time, an argument I made was that we might launch these big pre-planned attacks without having any effect of slowing down the Soviet offensive. So we might hit the Soviet Union and do great damage, but still lose Western Europe. That was not a good idea in our view, and Harold Brown, as I said, described this thing as countervailance.

Now, from this account, I believe you can see that the integration into war plans of strategic nuclear forces was never far advanced on the NATO side. Very early conceptions of it, and especially with US nuclear weapons doctrine, that is integration after the initial lay-down, were that there was a huge reluctance to break the nuclear threshold, especially by the 1960s, so even before the Cuban missile crisis. The brief experimentation with tactical nuclear forces in the 1950s, what I think the Soviet side would call combined arms integration of all kinds of nuclear weapons with all kinds of ground, air, and sea forces, that approach never really took deep root on the US side. Both the Navy and the strategic part of the US Air Force had little interest in that kind of integration, and the

94 Harold Brown (see footnote 7).

army, as it became deeply involved in Vietnam, lost interest and was also losing its clout in the budget for these capabilities.

This combined arms inclusion of nuclear forces began to appear in concept only in the late 1970s or early 1980s. Those theatre-based forces remaining in Europe, so far as I know, were targeting pre-planned fixed targets, and the people in Europe can really fill in the details that I don't know here. Many of them were probably considered integrated with the Strategic Air Command's Single Integrated Operation Plan, its big pre-planned attacks. I would suspect that SIOP, as we called this plan, would include air-delivered weapons from some of the aircraft in Europe and some of the Pershing Is at the time, or Ias, or whatever the designation was. I should also note that there was some attention given to regional strategic options by Secretary of Defense Schlesinger. I know our Soviet counterparts will probably remember his directive which President Nixon signed in 1974 – National Security Directive Memorandum 242. I was in Moscow as an attaché at the time and I was abused verbally by several Soviet marshals for the appearance of this document, so I remember it acutely. It was never implemented in so far as I can determine in any significant degree, and I did look into this quite a bit in the period from 1977 to 1980 when I was on the National Security Staff.<sup>95</sup>

Let me add one last observation, and this is about intermediate nuclear forces or INF and the deployment in the early 1980s of the Pershing IIs and the GLCMs.<sup>96</sup> I know personally of no demand – and General Smith, I would be interested to hear if I'm wrong on this – of the Joint Chiefs of Staff or by SACEUR to have these forces put in Europe. On the contrary, the military in the US seem to have little or no interest in this deployment. The demand came initially from German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. He gave this infamous talk at the IISS meeting in Hamburg about the SS-20 threat and his theology of extended deterrence

95 The staff of the National Security Council, the US president's principal forum for considering national security and foreign policy matters with his senior national security advisors and cabinet officials.

96 Ground Launched Cruise Missile.



captured us.<sup>97</sup> It was a fear that the US could be separated from Europe because the Russians would be able to target Western Europe with missiles that couldn't reach the US and that we would not be willing to respond to that with missiles from the United States because that would move it to the intercontinental level. While the military didn't react to this cry from Europe, the State Department did, and the policy staff did in the Secretary of Defense's office, and also my colleague on the NSC Staff became catatonic about it. There was this huge drive to deploy some INF as a counter to the SS-20s. Thus political requirements and not military operational needs dictated the INF deployment.

A little anecdote: at the time, I had tried to point out to my boss Brzezinski and some other people on the staff that it didn't make any sense to put Pershing IIs in Germany. This would be like an artilleryman putting artillery pieces on the forward slope of a hill where they would be exposed to direct fire by enemy tanks. This was just too far forward. I said that it might make sense to put them in Portugal or the Shetland Islands, but to put them in Germany is almost to ensure their early destruction before you could use them effectively.

As an aside, I was reviewing some materials for de-classification from the Eisenhower years and came across a memorandum of a conversation that Eisenhower had with the Joint Chiefs in which they discussed IRBM – intermediate range ballistic missiles – which were then located in Italy and Libya.<sup>98</sup> Ike said those countries were not politically stable and were therefore not a good place for them, but in Germany and France, where it is politically stable, it would make no sense to put them there at all. So I took delight in pushing this to my boss and saying “I may be wrong but I have good company here.”

I would like to end by emphasising that I think political factors alone (created through extended deterrence) prompted the INF deployment, and those political factors in turn were prompted by the Soviet SS-20

97 Helmut Schmidt gave his famous speech at a IISS meeting in London in October 1977. Three weeks later, at the congress of the Social Democratic Party of Germany in Hamburg, he repeated his argument.

98 Between 1961 and 1963, PGM-19 Jupiter IRBMs were deployed in Italy and Turkey. PGM-17 Thor IRBMs were deployed in the United Kingdom between 1959 and 1963.

deployments. So if you want to understand on the Soviet side what triggered this and started it – I don't know if it's news to you or not, but it might be – the military did not see this as an attractive thing, because there wasn't any target that we couldn't hit from Omaha, Nebraska. So why we wanted to put missiles forward was puzzling, I think, to clear-thinking military people, but it seemed to be absolutely imperative for diplomats and other people. I'll end with that. I have some questions here. Bob, I don't know if whether you passed around copies of the questions I was suggesting for discussion, but given the discussion yesterday, I doubt they'll be needed, because everybody has many ideas on this issue and many questions to ask. Thank you very much for your attention.

### **Robert Legvold**

I'm going to turn to Professor Tsygichko immediately to hear from the other side.

### **Vitalii Tsygichko**

I want to discuss the evolution of views in terms of the use of nuclear weapons, as well as their capacities in terms of tactical use. Also, I want to talk about the connections between plans to use nuclear weapons in the theatre of military operations and strategic nuclear forces planning. I should say that, in the 1950s, when nuclear weapons appeared in Europe, the situation in the potential theatre of war changed a lot. In this connection, according to the military analytics of that time, one of the tasks of the Soviet military and industrial complex was the creation of low-yield nuclear weapons, which could be used in operations at the theatre of war. I should say that, in principle, we were only able to obtain lower yields much time later, but initially, the charges were powerful enough. Our plans were based on these capabilities. We were given an assignment to establish parity or superiority in the nuclear campaign. In addition, the calculations were based on the estimation of the number of kilotonnes. At the first stage, the General Staff Headquarters based its estimations of the balance of nuclear forces on the total yield of the nuclear ammunition. It was an interesting situation, because the quantities were increas-

ing constantly, since the military and industrial complex was working continuously. Finally, we got the so-called primary weapons.

Then, we had to equip the troops with sufficient quantities of them, especially the first echelon. Thus, all of our weapons were subdivided into the tactical weapons, which were actually designed to be used in the tactical operational zones of our troops, and the tactical operational and operational weapons. The hierarchy was as follows: division, army, and front. Only the highest-ranking commanders could give orders to initiate the use of weapons; then, an army group commander, or commander of the front, and a division commander could have made further decisions and given orders in terms of use and targeting, etc. As a matter of fact, only the highest political and military leadership was supposed to deal with such decisions and issues. For this reason, at the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, all exercises and war games were aimed at different situations where, after approval had been obtained, they had to decide in what way to use a weapon, and whether it was justified, or not. However, they did not consider the issue of actual losses that could have been incurred by both sides. They did not talk about the harm to the environment and the population, etc. Maybe they had these issues in mind, but when I participated in exercises as a referee, we did not consider these issues.

I should mention that we had two separate spheres: planning for strategic strikes and planning for the use of nuclear weapons in operations in the theatres of war. These were the responsibility of completely different subdivisions of the General Staff Headquarters, which dealt with all of this separately. Later, they realized that tactical and strategic issues were linked, but initially, the issues of troop support dominated. They considered nuclear support on the battlefield to be another variant of air and artillery support. In the course of time, in the 1970s, nuclear artillery ammunition was created, and it was very effective for use in the tactical zone, which reached as far as 30 or 40 kilometres. I am talking about low-yield projectiles. Later, they also considered consequences such as the ability of the troops to carry out actions after a nuclear strike, as well as the issue of radiation. Such research began after the estimations of the consequences of a strike by the strategic nuclear forces. Research on the

consequences of a massive strike had a great impact on our assessment of the use of tactical nuclear weapons.

Our first nuclear doctrine envisaged a massive strike on the territory of the US with the purpose of massive destruction. Bob said that the US had the same intentions in terms of an exchange of disarming strikes. It was assumed that whoever launched the first strike would have completely disarmed the adversary and would not have had to expect any retaliation. But assessments showed that such a strike would have met with retaliation. Then they tried to assess the consequences of one missile hitting a big city. I do not remember the exact details, since it was in the beginning of the 1960s, and I do not want to mislead you. According to intelligence service, the US researched the consequences of such a strike, assuming that a city with a population of one million, or one and a half million, would be hit with one missile. The Americans did a very thorough job, and the consequences of even one strike looked like a catastrophe. First, the whole city and its suburbs would have been completely destroyed, and a huge territory would have become radioactive; moreover, people within the radioactive zone would have died very soon. This would have been not only an ecological disaster, but also a catastrophe for the whole nation. They tried to calculate the number of beds in hospitals to treat people who would have survived, as well as the amounts of money needed to restore the infrastructure and industry in the region and other issues. They also assessed the future health and the psychological consequences for the whole nation.

Such assessments encouraged our researchers to do the same kind of work. They got an order to assess what would happen to the Soviet Union in case of a massive strike, but not just a strike with one missile. What would happen? What would be left? I participated in work on such estimations, and I should tell you that the results showed that nothing would be left on the surface. Then, the Politburo adopted a decision saying that the elite of the country should be protected. Huge amounts of money were spent on defence facilities and even underground cities for the protection of our party elite.

Accidentally, I happened to be with the group that dealt with the usefulness of subways to serve as shelters in case of a nuclear strike. In this

particular case, they assumed that ten nuclear strikes had been delivered against different parts of Moscow. They tried to figure out whether people who would use the metro as a shelter would be able to survive, and what measures should be undertaken to reinforce the structure of the metro. As you might know, in several stages, all doors in all stations were removed and substituted with new steel doors. I was involved in calculating the effects of the blast within the radius of an assumed nuclear strike in Moscow. The results were horrifying. Later, many things were reconsidered after we had presented our findings to our political leadership.

In the US, too, scientists' research had a considerable impact on views concerning the massive use of nuclear weapons. Both sides understood the absurdity of an exchange of massive nuclear strikes. A new concept of "unacceptable damage" appeared in this connection. Our task was to come up with a way to defeat an adversary in such a way that the damages would not exceed the acceptable level of destruction in case of retaliation. As far as I know, according to the present US standards, any damage to US territory caused by a single warhead is deemed to be unacceptable. Factually, with the in-depth understanding of all the consequences of all these issues, nowadays, the concept of "unacceptable damage" is equivalent to our understanding that there should be no strikes on any country at all. It is important to mention that this way of thinking and the concept of "unacceptable damage" still exist. In any program, including Reagan's Star Wars and the creation of an air defence system in the US, this concept of "unacceptable damage" should be the criterion that must be taken into account in the creation of any specific system. The same was true for our Soviet leadership: finally, they started to understand that the consequences of a nuclear strike would be horrifying. This perception encouraged negotiations on the limitation and reduction of nuclear weapons, as well as anti-missile defence, etc.

Over time, the evolution of views in the area of the strategic nuclear weapons impacted the points of view on the use of the tactical nuclear weapons. As I have already mentioned, the first step in this direction was intense modelling, and I have participated in this work personally, since I was involved in the creation of a model of an exchange of strikes in the Western theatre of war. The General Staff Headquarters assumed

that both NATO and our troops would have 400 to 500 warheads on the front line, 150 in an army sector, and 40 in a divisional sector. The questions were: “How would you use it? What is going to happen if you use them? What would happen in case of a possible advance?” We had several different options and several scenarios were planned. The first scenario assumed that we launched a strike in the strip, which was 150 or 200 kilometres away from the front line. Another scenario assumed the use of all ammunitions. At that time, as far as I know from the information obtained by the intelligence, the US possessed highly effective methods of calculating the consequences of a nuclear strike.

We understood the dynamics of radiation within a period from three to five days. We were able to reflect this data on maps and make almost precise calculations of the radiation levels based on distance and height, and so on and so forth. Besides, depending on the type of a nuclear explosion and the type of ammunitions, we were able to make an estimation of how much dust would rise into the air, and how quickly it would accumulate afterwards. Maybe you remember Mr. Alexandrov, a physicist. He created the model of a nuclear winter. By the way, I am not aware of his fate. In 1985, he went overseas on a business trip and vanished. Nonetheless, he left the results of his work with the Moscow Institute of Nuclear Research, where he worked on forecasts of the consequences of a massive strategic nuclear strike. The findings showed that dust and dirt would rise very high into the air and would create a “greenhouse effect” lasting for a relatively long time. As a result, the global climate would change significantly due to a “nuclear winter”. These findings shocked the population of our country and especially the military, and affected perceptions of the nuclear doctrine. In particular, our military leadership expected to obtain at least some positive effects from the use of nuclear weapons, but there were no benefits from them at all. All these facts were disclosed to public and widely discussed in mass media. As you remember, the struggle for peace was our main objective, and I fully supported it. Mr. Alexandrov’s research results were the best arguments in our struggle for peace.

You asked us openly about such effects in the theatre of war. A big group of specialists of different levels has been established, and dealt with the research of this process for approximately a year, and, finally,

created a model. The General Staff Headquarters was in charge of this work, and the Academy of the General Staff Headquarters provided us with the information. Of course, this information was approximate; nonetheless, we needed to estimate the effects and see what would happen. These effects shocked us as well, because after we had calculated the losses, assuming that both sides would use all of their weapons, it appeared that almost nobody would survive on the whole continent. And it was obvious that in the area of a nuclear explosion, the level of destruction would be enormous, but the consequences of the so-called system effect resulting from the use of hundreds of weapons were even greater. Within a huge territory, oxygen would be burnt off. Oxygen would be sucked into the area of detonation, setting off a massive storm. Millions of tons of dust and soil particles would rise in the air, causing a "nuclear night" that would last for a relatively long time. Radiation would reach enormous levels with a big number of nuclear explosions. According to our estimations, about 100 million people would die from radiation during the first day after the explosion.

Then, we asked ourselves: "How can we use the nuclear weapons?" Another question was: "Would any of the troops retain military capabilities in case of retaliation?" In case of a massive use of nuclear weapons, there was no need to ask questions regarding the capability of troops. Then, we started to decrease the number of ammunition in our estimations in order to come up with findings of what would happen in case only half, or one-third, or one-tenth of them were used. We found out that in this case, it would be possible to continue an advance. Separate localized nuclear strikes could have been used in some areas in order to stop the adversary. We gave up the idea that it was possible to move through irradiated territory, because we had estimated the losses among troops moving through such territory. In 1956 or 1957, a military exercise was held in Central Asia in an attempt to test a nuclear weapon for advance purposes. A small nuclear device was detonated on the testing site, and the troops were sent to move through the nuclear cloud. It ended tragically, and only recently, many materials about it have been published. I used to know some participants of this event personally. I know one pilot who refused to fly through this cloud, and he was fired for that. All of

his friends who had obeyed the order died within several months. What I am trying to say is that there was a time when they used human beings for such tests. Nowadays, we perceive this as a crime. But it was really a problem that we did not possess knowledge about many things, and we did not understand the consequences thereof. If we had known what would happen, maybe we would not have done such things. The cost of our lack of knowledge and understanding was very high.

I believe that both the NATO and the Western political leadership understood that a widespread use of nuclear weapons in the theatre of war was an absurdity. While it would have been possible to defeat an enemy, it would not have been possible to carry out any of the strategic goals in the theatre of war. In the mid-1960s, we also considered a human factor, meaning, the destruction of the population in the affected territory, and we came up with horrible figures. The data obtained by the scientists caused a negative reaction, but the General Staff Headquarters accepted all this information. Afterwards, many of the norms, including the norms of the rear services, as well as many other things were reviewed. All those factors resulted in the decision to change programs of the armed forces structuring and the armament programs. Furthermore, many of the rules and norms of strategic operations at the front, army, and tactical levels were revised as well.

Mathematical models were the main instrument of research, and our General Staff Headquarters applied them to particular problems. I also have to mention that many people, especially the military who participated in the Second World War, opposed the introduction of mathematical methods. That is why during the whole process, we faced a lot of difficulties while we were working with some people from the General Staff Headquarters. However, such work continued, and, as I believe, by 1980, many institutes were involved in the calculations of all aspects of strategic operational planning, including use of nuclear weapons. As I have learnt from my own experience, in our war games, we planned the use of nuclear weapons, but we did not make calculations any more, because we already possessed knowledge about the results. No matter what, we had to be ready for military operations under such conditions. In all these war games, our assignments presented certain scenarios, and we had to



make decisions in terms of military operations. For example, in case of one or two nuclear strikes, massive retaliation was out of question.

At the same time, our military industry was functioning and missiles were being manufactured, and we needed find ways to use them. It goes without saying that this peculiarity of our economy had to be taken into account. During the Second World War, a huge military and industrial complex was established, initially in Siberia, the Far East, and Central Asia, and later in the European part of our country. When the war ended, our army forces were reduced, but what would you do with all this huge potential? This potential was regarded as a national asset and was not destroyed. Military production was continued and maintained constantly, which resulted in the collapse of our economy. The same situation prevailed in the nuclear area, since the nuclear engineering staff and the leadership were the lobbyists in this process, and they had an enormous influence on all Politburo members. Mr. Ustinov personally supported the development of this field at the time when he was the defence minister. Huge amounts of money were allocated to this sector.

In 1967, as a young officer, I attended nuclear tests in Kazakhstan. I was invited to a testing site as a part of the scientific team, and there were my friends, civil nuclear engineers. We were accommodated at the testing site in a small house, where everybody lived together, including generals and lieutenants. Nearby, there was a modern hotel with all modern conveniences with restaurants and their own chefs. The Ministry of Nuclear Energy, which was financed directly by the government, owned this hotel. This industry was like a small separate country in a big state. They had their own transportation, roads, and even their own cities, etc. It was a big deal when a plant or a laboratory needed to be shut down. Nuclear engineering jobs were very well paid, and that is why a lot of lobbying took place. Due to this, the stockpiling of ammunitions progressed rapidly. At a certain point, when we needed to liquidate them, it appeared that we had too much of them. I think that both Americans and Europeans encountered the same problem concerning their nuclear stockpiles. These problems need to be resolved, as we had to resolve the problems with chemical weapons. We have accumulated huge stockpiles,

which we have been trying to dispose of for ten years, and still are not done with it; besides, we face all kinds of ecological problems.

Furthermore, as I have already mentioned, before the beginning of the 1980s, plans concerning the use of nuclear weapons in the theatre of war were separate from planning concerning the use of strategic nuclear weapons. As far I understand, they calculated the results of a massive nuclear strike first, and then the result of separate strikes, etc. There were different plans and flexible approaches to these issues. For example, it was believed that one preventive strike would force the adversary to start negotiations. Such options were considered in the search for an effective way to use nuclear weapons without creating a threat to national security. Such a threat may have been posed in case of a massive nuclear strike, or even a partial nuclear strike.

Much effort was invested into anti-missile defence. As far as I know, we are able to destroy single missiles, but as for a massive strike, even in the 1980s, our calculations showed that it was impossible to create an umbrella, since there always would be another weapon that managed to penetrate such a defensive array. Considering that a multiple warhead carries 10–12 elements and launches about 100 elements, and that it is practically impossible to distinguish the warhead carrying a real charge from dummies, all attempts to build such a defensive shield have become futile. The creation of an anti-missile defence system is not the issue, but the removal of such mutual threats is the top priority. It goes without saying that, in the course of time, the understanding of the impact of nuclear weapons on a political situation and military actions has led us to the point at which we realized that any “dialogue” concerning the use of nuclear weapons makes no sense at all.

There is another side of the coin: Each country that possesses a nuclear arsenal views membership in the “nuclear club” as a prestigious thing. All countries, including Israel, Pakistan, India, and other states, believe that possession of nuclear weapons guarantees their security to a certain extent. When I talked to Indians and Pakistanis, I have found out that they are satisfied not only with the fact that they have nuclear weapons, but the fact that it allows them to implement the policy of mutual containment. This is a very important aspect for Pakistan. Each

year, Pakistani generals come to Moscow. When we meet, we openly discuss these issues. Mutual containment is the main factor for them. Another factor is that they are the first Muslim country to obtain nuclear weapons. In this sense, prevention of nuclear weapon proliferation is a very important task. Our country, together with the US, has made huge efforts to understand the consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. In view of the present instability in the world, and taking into account the technological characteristics of such weapons, which can be easily manufactured, as Pakistan did, and as Iran might do, we should be concerned about the direct threat to peace, since there will always be people who would not hesitate to give their life in a terrorist act for the purposes of establishing their regimes. I believe that I have deviated from the topic a little, but I think it is very important to bear this information in mind. Our Russian and American experiences, and the evolution of nuclear concepts should be viewed as lessons for everybody in order to analyze current situation and its possible consequences. We have to do something with it, and work together.

### **Robert Legvold**

When you were speaking about the studies that you were doing, including the mathematical modelling for the use of theatre nuclear forces, you referred to the 1970s. Was most of that begun in the early 1970s, in the mid-1970s, or the late 1970s?

### **Vitalii Tsygichko**

I want to tell you about our first research and our first book, which was published in 1966.<sup>99</sup> We were dealing with research in these areas in 1965 and 1966. The model of the strategic operation was developed in 1969. In the beginning of the 1960s, we dealt with modeling and planning on models of massive nuclear strikes against US territory. When did you begin to do such things, and what was it like in the US?

99 Cf. Vitalii N. Tsygichko, *Модели в системе принятия военно-стратегических решений в СССР* [Models in the System of Strategic Military Decision-Making in the USSR] (Moscow: Imperium Press, 2005), pp. 28–31.

## William Smith

Those were two very interesting and informative presentations. At first, I was just going to comment on what Bill Odom said, but having heard what Professor Tsygichko had to say I'd like to make comments on both. Four points and I'll do it briefly. Firstly, the role that technology played in the treatment of things nuclear by both the Soviet Union and the United States and its allies. Technology played a big role at first in speeding up the competition. When the United States learned that in 1949 the Soviet Union had exploded an atomic weapon, there was a great feeling that someone had to do something before the Soviet Union got those weapons, or there might be war in Europe which would be uncontrollable. Nothing came of that, but there was some concern about the technological development in the Soviet Union, and when Sputnik happened in 1957, it shook the United States technologically like we had never been shaken before. That really sped up the United States and its allies having to get better forces in order to deter an attack from the Soviet Union. That arms competition – it has been called action and reaction between the Soviet Union and the United States, and in my view there is a lot of truth in that. Neither side wanted to get behind, so that race continued. I will come back to this.

This leads me to the second point, but I will want to come back to the first. This interest and competition in things nuclear led the United States military to realise that they were going down a blind alley and that more nuclear weapons was not the answer. Therefore it already struck me in 1979 in the SALT II agreement, which the United States did not ratify, that the United States military wanted to make larger reductions in strategic forces than the United States government agreed to. The reason the US military did that was that they thought they had better uses for resources than putting them into nuclear weapons, which they had decided was a blind alley. That leads me to the second role that technology played, which was equally important. I was particularly struck because I think both the Soviet Union and NATO learned the same lesson, which is that the more you learned about nuclear weapons, the more you said you must never get in a position to use them. So the emphasis shifted from

how to use nuclear weapons to how to deter war. I was struck because at the beginning, Bill Odom talked about the Pentomic Division. It didn't take much experience in exercises to see that this was not going to work. So the United States Army turned away from thinking about using nuclear weapons on the battlefield. We adopted the doctrine of flexible response, because it made sense since the alternative was unworkable.

That leads me to the third point I want to make, which is that the coordination between the theatre nuclear forces and the strategic nuclear forces was always an almost insurmountable problem, at least from the United States point of view. If it got to the level of a strategic force attack, it had to be successful because the survival of the whole United States might depend on that. Therefore, strategic nuclear weapons took priority over theatre nuclear weapons even in the theatre. What is interesting to me is that – in the early 1960s we're talking about – we didn't see that because the theatre was sort of separate, because there were a lot fewer nuclear weapons and we had regional theatre nuclear plans, which were pretty much separate from the strategic plans. But as we got into the 1970s, we realised you can't separate those two issues, and so very close coordination was required between NATO use of nuclear forces and the use of strategic nuclear forces by the United Kingdom and the United States, and that was a big job, done primarily by the strategic forces. The theatre forces became subordinate. I guess the point I'm making here is that there was coordination between strategic and nuclear forces, but it was not easy, and it took a lot of complicated simulations and work to make sure that was coordinated.

Now to the final point I want to make. There was mention of the intermediate nuclear forces, INF. You know, Chancellor Schmidt made that speech, and I look at it from the way I see things. Other people see them differently. But they were worried at the time and the Europeans wanted to make sure they had some way in which they could respond which would get the Soviet Union's attention so that everything did not depend on strategic nuclear forces. They wanted to have some ability, some range to reach out to hit the Soviet Union, particularly when the Soviet Union deployed their INF. The Europeans said, "We have to have some way to respond, because otherwise we're just sitting ducks here. We

can't live with this situation." As Bill Odom said, the United States wasn't too interested in doing that, and therefore the United States persuaded NATO to adopt a policy which was called the dual-track approach. This said that if you, the Soviet Union, will not deploy your intermediate nuclear forces, then we will not deploy our intermediate nuclear forces, and therefore neither side will have those forces in Europe. It did lead to a treaty eventually, but the interesting thing to me was that although having an intermediate nuclear force was a European idea, when it came to deploying it in Europe, Western Europe, including Germany, whose idea it was, said "Not me! I don't want those weapons." So there was a dilemma here. We were trying to satisfy them and they said they didn't want it. Well, eventually, the two countries who really helped us there were the Italians and the Dutch, because they finally said "we'll do something" and the Germans said "OK." I mention that because all things nuclear made life more complicated, but I guess that the thing I have learned this morning is how as both sides learned more about nuclear weapons, both sides realised there has to be a better alternative. Thank you.

### **Leopold Chalupa**

I think it was clear to us all that this was a discussion between the United States and the Soviet Union. This was not a discussion between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, although of course I agree that in principle on the NATO side, for which I speak, this was always closely coordinated and agreed to in the Military Committee by our nations in how far nuclear weapons will play a role. Let me make a comment on the second work session project, the link between strategic nuclear weapons and theatre war plans. Bill, I agree there was close cooperation and close coordination, but there was no link with theatre war plans. The strategic capability was the last-resort capability in the event that the theatre war would be lost. This is how we understood it. This is the reason why massive retaliation was changed into the concept of flexible response. Because in a massive strategic nuclear exchange, not only NATO territory was threatened. Your homeland was threatened. This had a different impact on our nuclear powers, which of course we needed as the backbone of our defence. This

is why this concept was changed. It was no longer credible, given the impact that you explained that nuclear weapons would have, that the United States president would authorise a big strategic nuclear exchange for the crossing of a Czech brigade of our friends – if you ever came across, because we didn't want to come to you. Obviously, with the advance of nuclear parity, the concept of massive retaliation changed, initially in the strategic field, and then also in other weapon systems.

I must of course refer to my chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, of the Social Democratic Party, who was fighting against tough political resistance in our country too. He was promoting the development and the stationing of Pershing and cruise missiles as weapon carriers. They were not seen as nuclear weapons carriers only. But obviously, in the consideration of our strategy, there was a gap between the initial use and the escalation to strategic use. There was a gap of this intermediate-range nuclear exchange, and therefore the stationing took place. I am grateful that you in particular mentioned so much the impact on the civilian population, which of course for us, as the front countries on either side of the Iron Curtain, would have played a particular role.

I come back again to the first session on the impact of the employment concept for the use of nuclear weapons on the battlefield. This was a lengthy process and a long study process. I know when I was a young General Staff officer, we had just developed the killing zone where one brigade will be killed and we would just attack and the war would be won. This of course was not credible, and it was quickly changed, and then on the NATO side very stringent release procedures were employed. These procedures went up to the nuclear top political decision-maker, which was the US president. In the ground forces setup in my region, the Americans had a smaller sector than all the others, so when you talk about our forces, it meant that it would also have been weapons which would be accepted by the allies under joint agreed procedures, and this was really the basis of our plan of linking nuclear weapons into the defence battle. We never had plans to attack on the other side. We never planned such things at our General Staff College. When I was at Fort Leavenworth, of course I played "attack in China", I must admit, but I never played it in

Europe. This led to the conclusion that a logistics situation could possibly have been the trigger to request the initial use of a nuclear weapon. The targets considered sensitive could have included a known assembly area, thus the improvement in the reconnaissance and air surveillance. But looking at this target list from a European point of view, I must say that even if we had been looking at targets on the other side of the Iron Curtain, I think it would have been a very difficult decision to request the use of nuclear weapons.

However, I feel the inclusion of deterrence in our overall strategy helped to prevent the Cold War from developing into a Hot War with consequences that were unforeseeable and unpredictable. I would like to make one additional comment on nuclear weapons to my friends on the other side. Why would we have developed a weapon like atomic demolition munitions, which as you know is a device just to create obstacles on the ground, not for transport by any weapon system? I just want to mention this again to indicate that we had defensive intentions all the time.

## Sixth working session

### **Alyson Bailes**

A large group of Western politicians assumed that the nuclear weapons would never be deployed. They were only a bargaining counter to persuade the other side that it was not in their interests either, because really, what we were saying to the Warsaw Pact was, “any move you make, we can match it.” And this was an essentially deterrent operation, just as forward defence would probably never have worked if we had had to do it, so the point was that it deterred the other side so we didn’t have to do it. The Western proposal to deploy the INF missile had exactly that character, and if we ask why nevertheless many people in Germany and the other countries were opposed to it, and there was an enormous peace movement which I witnessed myself in the early 1980s, it was partly that some people didn’t want to have the missiles under any scenario. But on the other hand, there were many quite moderate people who felt NATO was



not sincere enough in its disarmament offer, and that it was not actually playing those tactics sincerely enough and cleverly enough. I remember particularly well that many people in Germany felt that the Western side should have offered cuts in French and British nuclear weapons in order to clear out, as it were, the whole sub-strategic level in Europe, because it could reasonably be argued that Moscow might not want to throw away its intermediate defence, its chance of flexibility, as long as there were French and British weapons in the same theatre. So I hope that this statement helps to explain some of the features of the Western attitude which seem illogical or inconsequent if you look at them purely from the standpoint of military logic. Thank you.

### Robert Legvold

Alyson has stressed that the INF was essentially, if I don't oversimplify, a bargaining proposition. That is, an answer to the SS-20, but in a way that would eliminate the problem rather than create the problem. The difficulty on the arms control front demonstrated the perils of the strategy, because you will remember early on, when there was an effort to break through on this with the famous walk in the woods between Paul Nitze and Kvitsinskii,<sup>100</sup> that failed.<sup>101</sup> It was only in early 1987, when Gorbachev agreed to de-link INF from the strategic arms talks, the SALT talks, that they were able to make progress. It required, however, two further steps. The first was a willingness on the Soviet side to agree to the first of what came to be called the double-zero, that is the complete elimination of weapons, and that was initially proposed by Richard Perle<sup>102</sup> and others in the Pentagon who were not friendly to the idea of an INF agreement. But in this case, Gorbachev agreed to the first zero, but the initial stage, you may remember, was to allow a hundred INF in East Asia and a hundred INF in the United States. That eventually was eliminated, but it required a further stage, which was to include so-called SR INF,

100 Iulii A. Kvitsinskii, head of the Soviet delegation negotiating on medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe.

101 The 'walk in the woods' took place in Geneva in June 1982.

102 Richard N. Perle, US Assistant Secretary of Defense (1981–1987).

short-range INF. The US had no SR INF in Europe. The only category for that was the Pershing Ia, and therefore the consent of the German side was required in order to get the agreement. So if this was essentially a diplomatic strategy, it had a number of hurdles to pass, and had the Soviet leadership not been willing to go in the direction they did to get the double-zero, we might have been stuck with INF along the way.

### **William Odom**

I said it's not our wisdom. It's Gorbachev's wisdom. This was a self-created unnecessary problem.

### **Robert Legvold**

The second point that I would make is really a question and it flows from Alyson's comment, because she spoke of the French and British dimension of the INF issue. People around the table know that the French and British dimension of the strategic arms limitation talks is one of the issues that bedevilled the SALT I negotiations. It does lead to a question that's on the mind of some on the NATO side here, which I would put to the Soviet participants, and that is the way the Warsaw Pact perceived the French part of the deterrent. Did you calculate that that would almost automatically be brought into play in the case of war, or did you see it as potentially disconnected and remaining independent, under French control and therefore not necessarily part of the problem that you faced in thinking about war in Europe? Aleksandr is next.

### **Aleksandr Liakhovskii**

I will talk about this issue some time later, and now I would like to talk about one thing. In 1945, when the US built nuclear bombs and used them during the war with Japan, it believed that it would continue to have a monopoly on this kind of weapon for many years and be able to pursue its interests in the world. However, the Soviet Union created the same type of weapon some time later. In my opinion, at that very time, both sides should have stopped and entered into an agreement on non-

proliferation of this kind of weapon. Unfortunately, we did not manage to do so. I believe that such a step, had it been undertaken, could have stopped further escalation of the arms race.

I will not consider historical events. With the help of the US, such weapons were transferred to France and England. As for the Soviet Union, it did not transfer its technology to any of the Warsaw Pact countries; for all practical purposes, the Soviet Union was the only one of the Warsaw Pact countries that possessed such weapons. This is where the confrontation between the Soviet Union and the US comes from – note that it was not NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries, because other countries of the Warsaw Pact did not possess this weapon. I want to draw your attention to this detail: in principle, the Soviet Union adhered to this policy constantly, and it did not transfer its technology to any other countries.

Concerning Pakistan, I want to provide you with some explanations. At the time when our troops entered Afghanistan, Pakistan was developing the technology for this weapon. In violation of its own laws, the US started to provide significant support to Pakistan, including financial support, etc. Maybe due to this, nuclear weapons appeared in Pakistan. I am saying this because I believe that this confrontation between the US and the Soviet Union accidentally served as catalyst, and facilitated the process of global proliferation of nuclear weapons. Currently, it will be very difficult to stop it, because the countries that are gaining scientific and economic potential also want to possess nuclear weapons. There will be more difficulties and barriers, and notwithstanding any negotiations and limitations, it will be more complicated to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons. At present, a massive international campaign is being conducted against the production of nuclear weapons in Iran. President Bush has even threatened to launch a nuclear strike against Iran if they do not stop the process. I think that such a step is questionable, very risky, and may result in very serious consequences. We have to find new steps and options to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and we have a lot of opportunities in this area for joint efforts of the leading countries. This issue is of vital importance, and we can closely cooperate and work

on them, because if the process gets out of control, it will be too late to do anything, since we would have nothing left on the planet.

As for the process of planning the use of nuclear weapons, I should note that it was continued and constantly changed depending on the upgrades and delivery vehicles of nuclear weapons. I should note that our country and the US had different ways of approaching this issue. As you may remember, at the time when Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev was our general secretary, somebody convinced him that missiles must be the main delivery vehicles. Unlike the US strategy, which envisaged the development of warplanes, long-distance bombers, and strategic bombers as the primary platform for delivering nuclear weapons, we reduced our air fleet, dismantled our warplanes, and research and development slowed down. At that time, we were far behind the Americans and the NATO countries in this area. On the other hand, we deployed a large number of strategic missile troops and constructed a great number of silos, since our country is large in size and there was a lot of space for them. Later, we switched to an integrated approach in planning and understood that it was wrong to use only one kind of delivery vehicle, because missiles were not accurate enough. Many of our missiles were based on liquid fuel systems, and required a lot of preparation before launching; it was difficult to store them, and their lifetime was short without replacement. All these factors impacted our planning process.

As you may remember, in the Soviet Union in the 1970s, both in our tactical and operational tactical chain, we had a missile called "Luna". It was not accurate enough and had a wide range of dispersion. We were able to compile more precise and selective plans after the development of the new OTR-21 "Tochka" ballistic missile system, which was accurate enough in its ability to hit targets. Then we neglected the artillery component and did not pay much attention to the development of nuclear shells. When the US had developed such shells, we also started to work on artillery systems with such shells. Thus, there was a lot of competition between the two countries, and it had an impact on our planning. We needed to incorporate changes into our plans on constant basis, annually, meaning that changes in the objectives and infrastructure automatically entailed changes in our plans, etc.

Now, I want to talk about the strategic missile troops and nuclear delivery vehicles at the front, army, and division levels. Yes, we had a plan for a first strike by the strategic missile troops, and it existed separately. As you may remember, initially we did not have much stockpiling of nuclear weapons. Then, as nuclear weapons were developed and accumulated, we were able to launch strikes using the strategic missile troops in the theatres of war. When a front operation has been planned, certain targets were identified for the front, and other targets were identified for the strategic forces; then, those targets were excluded from the tasks of the front operations. As Vitalii already mentioned, in 1965, 1966, and 1969, the calculations in planning were widely used, and this approach was used later as well. I have participated in calculations of the effects of an American first strike against the Soviet Union, mainly against cities, including civilian and industrial facilities. We calculated the destruction level and losses after the strike. We estimated the death toll resulting directly from such a strike, although we did not assess other consequences. According to our estimations, in the first hour after such a strike, the majority of our population would have died. If we had been able to implement appropriate civil defence measures and to evacuate the population from big cities, and use bomb shelters, we would have had less casualties; however, people could have died from the consequences of the nuclear strikes. Perhaps you know that, at first, we constructed a great number of bomb shelters and stockpiled food in them. Also, some infrastructure was developed in the suburbs of cities. Nonetheless, we gave up the idea of such measures, because they were useless, just a waste of money.

### **Vitalii Tsygichko**

Regarding the issue of the deployment of intermediate-range ballistic missiles in Europe. Yes, this measure was very painful for us. Unfortunately, we did not find an appropriate response to it. When the Soviet Union deployed missiles in Cuba in the beginning of the 1960s, this action almost resulted in the initiation of a catastrophic thermonuclear war. The Soviet Union could have responded to the deployment of missiles in Europe by deploying similar missiles in Cuba. But instead, we started to look for

ways to start the reduction of armaments. As you know, after Mikhail Gorbachev had become the general secretary of the CPSU in 1985, we began to implement these measures. A treaty was signed, even though it contained provisions that were unfavourable for us. For example, the R-400 Oka missile,<sup>103</sup> for some unknown reason, appeared to fall within the terms of the INF Treaty, although this was a brand new missile, and due to its characteristics, it should not have been within the terms of the treaty. The missile was destroyed together with all the manufacturing facilities. That move caused a great deal of resentment among the military, and there have been no explanations to date as to why the program was cancelled. This is still regarded as a betrayal of the national interests by Mr. Gorbachev.

In conclusion, I want to stress once again that, based on our calculations, we arrived at the conclusion that the use of nuclear weapons is not only senseless, but very dangerous for the whole planet, and that such weapons must not be used at all. For this reason, we need to concentrate our efforts on the destruction of such weapons. This is not an easy matter, because the countries that possess nuclear weapons will not be eager to destroy them; they believe that the nuclear weapons guarantee their security. We need to find a mechanism to ensure that they do not use nuclear weapons at their own discretion in order to pursue their interests, and that they will consider the interests of all mankind.

### **William Smith**

I want to ask General Liakhovskii a question. General, this question may seem unfair, but it's not meant that way. I was struck by the fact that you said that deploying INF led to something very similar to the Cuban missile crisis. The first party to have INF was the Soviet Union. NATO responded with an INF proposal. I don't think you're saying this, but my question is, are you saying that it was wrong for the Soviets to deploy INF in the first place?

103 The R-400 Oka missile was a mobile theatre ballistic missile.

**Aleksandr Liakhovskii**

Planning of the use of nuclear weapons changed depending on the situation and technical capacities. When nuclear weapons appeared in England and France, the public reacted pretty quietly. In terms of technical characteristics, the French and British arsenals were less advanced than US nuclear weapons. The fact that nuclear weapons appeared in France did not have a huge impact on the balance of forces. Negotiations were held in order to prevent these two countries from combining their nuclear arms. I know that these talks were confidential, and I am not sure what the results were. France provided guarantees that its nuclear weapons would not be included in US planning. Nonetheless, we had plans for small strikes against the nuclear complexes of France and England in the 1960s.

I want to talk about the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. I support Aleksandr's point of view: the issue of proliferation depends on the consensus of all countries that possess nuclear weapons and nuclear technology. We all know that Pakistan now has nuclear weapons. How did they manage to obtain them? I believe that they were unable to develop the technology themselves. It is absolutely clear that China stole the technological information from the US. Then, this information was transferred to Pakistan by China for political reasons. Unfortunately, at times we supported both China and Iran's policies, but we have realized the potentially dangerous consequences. For this reason, we should reach an agreement on preventing the transfer of such technology with all countries, including China. Proliferation of such technologies must be prevented at all costs. This is a very important issue to address now, since it is being claimed that Iran has made attempts to produce nuclear weapons. I am familiar with the state of affairs in this field, and I am sure that they have been unable to produce anything independently. All they can do is to invite specialists from Russia, since there are a lot of specialists available in this area, or Chinese specialists, or they can just buy some technologies. The strong likelihood of a black market for nuclear technology being exploited for political goals, such as China's

geopolitical interests, is reason for concern. I think that this problem has to be discussed.

### **Garry Johnson**

It's been really interesting to me listening to the big boys talking about all this as a representative of a minor nuclear power. What was a minor nuclear power thinking of at the time? I had a job as a major-general in the Defence Staff at the time of the INF, and it was my responsibility to bring these in to the UK. At that time – it's a perception on attitudes I want to give you – it was seen in debate in the Ministry of Defence in the United Kingdom much more in political terms than military. This was seen as a demonstration of political will, and a demonstration of political will to spend what it was necessary to spend in the ultimate defence. The military arguments of the business were not very high, certainly not around Whitehall. By that stage, and it comes back to other things you gentlemen have said, it was becoming increasingly an unreal game. I stated yesterday that in the 1960s, and other people have said this – General Chalupa said it today – we really thought that we were going to have to fight on a nuclear battlefield. By the time the INF arrived, it was away in fairyland. We knew that we had enough destructive capability to make people think before they really did something where our national security was involved. We took it rather like car insurance. You don't pay more than you have to and you hope you never have to use it. For most of our military the nuclear business was the province of swivel-eyed fanatics. The rest of the military got on with their game. The army had understood that battlefield tactical nuclear weapons were not the game. They weren't going to be used for the reasons you've all stated, and there were a few people in the navy and the air force who were indulging in the inter-service battle as to who would carry the deterrent because that meant the budget. The budget was taken outside defence policy and planning. The modernisation of our weapons, the introduction of the submarines and the discussions with the United States about arms, etc., were taken outside the general military planning. To hear you gentlemen discussing the centrality of this issue to your plans is very interesting to



me from the point of view of one of the minor nations observing this around the edges

### **Jan Hoffenaar**

Now an input from a very small nation. I have a question on timing and war plans. We've just heard from both sides that both sides concluded at the end of the 1960s/1970s that the use of tactical nuclear weapons would also be catastrophic. My question to both sides, and let's begin with General Chalupa, is – we touched this topic earlier: When would you have asked for the release of tactical nuclear weapons in your war plan and in reality? I would like to ask the same to one of our Warsaw Pact people. At what point would the Warsaw Pact or the Soviet Union have started to use tactical nuclear weapons if it had come to war?

### **Leopold Chalupa**

I hope I can make a comment on INF later. I thought I had explained this. Of course, in principle, our intention was always to prevent a war by threatening the initial use of nuclear weapons, but with a flexible response concept in which INF played an important role. I would have asked either a regional corps commander or a regional commander. I think I can only describe it – I cannot give a time structure – and say that such a situation might conceivably have arisen if there had been a threat of a loss of our conventional defence as a result of a major breakthrough, with all our reserves committed, or with no more logistic capability available to continue a conventional defence. Our aim in defending was also to get the other side, if possible, to cease and to come to the table to negotiate. Wherever or whenever this would have happened, I can't describe in time, but the situation would be perhaps that all the air forces were grounded or the airfields destroyed. Then it could have been the case that I as a regional commander, maybe based on the estimate of a corps commander in his sector, would have gone forward to request the release of nuclear employment for the nuclear target list that we had prepared in peacetime. These would, of course, not have been floating targets on the battlefield, such as a brigade or a division, but very sensitive targets

might have been the reason to put forward such a request. I don't know whether Bernie Rogers, who was SACEUR in those days, would also have put a request forward to his authority or of course on the British side, but field weapons were more or less American weapons which we held in close custody. As the corps commander, my most sensitive point in Southern Germany was Günzburg with the United States nuclear depot, and we had just the guards outside. So I hope this is sufficient. I cannot of course describe it in detail in terms of time.

### Robert Legvold

Let me go through three documents that bear on all of what we have been talking about. Those of you who were on the inside can then say a bit more about what this represents. The first document is from 1969 on the Soviet side and therefore in the period that Vitalii has described in detail in terms of the modelling that they were doing. This is Marshall Zakharov's<sup>104</sup> report on a war game that was fought in October 1969.<sup>105</sup> I think the NATO side will be interested in how the war begins, but I won't take your time to go over that. The war begins on October 12 and on October 16 at 10.05, when the NATO powers have failed to maintain their defences forward, they deploy what are called here operational tactical nuclear weapons, and immediately the Eastern side in turn employs nuclear strikes, again of operational tactical nuclear means, against troops, airports, naval forces, and other objectives of the West. That's the summary. That's all that's said in this war game in October 1969.

The second document is the CIA assessment in January 1978 called "The balance of nuclear forces in Central Europe".<sup>106</sup> It says that in 1975, in response to congressional mandates, the secretary of defense submitted a report providing judgements on the purposes and capabilities of US nuclear forces deployed in Europe. It says that although tactical

104 Marshal Matvei V. Zakharov, Chief of General Staff and Deputy Minister of Defense of the Soviet Union (1964–1971).

105 See: Mastny and Byrne, *A Cardboard Castle?*, pp. 342–46. See also: <http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/colltopic.cfm?lng=en&id=21216&navinfo=15697>.

106 "The Balance of Nuclear Forces in Central Europe" (SR 78-10004), 1 January 1978, document available at <http://www.foia.cia.gov>.

nuclear forces cannot substitute for adequate conventional forces, they could temporarily affect the tactical situation and create a stalemate or NATO advantage that could be used to induce negotiations. Secondly, a nuclear strike by NATO to blunt a Warsaw Pact conventional attack that threatened to overwhelm NATO defences should clearly be limited and defensive in nature so as to reduce the risks of escalation. On the other hand, the attack should be delivered with sufficient shock and intensity to forcibly change the Warsaw Pact leaders' perceptions of the risks involved and create a situation conducive to negotiation. Then the report goes on to summarise US doctrine on the use of tactical nuclear weapons. The doctrine holds that the deliberate escalation of conflict in Europe could involve the limited use of nuclear weapons in any or all of the following ways: Firstly, use in a clearly defensive role, such as employing nuclear-armed Nike-Hercules missiles for air defence or atomic demolition munitions for area denial. Secondly, demonstrative use or launching a strike designed to convey resolve, but to minimise the risk of provoking an escalatory response. There are two more: selective nuclear strikes on interdiction targets and selective nuclear strikes against other suitable military targets. So this is the summary of what was doctrine in 1978. The question is how this actually affected the way you were thinking about war planning on the inside.

The final document is from 1981, and this is the secret operations plan for the V Army Corps that was approved in January 1981, adopted by the Department of the Army and adopted by NATO as of 1 January 1981.<sup>107</sup> It comes from East German intelligence because the document was sold to the East Germans, and what I'm going to read to you is the .... Bill's shaking his head – he can give you the details.

### **William Odom**

It was acquired by the Hungarians, given to the KGB, and then distributed to East Germany. A spy died in a Stuttgart jail.

107 See: Mastny and Byrne, *A Cardboard Castle?*, pp. 469–71. See also: <http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/colltopic.cfm?lng=en&cid=17214&navinfo=15697>.

## **Robert Legvold**

Bill was very much involved in figuring out how this happened, so that's why he knows the detail. But in any event, this is the operational plan for the V Army Corps, and that plan from January 1981 says the following: "Nuclear weapons are considered to be ..." – Vojtech, this is evidently the East German summary of it, because I take it that it was in German. What I'm reading is the East German interpretation of the document. I'm not looking at the document itself. The document itself is attached here. It's in German. So what's interesting is the way in which it gets reported, the way in which it is understood by the other side. These are the two pertinent paragraphs. "Nuclear weapons are considered to be a means of fire support (nuclear fire support). They are to be put into action by the air force, the artillery, and the engineers upon command or after the go ahead for nuclear weapons having been given, that is, the R hour. Particular attention is attached to nuclear mines (nuclear blocking ammunition) as an escalating element." Finally in this paragraph, the use of chemical agents is planned as a retaliatory measure following the first use of chemical agents by the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact. So in reading these three documents, I'd be interested in the degree to which it represented any kind of real-world thinking on your part if you were part of the military operation. The record of the way this was put into documents is fairly clear.

## **Aleksandr Liakhovskii**

A US medium-range missile system was deployed in Europe, and it was a strategic weapon. This weapon was able to hit the most important targets in the territory of the Soviet Union. The Soviet weapon that was deployed in Europe was not able to reach targets in the US. The Pershing missiles were able to reach the Ural Mountains in a very short period of time and strike targets there. Soviet missiles had to fly for a longer period of time in order to reach targets in the US. That is why we thought they had deployed these missiles with a strategic objective in mind. That is why I said that we could have positioned our missiles in Cuba, so that they would be close to the American targets. Do you see a parallel?

## Vitalii Tsygichko

Yes, I would like to mention that the Soviet Union never planned to launch the first nuclear strike under any circumstances. What was envisaged was a so-called launch-on-warning strike, in response to an attack by NATO. Provided that NATO used nuclear weapons, the Warsaw Pact countries would have launched a nuclear strike as well. For these purposes, each missile division had specially designated missile units, which were constantly in alert mode. It was planned that as soon as NATO used nuclear weapons, an immediate launch-on-warning strike would have ensued, excluding those mentioned by Robert. I think that the idea of employing selective strikes for deterrence purposes, as well as for encouraging negotiations was just a bluff. All our resources would have been used for retaliation, provided that our adversary had used nuclear weapons. Any action entails another action, and restrictions are automatically discarded. A killer, having killed once, has less inhibitions about doing so again, because the psychological barrier has already been breached. The same is true for nuclear weapons: to use nuclear weapons implies crossing a certain barrier, and subsequent thresholds are disregarded more readily. There is no guarantee how many weapons would be used once a nuclear attack is launched. Our concept anticipated that if NATO had used a nuclear weapon, we would have needed to launch a strike in response. However, we did not plan to use nuclear weapons first under any circumstances.

I would like to point out that many people fully understood that this idea of retaliation would result in a catastrophe. Among politicians as well as the military, there were a lot of crazy people who would not consider the consequences of a nuclear strike. They just wanted to respond to a certain action without dealing with the “cause and effect” problems. They were not seeking any reasonable explanations, but used one selective response to whatever an option was. I know many military people who look like normal people, but it was difficult to explain to them that waging nuclear war was not feasible. We had a lot of arguments in this respect. Unfortunately, as far as I know, there are a lot of stupid people both in NATO and our country.

## **Leopold Chalupa**

Well first of all, these comments were not in my defence plan, and I was corps commander in 1981.

## **Robert Legvold**

So Leopold, what does that then mean? How should we understand that?

## **Leopold Chalupa**

What I mean is, in our armed forces, nuclear missiles were never considered fire support. It was a totally different quality of war, and therefore nuclear weapons would not just be listed in the capabilities as fire support. Secondly, ADM – atomic demolition mines – I think it was addressed this morning to deny terrain to enemy forces. To list these as an initial use weapon was meant to indicate to the other side that although we use a defensive weapon at the beginning, you must know now we are also prepared and willing to escalate in a nuclear way if necessary. That was the intention. On INF, I would just like to make a comment on the nuclear intermediate weapon system. Of course from a European point of view, the 300 kilometres meant far more to me than maybe 300 kilometres on the other side. I would like to come back to Helmut Schmidt. Our military judgement in those days was with the stationing of the SS-20. There was a gap in our deterrent posture in the intermediate range area where we had interdiction, but so far only by air forces.

We had improved the shorter-range artillery with a 203-mm weapons system. We had the Honest John weapon system. We had the combat helicopters introduced as short-range fire support. You mentioned the air defence capability, including the Nikes, and we had combat aircraft especially developed for this support. Now from our military point of view, when we recommended equipping our infantry with Pershing and cruise missiles, we did not only think of the nuclear capability involved. We thought also of the conventional capability to interdict what we felt was one of the greatest threats in the case of aggression, and this was the

echelonment in depth or the possibility to relieve an attacking echelon by a new, fresh echelon. This was a great discussion in Germany in particular, and just for my friends to tell you the outcome, against all political resistance, especially by the Free Democratic Party of Foreign Minister Genscher, we went through with the Doppelbeschluss, the dual-track decision. This, of course, was a political offer: If you withdraw your SS-20 and do not deploy it forward, we can do the same. Minister Genscher was against it at that time. Two years later in 1982, after the government of Helmut Schmidt had lost a vote of confidence in the Bundestag and Helmut Kohl became the chancellor, surprisingly the Free Democrats and Foreign Minister Genscher remained in the government, we had a change of course from Social Democrats to the Christian Union, and they maintained this position of closing the gap of deterrence in this area.

### **William Smith**

Let me first answer your question about those documents, those US documents. Were they taken seriously and did they shape policy? The answer is yes. To me the interesting thing about those intelligence documents you read was that when Stansfield Turner was director of the Central Intelligence Agency, he began to put into intelligence documents what the US was going to do. He was told that that was not the job of intelligence people: "You tell us the intelligence, and we'll tell you the rest, and just stay out of this." So there was a big argument with the government about that. But the point is that these documents represent what United States thinking was at the time, and attention was paid to them.

A brief remark about the INF. Pershing II and the GLCMs were designed specifically not to reach the Soviet Union. We have heard here that the Soviets were worried about that. They never believed that, but we did everything we could to explain to the Soviets that the INF forces were for Eastern Europe and not against the Soviet Union. I just think it's important to remember that, because it's part of that dual-track decision on INF. One was that those missiles could not reach the Soviet Union.

My third point is that there is another area in which the Soviets and NATO agreed, and that was that, unless unusual circumstances occurred,

the Soviets did not intend to use nuclear weapons first in Europe. It was obvious to us why they did not, because they had an advantage in conventional forces, and therefore they could achieve their objectives using conventional forces, and nuclear forces were not necessary. One reason that NATO decided on a first-use policy was because the only way to prevent the Soviets from overrunning Europe was to express a determination to use nuclear weapons if necessary in the defence of Europe in the hope that that would deter the Soviet Union. But we both agreed that the Soviet Union was not likely to use nuclear weapons first because they wouldn't need to. They could achieve victory without.

### **Jan Folmer**

Just briefly to support mainly what General Chalupa already said and to state that in the Netherlands' planning for the 1<sup>st</sup> Netherlands Corps, nuclear artillery was viewed in quite a different way to what was expressed in the operational plan that you just read to us. In the 1980s, there was a growing reluctance towards the use of nuclear forces and nuclear means in the Netherlands, and there was a diminishing belief in their use as battlefield weapons at all. Therefore, our operations plans mentioned nuclear artillery. We had some, we had two or three howitzers with a dual capability, but that was about all. We had already abolished our Honest John by that time as being essentially a dirty weapon with its very large CEP.<sup>108</sup> So therefore, we viewed nuclear means formally as a means of last resort. We adhered to them formally, but internally, our belief in their usefulness had very much diminished by that time.

### **Jan Hoffenaar**

I was wondering if we could conclude from what has been said about the retaliatory strike by the Warsaw Pact against the first use by NATO, also on the tactical level, that flexible response was a non-usable strategy in the end.

108 Circular Error Probable: the radius of a circle in which a projectile will land at least 50 per cent of the time.



**Unidentifiable Russian Speaker**

Show the white flag then?

**Unidentifiable Russian Speaker**

Well, the escalation process wouldn't have worked.

**Unidentifiable Russian Speaker**

We don't know that.

**Leopold Chalupa**

You don't know that. I could say it has worked, because we had an end to the Cold War without a Hot War. So my friends here will agree with me that I have to convince them that it worked, because why then has everything changed on your side while we have remained the same? We did not want to fight a war. We wanted to prevent a war. This was our task and our mission, and I feel we were successful.

**Jan Hoffenaar**

This was a provocative question.

**Robert Legvold**

Listen folks, listen. Bill you've got a very short rejoinder ...

**William Odom**

Concerning this question of, what do you do if you have to fire the weapon? I understand all your political arguments about deterrence, but I want to shoot at tactical forces. I think the Soviet approach was much more sensible than ours. You see, this attitude I ran into in the American system is insane. Do you want to leave the president with no choice but to blow up half the world? No, if he has to fire, let's have him fire at something that will have a military effect. This is not a firecracker for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July or for celebration. You want to be serious with it. So there is a

clash of intellectual perspectives on this that's been missed, and I realise there is tension between Europe and the US on this, but there is also a tension within the US as to what the Strategic Air Command would do and what maybe we wanted to achieve operationally.

### **Vitalii Tsygichko**

When you consider such situations, please keep in mind that, although we planned operations with the use of nuclear weapons in case of a first strike from the West, nobody seriously believed that such a war could take place. It was like a confrontation, a struggle of ideas, and a kind of intellectual competition, because everybody knew what would happen if such actions were undertaken in reality. There were “hawks” on all sides, but the common sense of many people helped to avoid a serious conflict in Europe. The reason why it did not occur was not just because you planned for retaliation, and because we were afraid of such retaliation, but also due to an awareness of the dangerous consequences of such a conflict. This was also a kind of a containment factor, the same as in the nuclear strategic forces.

## **Seventh working session**

### **Robert Legvold**

The seventh session on the agenda is to recap, and then think about and review the earlier discussion. We want to do that in the context of the roundup of the results and that is, in that eighth session, to talk about what one needs to do further in order to understand this period. What kinds of study, what kinds of materials, what kinds of topics ought to be addressed if the things we've talked about over the last two days are to be elaborated and understood more thoroughly? I think we want to put those two things together, and I would suggest that the way we think about this is, if we had the luxury of planning a follow-on conference to this conference, what is it that we would want its agenda to be? What

topics still need to be explored? Or on those topics which we have talked about, what more do we need in order to proceed?

Secondly, informally, one of the ideas that I hear a number of people proposing, apart from this conference and its agenda, is the idea of having work done on the flanks, particularly on the northern flank, and to address that as a separate topic. There may even be some interest in looking at the southern flank. I think that's an alternative way of thinking about follow-on work in this area, but before discussing that, or any other ideas that you may have, the first question we want to ask is, given the points that have been made at this meeting and the issues that have been explored at this meeting, what more do we need to understand? In the eighth session, this was put in terms of aspects of war plans, logistics, force development, and command and control. Are these the subjects that one really wants to push further, or are there other dimensions that we simply haven't talked about at this meeting that you would be interested in, and particularly in this case now the historians, the military historians, what issues need to be addressed in the future?

The final point that I would make on this score is that, for the most part, unlike the other Cold War history projects I have been involved with, we are confronted with a relative dearth of documents and documentation. You have not been working from documents. I brought a few that are scattered, but what has made the other projects particularly successful in my experience is when you not only bring your memories and knowledge of what you lived through, but where you can look again at the documents. One of the problems is how we get them and that's a problem on both sides, both the case of the United States – I don't know about NATO broadly – and on the Russian/Soviet side as well. So that's a practical matter, but from my previous experience, one of the things I would say to you is: I don't think there's much value in taking the topics of this conference and trying to push them further unless it's going to come with documentation.

## **William Odom**

Because we on the American side initiated this, I'd like to hear a reaction from the Russians, specifically on two points. Have you learned anything here that made it worth you coming? And what more what you really like to know? With some specific examples if that's possible.

## **Svetlana Savranskaya**

It was a revelation to me that, looking at all the documents that are available on the Soviet side, the deployment of Pershings was seen as a turning point specifically because it was believed that they could reach Soviet territory. The whole timing changed as a result, so if the American side made the information available that they were designed so as not to reach the Soviet side, was there any debate on that in the Soviet Union? Were the Soviet leaders aware or were they not aware, and if they were was the decision made not to treat them as shorter-range, and why were they perceived as so threatening?

## **Vojtech Mastny**

My question has to do with the previous period, so I wouldn't necessarily expect our Russian colleagues to be informed about it, but if they are, I would be interested in their views. It has to do with the operations in 1968, the intervention in Czechoslovakia, and the possibility of eliciting some sort of hostile reaction by NATO. There's scattered evidence of varying quality by people who claim to have been present within the Soviet forces in 1968, and according to some of these testimonies, the possibility of an encounter with NATO was considered seriously. That is to say that the advancing troops would be moving towards the West German border and that maybe there would be some NATO action and the two forces would meet each other. In that case, supposedly, the Soviet forces were under orders not to fire and to consult the political leadership about what to do. So my question is, to your knowledge, is there anything of substance in this sort of planning, taking into account the possibility

of an encounter with NATO in that part of Central Europe during the intervention in Czechoslovakia?

### **William Smith**

You asked what we had learned that was most surprising. I had always thought that the Soviet Union preferred to keep any war in Europe limited to Europe, to Western Europe and Eastern Europe, where the United States and the Soviet Union would not be attacked. I thought that the Soviet Union, remembering the destruction it suffered in World War II, was very determined not to be subjected to that again, and therefore wanted to keep the war limited to Eastern and Western Europe. If I understood correctly, what the Soviet Union wanted was the war to expand to include both the United States and the Soviet Union, which meant that both the United States and the Soviet Union would suffer destruction, rather than avoiding destruction by limiting the war to Western and Eastern Europe. Did I understand that correctly, that the Soviets sought to expand the war?

### **Leopold Chalupa**

I would first like to give a brief answer to your question because the career of one of my predecessors as corps commander ended in 1968, or shortly after, because he had deployed 2<sup>nd</sup> German Corps ground forces along the border prematurely without any alert system measure, and this was not accepted by the politicians. It caused a lot of unrest, so the threat assessment as far as our higher politicians were concerned was that we did not expect military action resulting from this.

Concerning what we should look at further, I would say that the greatest surprise for me was that my friends, if I may call you such, on the other side had such a threat assessment of NATO and were expecting possibly a military aggression by NATO, even perhaps preceded by a nuclear initial use. This was new to me. I was not aware that the other side would have assessed NATO as the threat. Consequently, the question that would need further study or an answer is: What then were the

reasons for the peaceful end to the Cold War? From the military and the political view of the Warsaw Pact, why did this Cold War end with all the subsequent changes in Eastern Europe? We had no NATO expansion. We only accepted those countries which came to NATO and asked to become members: the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland in 1999. So with the capabilities we discussed, with all the military planning, the improvements in INF, and the intermediate-range interdiction capabilities we have talked about – which were all, from my point of view, means to keep our deterrence credible – why did we witness a peaceful end to the Cold War? And as a German, I might add, also the peaceful reunification of my country.

### **Robert Legvold**

Leopold's question about why and how did the Cold War end peacefully is premised on a question that's been here since the beginning of the meeting. Remember on the list of questions that Neal prepared, that you had the first day, was the question of whether the Warsaw Pact leadership and the Soviet leadership understood that NATO was postured only defensively, and we've come back to that time and again. Let me sharpen the question by going back to the document I cited before, which was this 1981 Oplan for the V US Army Corps.<sup>109</sup> I read only a paragraph. The summary that was prepared of this, not merely the document, but the summary, was a very accurate representation of what NATO's posture was, and demonstrates that it was a defensive posture. As Bill said, after the Hungarians got the document, it went to the KGB. Did this kind of thing, combined with the intelligence within the Warsaw Pact, not underscore or not lead people to understand the way in which NATO was actually postured?

### **Vitalii Tsygichko**

First of all, I want to answer a question of my neighbour and explain my point of view in terms of whether or not the Soviet Union wanted to

109 See footnote 107.

expand a nuclear conflict, for example, in case of one preventive strike. First of all, this concept of a counter-strike was propagandistic in nature and aimed at containment. Let me assure you that if everybody had adhered to this concept, people would not have known about its existence. However, it was open to the public, and it was one of the deterrent factors, and it was the same thing as NATO used. I personally participated in research where we dealt with the elaboration of a cessation mechanism at the initial stage of a conflict in order to prevent further escalation. By the end of the 1960s and in the 1970s, everybody was aware not only of the consequences of an exchange of nuclear strikes, but also of the consequences of operations as such. I believe that both political aspects and internal political aspects are of big importance. The point was that NATO, in the perception of a Soviet citizen, had to be regarded as an enemy all the time. In such circumstances, it was easy to justify any armament and arms race. Internal political goals were being pursued, meaning the unity of society against an external enemy, the fight for peace, and other pacifistic ideas – this was the internal “background” that was used for propagating such plans.

In fact, all options of ceasing hostilities were considered. As a matter of fact, although the Soviet Union had plans for military operations, it never planned for a serious “battle” with NATO at any period of its existence, and there were no such political decisions and/or desires. These two things must be differentiated and understood clearly – military planning as such is one thing, and we, as the military, dealt with it, and researched the use and impact of nuclear weapons – but in reality, the Soviet leadership did not take the idea of a war in Europe seriously. This is a very important aspect in order to understand the events of that time.

One very interesting issue about the outcome of the Cold War has been raised here, and I want to touch on the underlying reason. The internal political situation in Russia played a significant role in this process. Our political elite decided that it was better to live in a capitalist society, and that was it. In fact, we have other issues to consider in this respect: how it happened, and why this process has harmed national interests. In principle, the political restructuring in our country drastically changed our attitude toward NATO and the West.

## **Vojtech Mastny**

A brief answer to the question that General Chalupa raised, as to why the Soviets and the Warsaw Pact regarded NATO as aggressive although they knew what the plans were. In the same collection of documents that we published from the Warsaw Pact archives of Eastern European countries, there's an interesting document from the late 1950s where Marshal Konev, at that time the supreme commander of the Warsaw Pact, addresses that question at the end of the manoeuvres, at the briefing of the officers, so it is a closed meeting.<sup>110</sup> He says, yes, the NATO plans are defensive. They are defensive because they're based on the wrong assumption that we are aggressive, whereas we must act on the right assumption that NATO is aggressive. How can this be squared out? My explanation is that we have to consider the ideological factors. NATO is aggressive by definition, because it is an alliance of capitalist countries and thus must be aggressive. This has nothing to do with military plans; it has to do with deeper intentions.

## **Robert Legvold**

That is an astute point, Vojtech.

## **Aleksandr Liakhovskii**

I want to talk about some things. I want to address the issue of why we did not trust NATO and the fact that it was not just a defensive bloc without any plans of aggression. I think that it was due to the fact that NATO possessed more economic potential and power than the Warsaw Pact. It was hard to believe that this organization, which was much more powerful in terms of its potential, had only defensive plans. We simply did not believe that. As for the Warsaw Pact, it neither planned for aggression nor possessed any operational plans to initiate an aggression. Never. We only planned for a response, and we believed that offensive operations

110 Marshal Ivan Konev's Analysis of a Czechoslovak Army Operational Exercise, 31 March – 7 April 1959. See: Mastny and Byrne, *A Cardboard Castle?*, pp. 97–99. See also: <http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/colltopic.cfm?lng=en&cid=20930&navinfo=15697>.



were the most efficient method of responding for the purposes of the achievement of an ultimate goal. Please understand that it is erroneous to conclude that the Warsaw Pact had aggressive intentions based on the fact that we had offensive plans, at a time when NATO did not possess any plans of advance; on the contrary, our plans should be viewed just as a means for the achievement of our ultimate goals. We looked at our experiences of the Second World War, where all the goals were achieved via offensive operations. We never had a scenario to start a war; this was never in our mind at all.

I wanted to talk about the issue regarding Czechoslovakia in 1968. I was a lieutenant and platoon commander in 1968. Right after I finished military school, I was sent to Czechoslovakia. At my level of rank at that time, we were told that we had to expect some reactions from NATO to our actions. Moreover, maybe for propagandistic purposes, they told us that due our timely actions, we had managed to pre-empt NATO by a couple of days or hours, since NATO also had plans to send troops to Czechoslovakia. In fact, in order to carry out this operation, we had a big group of troops, approximately 25 divisions, because we were expecting some action from NATO's side. Had they undertaken military operations, we were ready to rebuff them and deal with the goals that our leadership had set forth for us. More in-depth research would be required in this respect to avoid speculation.

### **Robert Legvold**

Earlier, when I cited the Zapad wargame of October 1969, the scenario for it makes sense.<sup>111</sup> The scenario was for increased tension, either of the kind around the Berlin Crisis from 1958 to 1962, or potentially August 1968 in Czechoslovakia, in which you essentially get to the war in the way you did in July and August, that is through mobilisation. It starts with the West when NATO goes on alert, and then as the first signal runs an exercise, it looks like the Russian word used there is Autumn – I presume

111 See p. 86.

you used to run exercises called Autumn<sup>112</sup> – and at that point the Russians, or the Warsaw Pact, go on alert in response to that step, but the trigger is when the West begins to reinforce by bringing the American side over and the British troops on line, and then it simply goes forward. So that's how they envisaged getting to something like this.

### **Petr Luňák**

Just one comment and one question. The comment: Really, ideology is something that all war plans were based on, and all documents. Remember from the Czechoslovak plans and documents in the 1950s, the conclusion always was that the West was not planning to attack us for the time being, because they do not have enough ground troops to do it. But this is only a temporary solution, because the balance will change and we will have to be ready. What is interesting is that in the middle of the 1960s, suddenly the conclusion is somewhat different. Suddenly the Soviet generals start saying, well the West can attack any time without any warning, and this was precisely after Khrushchev was toppled. The top military brass probably then got enough control to draft the plans that they liked. What is interesting here is that the political détente is not reflected in the war planning of the Warsaw Pact, which I think is a fascinating fact in itself.

My question relates back to our discussion this morning when General Liakhovskii mentioned the fact that if NATO and the West had used nuclear weapons, the East would immediately have used its nuclear weapons, at least in Europe. We don't know about the strategic level, but probably that also. My impression from the Czechoslovak documents in the 1970s and the 1980s is that there was something that could be called an option of limited nuclear strikes, because if you look at the numbers of weapons earmarked for the first strike and then for the next strike, the proportion is actually declining. It was in the plan of 1986, if I remember

112 See: speech by Marshal Grechko at the "Zapad" Exercise, 16 October 1969 (Mastny and Byrne, *A Cardboard Castle?*, pp. 342–46; see also: <http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/colltopic.cfm?lng=en&id=21216&navinfo=15697>).

correctly, and that was before the Gorbachev reversal actually.<sup>113</sup> The proportion of nuclear weapons for the first strike was lower proportionally than in the late 1970s. So my question to our Warsaw Pact colleagues would be whether a concept something like that of limited nuclear strikes appeared in the thinking of the second half of the 1980s.

### Garry Johnson

Speaking as someone who is not a graduate of the college of nuclear theology, the thing that has really struck me today is all the debate and the discussion about the nuclear issue, and in particular, how similar the attitudes of both sides were as well as how both sides seem to have come to an understanding at roughly the same period that these weapons did not possess the degree of military utility that they were thought to possess at the start of the Cold War. Despite the nuances on either side, that seems to have been one thing that comes out, and about the time that that realisation comes, there is the inability to get off the treadmill. There are so many lock-ins on both sides, so many vested interests, so much economic development on both sides that the stockpile of these things that you're not going to use keeps on going up. The whole thing then develops the unreality that both sides now acknowledge, and both sides are coming to the conclusion round this table that we weren't going to start this crazy game. My deduction from that is that it was because there were two players in this game. You didn't put it to your Warsaw Pact allies. We were bit players. The French were mavericks. It was a thing between two big powers and that produced a sort of terrible stability that had its own value.

That brings me to my second point, what would I like to see next? Military men are always accused of planning for the last war, but in fact I don't think we do. I think we look at history and ask what lessons we have learned. If you're coming to the next decade, we are going away from that stability of having two major players to a fragmentation of power,

113 Outline of a Czechoslovak Command Post Exercise, 27–28 January 1987. See: Mastny and Byrne, *A Cardboard Castle?*, pp. 551–53. See also: <http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/colltopic.cfm?lng=en&id=21269&navinfo=15697>.

and there is another nuance to that, which I pick up today, and that is that in the previous period, the mental and moral approach to this thing was roughly the same: This would be a terrible human disaster. If you're looking to the spread of this weaponry now into cultures which do not necessarily see conflict as a terrible thing, but see conflict and even death as something to be desired, then that stability which was there before becomes non-evident in the future, and it therefore becomes more terrible. So is there anything we could do on the lessons learned out of this that would help us in the next decade?

### **Ross Johnson**

I have three suggestions as to issues that might deserve further discussion in a subsequent session, especially if we had some texts and documents. Some of them we have, but we just don't have them here. Others we still need to get. The first issue has to do with mutual perceptions and action/reaction relationships. I'm thinking in particular of the issue we talked about yesterday of the changes in Europe and the European theatre after the mid-1970s. The issue here is what drives force posture and what drives weapons development. Is it appraisal of what's happening on the other side, or is it a perception of the discussion taking place on the other side? It can be argued that the AirLand Battle and the follow-on forces attack developments impressed people more in the East than the West and caused some reactions before capabilities were in existence. It could perhaps be argued on the other side that in NATO, there was an overreaction to some of the Soviet discussion from Ogarkov and others about the third revolution in military science and so on in advance of any capabilities to implement such concepts. So again, perhaps we require some further discussion of this kind of issue of what perceptions are based on and what does drive force posture. That's the first issue.

The second issue might be some attention to the role of intelligence and intelligence operations in these kinds of issues. No side will praise spying by the other side. On the other hand, it's argued by some of the spies that their work contributed to transparency and therefore contributed to stability. Do we think there's any merit to any of that argument?

We've talked here today about evidently fairly accurate transmission of some of the Western operational plans to the East, and yet it didn't seem to affect perceptions. Somehow, there seems to have been the belief on the Warsaw Pact side that there was another plan someplace else that they didn't have yet, or that a new plan would be created very quickly if need be, or whatever. So the intelligence issue is number two.

The third issue, which is quite different, is the question of the use of military force within one of the blocs, within the Warsaw Pact, and back to the issue of what a military operation in Poland would have looked like in 1980/1981 if there had been a political decision to do that, and whether such an operation would have looked like Czechoslovakia in 1968 or whether it would have been something quite different.

### **Jan Folmer**

I would like to say a few words about what has struck me at this conference, and I will do so by first saying that all military leaders and military planners, etc., at some time will have said to their political masters that you should not plan on intentions, but rather on capabilities. Those are words that to my mind over the years have led to some self-fulfilling prophecies. Our planning, based on those capabilities as we saw them, has led to a perception of our possible opponents, and that I think is something that is true for both sides, and this is a perception that has stood regardless of the changes in the world and the changes in the intentions that could be seen, but were not perceived and were not taken into account. That led, I think, to a relative rigidity of military planning over these periods. Of course it has its merits, but I think that a bit more curiosity and a bit more steering of the intelligence would have helped in this field.

Unknowingly and possibly unwillingly, Dr Cirillo gave an example of this steady perception when he talked about the Netherlands Armed Forces and claimed that over the weekend, they were less present than others. That is definitely not true. He also said that it had something to do with their overtime pay. This story is an old one. We could do everything to disprove it in the annual mobilisation exercises we held at the weekend, but this story stands until this day. I would just like to give that

as an example of the firm perceptions that have led our planning, and that maybe we should learn a little bit about flexibility from that.

### **Robert Legvold**

General Folmer, I think that's a useful exhortation but it's also rather discouraging because if false perceptions are that difficult to overcome among friends, how are they to be between enemies?

### **William Odom**

What we've learned here is that you had at least two or three big force developments in the Warsaw Pact and NATO. You had the initial 1950s reaction to the appearance of nuclear weapons. We had one sort of reaction and then backed off from it and changed, then the Soviets and the Warsaw Pact had a longer, much steadier force development. Then we had a new technology revolution, and we set off another one. I think that focusing on the strategies of force building, back and forth, would be an interesting new cut at this whole business. We have been looking at operational plans primarily, and those of us who have served in the Pentagon know that most of the time in the military services, you're not thinking about contemporary plans. You're thinking about how to spend the money for the plans five or ten years from now. So you've got several levels of strategy going on, and I think it would be hard to find a period of military history where you had such a comprehensive development in the competitive sense as this.

I would think that if I were a Russian officer, I would want to see this catalogued in history, because you achieved some remarkable force development goals. I watched you very closely, and I must say I was very impressed by how you dealt with lots of short-term things. For instance, you didn't have the technical cultural level in your enlisted personnel that we did in the West, but you designed systems that very effectively compensated for that. You designed doctrines that were very rigid at the technical level, which gave you much more flexibility at the operational level. I just see very many things in here that if I were a Russian officer, a former Soviet officer, I would want to see military historians have a clear

record of. I think the US Army, from which I come, has never gone to war prepared except twice: against Iraq in Kuwait and against Iraq this time, though we were only half prepared this time. But normally, we're going to war at a huge disadvantage as in World War I, World War II, etc. Even the Spanish-American war<sup>114</sup> was an absolute disaster. This last period from after Vietnam to the 1980s, I think from an American point of view, would be a very interesting one to have better understood by military historians. That's a long-winded way to explain, but I think you've got the idea of a different cut at the same thing, moving from battlefield operations back to force development.

### Leopold Chalupa

Turning back to our purpose here, which is to discuss our military plans on the basis of the military assessments that we had at the time, of course it's interesting and a surprise that neither side, as I would take it away from here, had aggressive intentions. The question then is, were our military assessments, which we of course gave to our political masters, so very wrong, or were they not taken into consideration by the political masters? Because the question would be, if there are two opponents who do not have aggressive intentions against each other, why then spend such a tremendous amount of money on force development, on modernisation, and on mechanisation? And this would be the question, have we in the military done something wrong because we gave a wrong assessment of our opposing side? And had this been different, and my friends here allow me to say if 1953 had been different, and if the Eastern part of Germany had been given the freedom to choose their own structure, whatever they had in mind, and in 1956 in Hungary and in 1968, why did we not come to some peaceful terms of cooperation and get together and avoid this discussion on intermediate, short-range, strategic capabilities etc.? So my question would be: Did the military do something wrong in

114 The Spanish-American War (April–August 1898) was an armed military conflict between Spain and the United States over Spain's remaining overseas territories in the Caribbean and the Pacific.

their estimates to advise the politicians as to the action or decision they should take?

### Robert Legvold

The military, when they responded to their political bosses, always did so in terms of the capability of the other side and not the intention. That was something that was of course echoed in civilian circles. I used to hear it all the time in the US, in the 1970s particularly. But I think there's a fundamental problem when you introduce the broader context, because the politicians, the national leaders, read back into whatever information you would give them on the military balance, the military situation, in the context of their judgement of the other side's foreign policy behaviour in thinking about national security. So even if you were to create a nuanced and balanced integrated assessment that was based on the capability and your understanding of intentions in terms of the military balance, the national leadership is always going to interpret that in the context of how they see the foreign policy behaviour of the other country.

So in the 1970s, for example, the US administration increasingly was focusing on what they thought was the Soviet and Cuban role in Angola, in the Horn of Africa, and in Shaba too, in what Bill Odom's boss used to call the arc of crisis, and that affected the way in which they interpreted whatever they were hearing about the state of the military balance. It probably affected what Bill regards as an irrational decision on INF and a lot of other things. I think that's very hard to control, and I know the same thing was happening on the Soviet side. You've got it in the memoirs of a number of people who participated, including Cherniaev's memoirs,<sup>115</sup> Dobrynin's memoirs,<sup>116</sup> and so on. So I think this is a very difficult problem.

115 Anatolii S. Cherniaev (Gorbachev's senior foreign policy aide). Anatoly S. Chernyaev, *My Six Years with Gorbachev: Notes from a Diary* (State College: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000). See also: *The Diary of Anatoly Chernyaev: Former Top Soviet Adviser's Journal Chronicles Final Years of the Cold War*, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB192/index.htm>.

116 Anatolii F. Dobrynin, *In Confidence: Moscow's Ambassador to Six Cold War Presidents* (New York: Random House, 1995).



However, it leads to another point I would make, and that is the notion that if the military were responsible for controlling the relationship in terms of national security, including arms control, whether it was mutual balanced force reduction talks or INF talks or Stockholm or the SALT negotiations, whether they in fact would have manifested this kind of restraint and realisation of the impossibility of nuclear war. Because the truth of the matter is, at critical points, major obstacles to arms control came from the military leadership. Grechko was in opposition to many of the steps that the political leadership wanted to take on SALT. At the end of the Cold War, it was Weinberger and the Joint Chiefs of Staff who were the most resistant to proposals that George Shultz<sup>117</sup> and others in the Reagan administration were prepared to make in response to the Gorbachev initiatives. So I'm not entirely persuaded that the senior military leadership would have behaved with still greater restraint than the political leadership when it comes to managing the mutual security relationship.

### **Vitalii Tsygichko**

I agree with the analysis you have presented; however, the situation in the Soviet Union was different from what it was in the West. I just heard someone say that Soviet generals talked openly about some things. In the Soviet Union, a general had no right to say anything about political matters, especially about any plans or intentions, or to make any statements of a political nature. Today, such things happen sometimes as well, but at that time, it was not possible for the military to make any comments and statements at all; therefore, it is simply wrong to refer to any statements of the military.

In reality, the relationship between the political authorities and the army is a separate issue, which is related to the protection of national interests. We need to take into account that in the Soviet Union, the army leadership and the intelligence service had a very strong impact on the assessment and understanding of any situation. The army, as a sepa-

117 George P. Shultz, US Secretary of State (1982–1989).

rate institution of the government, has been striving for expansion and a bigger military budget. For this purpose, they aimed to create more assignments for themselves; beside, there was so much fight in terms of funding, meaning even within the army, different branches of the armed forces competed for a bigger portion of funds, etc. The political and economic structure of the country contributed to this process, since there was practically no competition in reality. Sometimes, various institutions dealing with the development of military technology came up with different systems of weapons, but it was not real competition.

The structure of the armed forces was in accordance with the general and political plans; the political leadership made decisions practically on all issues, and the leadership was guided by ideological dogmas. At one time, I worked very closely with the Military Department of the Central Committee. I should say that, as professionals, they were not bad: they had a good understanding of military problems. However, most of the time, purely due to the ideological motives, they would try to disregard the findings and expert opinions of the military scientists, which were even supported by the General Staff Headquarters.

I want to answer your question about lobbying. Military and industrial lobbying never stopped, and it had an enormous impact on many areas. The image of NATO and the US as the enemy was used in the political discourse to unite the people in their struggle for peace and against the external enemy. This facilitated the continuation of the arms race, which they were not able to stop. Everyone was aware of the consequences of shutting down military production: massive unemployment and economic crises would have ensued immediately. The whole process was a vicious circle that was difficult to break. Factually, perestroika showed to us that in case of abrupt measures, the country would face a collapse of the economy; this is what actually happened, and even now, we still are suffering from the consequences. The political leadership determined many aspects of military planning such as goals and assignments; unfortunately, they did not pay much attention to the actual balance of forces and the goals of our adversaries. Most of the time, decisions were made in line with ideological goals. If anybody dared to object at the minister's level, provided that he was with the Politburo, he could have been easily fired.

For example, Mr. Ogarkov expressed his personal opinion, and you know what happened to him afterwards.<sup>118</sup> The internal political situation, the hierarchy of power, and the role of the military in the decision-making process must be clearly understood. Without in-depth understanding of the whole process, it is not possible to understand many of the decisions made in the Soviet Union. For example, the development of arms and military equipment, as well as military construction were determined not only by the real needs and threats, but also by the efforts of the air force lobbyists. The same things are happening now as well, maybe not to the same extent, but they still happen.

We have been talking about the role of the intelligence services. I would like to say that the role of the intelligence services has always been important, because the leadership relied on their reports. We had several secret services, and of course, sometimes their analyses did not agree with one another. Information that was in line with the ideological framework was accepted more easily. I used to be a part of the group that was involved in the preparation of reports from the Main Intelligence Department. It was in 1979, and we needed to issue a report on options concerning the introduction of our armed forces into Afghanistan. The report had to be compiled very quickly. But I think that not only we were involved, but the KGB as well. We had academics dealing with Asian studies, very serious people who studied these countries. I worked on calculations of options of the possible introduction of forces and the consequences of the armed conflicts, etc. In our report, we mentioned that Socialism would never work in this Muslim country, because the mentality of this country's population was very similar to that of a society of the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> century. We used the example of England's attempt to invade Afghanistan and its outcome: both expeditions resulted in total failure. The second expedition had tragic consequences. The British army of 25,000 soldiers had been disarmed and was held captive. Then, the British queen requested that the Afghan king release the captives, and

118 Marshal Ogarkov stressed the impact of new technologies. In 1984 he was fired by General Secretary Konstantin Chernenko because of his advocacy of reduced spending on consumer goods and increased spending on weapons research and development.

committed herself to non-interference in Afghan affairs. The captives were released, but the Afghan people killed all of them on their retreat. I must say that people both in our office and the General Staff Headquarters had a perfect understanding of the situation, but there was another assessment that changed our point of view.

We had mentioned repeatedly that it was not the right thing to do, and we offered a solution. In Afghanistan, the royal family consisted of at least 100 people. We wanted to find a pro-Soviet person (there were a lot of such people) and bring him to power with our help via the military and economic instruments. Also, we warned everybody about a potential negative development of the events. And then, our boss grabbed the papers and went to the Central Committee. We were asked to wait. When our boss came back, his face was red, and he said to us: "You guys got me into trouble." Instead of receiving a medal, he was reprimanded. This happened because the Politburo was convinced that the KGB's report complied with the ideological principles of the leadership of our country. It was the intention of the Politburo to liberate the Afghan people and direct the country towards Socialist progress. All further events developed in accordance with these ideological tunes. Nobody wanted to see the reality. Now, everyone knows how it all ended.

The same kind of scenario occurred when the Americans invaded Vietnam. These stories are similar in terms of their endings and consequences. The same thing is happening in Iraq now. A month before the Americans began their operation in Iraq, I gave an interview to one of the Moscow radio stations, and I was asked: "What results and consequences can we expect from the American invasion of Iraq?" My answer was that the Iraqi army would be defeated within a month and that a military victory would be won. I also predicted a guerrilla war and a civil war, bearing in mind all these lessons of the conflicts in the Middle East, as well as the mentality of the peoples of the East. I was aware that their inter-communal war had been lasting almost forever, and had been stopped for some time because a dictator suppressed all the fights in a very cruel manner. You know what happened after the dictator was gone. Unfortunately, I do not know what will happen next. Before, the

situation was more or less clear, but now, it is not clear at all. Intelligence is very important.

Of course, we are all educated people, and we know how to undertake operations; however, we still keep making the same mistakes and do not anticipate possible serious consequences, focusing instead on short-term goals. I think such an attitude is a big political, not military, mistake. The military does not make political decisions, but politicians leave the military vulnerable. I have heard a lot here to the effect that the military people were guilty of something in one case or another. Nothing of this kind! In the Soviet Union, politics and ideology determined everything, and I believe that lack of understanding of this issue may result in similar situations. In other words, the situation was such and such, but you did that and that! Such things happened because we were obliged to do things in a certain way due to ideology, without taking the actual balance of forces and the reality into account.

I think that ideology played a significant role in the Soviet Union, but it plays a huge role in the US as well. Look at the example of Iraq. One of the ways to preserve stability in that country would have been to keep the armed forces in place there. They surrendered although the armed forces were very well organized and well-trained, and had gained experience in the war with Iran. Personally, I used to know many Iraqi officers, and they were very commendable people. They were Ba'ath party members, and it was the perception of this party as an enemy that prompted the disbanding of the army. As a result, there was no force that could have controlled the situation in the country. Now, such forces are being established, but it costs a lot of effort and money, and they are not always effective. Of course, Afghanistan is not my area of expertise, but we have someone here who has dealt with these issues in depth. He can tell you about obstacles that impeded the fulfilment of our tasks with regard to the establishment of peace in Afghanistan.

## Robert Legvold

There have been several occasions when military leaders in the Soviet Union, and subsequently in Russia, and on the US side have objected to the use of force. The records show that in December 1979, Marshall Ogarkov and General Varennikov<sup>119</sup> resisted the decision to use military force and intervene in Afghanistan, which led to a direct confrontation with Minister of Defence Ustinov.<sup>120</sup> The same thing happened on the eve of the war in Chechnya in 1994,<sup>121</sup> when Grachev, the minister of defence, a professional military man, was resisted by others in the military. There are signs that General Shinseki<sup>122</sup> disagreed with the way in which Rumsfeld<sup>123</sup> and others were planning the Iraq War<sup>124</sup> in our case. The interesting question, I think, is twofold, maybe with a straightforward answer during the period we're looking at. Was there any point, I assume not, when military leadership at that level, that is the chairman of the General Staff or the Joint Chiefs of Staff, or any other level would have been prepared to exercise the same kind of objection? I assume that we never got close to a point where that would have happened. One of the interesting questions is why not.

But the other question is twofold. What is it that a Marshal Ogarkov knows about the whole complex of intelligence and the military process under him that leads him to say "don't do this" when a minister of defence says "we going to do this"? What leads that entire military establishment to reach that kind of a decision? The more difficult question is, what happens in an environment like the Iraq War, where it appears that the people who are in the key positions in the Joint Chiefs and elsewhere essentially accepted the decision of the civilians, Rumsfeld and the rest of them, even though there were plenty of military on the outside who

119 Valentin I. Varennikov, deputy head of the Soviet General Staff (1979–1984).

120 See: [http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic\\_id=1409&fuseaction=va2.document&idntifier=5034DFEE-96B6-175C-97570BBAF1C0AF3F&sort=Subject&item=Varennikov](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=1409&fuseaction=va2.document&idntifier=5034DFEE-96B6-175C-97570BBAF1C0AF3F&sort=Subject&item=Varennikov).

121 The First Chechen War, between the forces of the Russian Federation and the dissident Chechen Republic (1994–1996).

122 General Eric K. Shinseki, Chief of Staff of the United States Army (1999–2003).

123 Donald H. Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense of the United States (2001–2006).

124 The Iraq War (the Second Gulf War) started on 20 March 2003 with the US-led invasion of Iraq.

thought it was a mistake. I don't know how many of you followed General Odom's position on the war, but it's well known in the United States because he's been on television expressing it. From the very beginning, he thought that this was an idiotic move, and he said it in that language, and he's been arguing that we ought to get out of that war as quickly as possible. He began saying get out of that war about a year and a half ago, maybe two years ago. This is a professional military person, so how is it that Richard Myers<sup>125</sup> and all those other people end up simply signing onto the thing in this context?

### **Aleksandr Liakhovskii**

I would like to add to what Vitalii just mentioned in response to General Chalupa's comment when he said that neither side wanted to attack, but confrontations still take place. At that time we had two political systems: Capitalism and Socialism. Each of the systems was supported by their ideologies, and both sides intended to demonstrate the superiority of their system over the other. This was the key aspect. As you remember, in light of the principles of the Socialist system, which had been developed by Vladimir Ilich Lenin, the capitalist system was viewed as wrong and unfair. That is why this ideological confrontation was going on. Politics were conducted in accordance with these principles, and figuratively speaking, politicians ordered the music, and military men played the tune. As a general rule, these politicians who constituted the top leadership of the country had no clue of military affairs; however, they tried to resolve global military issues.

Let's consider the examples of Mr. Khrushchev, Mr. Brezhnev, and other general secretaries. Notwithstanding their lack of knowledge in the art of war, they commanded the military and gave them orders in order to reach their political goals. Vitalii already talked about the way the military people were forced to carry out their assignments in Afghanistan. In the case of Chechnya, we tried to justify the fact that we were not prepared for the operation, since the army was in the midst of being reformed. We

125 General Richard B. Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (2001–2005).

requested a period of at least three or four months to be fully prepared, provided that such an assignment was absolutely critical. They forced the military to start operations immediately.

Robert has cited the case of Mr. Ustinov. Mr. Ustinov was not a military man either. He only had some expertise in the area of armaments, but no experience in any other military areas. Moreover, he had no clue of strategy and tactics. Again, in this case, political goals dominated, and our calculations of the consequences and forecasts were disregarded. What were the political goals? There was huge opposition in the circles around Mr. Brezhnev. Ustinov, Gromyko,<sup>126</sup> and Andropov were competing with each other for power and influence. Mr. Andropov succeeded to some extent, and in order to not fall behind, Mr. Ustinov tried to promote these ideas. At a certain point, Mr. Brezhnev was persuaded with the help of a little trick: They told him that Hafizullah Amin<sup>127</sup> was a CIA agent. A CIA agent who supported US policy was not supposed to remain in a friendly country that we supported, and where we had invested so much of our efforts and resources. Based on this, it was decided to remove Amin. In my book,<sup>128</sup> I present a detailed description of these events, and I describe the failed attempts to poison Amin. We therefore had to introduce the troops to get rid of Amin. Our initial plan envisaged the removal of Amin, his replacement with Babrak Karmal, and then, a withdrawal of our troops in two or three months. Unfortunately, not everything always works out as planned. As a rule, the politicians are not blamed for anything later. We, as the military, have to create precedents to ensure that any risky orders that might have dangerous consequences are not followed.

At present, there is no serious ideological confrontation between NATO and Russia. Our mutual relations should be developing normally, but that is not the case. Old stereotypes still exist, and they are really

126 Andrei A. Gromyko, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union (1957–1985).

127 Hafizullah Amin, the second president of Afghanistan during the period of the Communist Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, September – 27 December, 1979.

128 Aleksandr A. Liakhovskii, *Трагедия и доблесть Афгана* [The Tragedy and Valor of the Afghanistan Veteran] (Moscow: Iskon, 1995) and idem, *Пламя Афгана* [The Flame of the Afghan Veteran] (Moscow: Iskon, 1999).



harmful for both Russia and NATO. Russia has to find ways to cooperate more with other countries. I think that the elaboration of joint concepts that would serve to find common grounds in our positions should be one of the main goals of this and future conferences. Misunderstanding of positions and mutual distrust result in confrontation. Even supposing that we have been able to find some common ground in our positions before and during this conference, the problem is that other people still have old stereotypes. We must also enhance public awareness to bring our respective positions closer together; besides, we must work on the development of mutual understanding and trust in order to develop good relationships.

### **Vigleik Eide**

I have been listening to the discussion of the last couple of days with great interest, and I would first like to take the opportunity to congratulate the Parallel History Project and say that these discussions must continue. If they are centred on the flanks, south or north, or on the centre as now, with different players maybe, to take Aleksandr's point, that will be fine, but it has to continue, because we are not finished. Possibly the greatest surprise we have heard over the last couple of days is that none of the opposing alliances had aggressive intentions. I personally know well that NATO had no aggressive potential, but I have to believe you when you say that you saw it differently. You should also believe us when we say that we didn't have it, but we have to believe you when you also talk about your intentions.

Another striking point is that we have been listening over the last few days to a lot of technicalities in my view. It is important, of course, to discuss that and to hear about follow-on-forces attack, AirLand Battle, intelligence, and so on, but it has to be put in an overall context. Take political issues, take the political situation, the economic situation, and the religious situation for that part, between Communism and capitalism. Take that into account, and take into account the strategic situation elsewhere. Were the great powers involved in other conflicts? What were the consequences? What consequences did this have for the overall

assessment? What were the views of the political leaders, their intentions, and their capabilities? It is important to take a look at the overall picture and the overall context and then put all the details into that context and look at it from that total perspective. But my first message is, please do continue.

### Vojtech Mastny

Yes, we should continue and deal particularly with those two themes mentioned here, the northern flank and the southern flank. We would very much like to do that, and I would like to appeal to all of you who are interested to help us with that. We have been thinking about the possibility of starting with the northern flank, which is closer to here, and many of the people in this room are from that area. So I would like to ask all of you, but particularly our Russian colleagues, to get in touch with me, particularly with recommendations for the participants. We should continue with the themes that we have been discussing here. We did have a conference three years ago in Norway in Longyearbyen on the theme of threat perceptions, military plans, and military doctrines of the two alliances during the Cold War. This was a conference of the more traditional kind with papers, and a selection of 12 of these papers have been published by Routledge in London.<sup>129</sup> That conference was based on documents which we had been able to get from both the NATO side and the Warsaw Pact side.

We are facing a problem of documentation on both the NATO side and the Warsaw Pact side. It is not symmetrical. As the forces during the Cold War were not symmetrical, so the situation in the archives is not symmetrical. We know much more about NATO for the early years, the 1950s and 1960s and into the 1970s. The NATO archives are open, and the archives of the member countries are largely open because of the 30-year rule, so we know a great deal. We know much less from the other side, particularly from the Stalin period. Much of the documentation probably doesn't exist. Much of it also is still inaccessible in the presidential

129 Vojtech Mastny, Sven G. Holtmark, and Andreas Wenger, eds., *War Plans and Alliances in the Cold War: Threat Perceptions in the East and West* (London: Routledge, 2006).

archives in Moscow, or else in the Defence Ministry archives. For the 1970s and 1980s, ironically enough, we know more about the Warsaw Pact than we know about NATO. Because of the 30-year rule, the NATO archives are not yet open, and much the same situation prevails in other Western archives.

In the documentary collection on the Warsaw Pact I have published together with Malcolm Byrne, we have done something that so far is not commonly done.<sup>130</sup> We have put all the documents that are published in English in that book and we have put them on the website in the original complete versions. Sometimes we published the English translations in shortened versions, but anybody can find those 180 or so documents used in that book on the website of the PHP.<sup>131</sup> You will find the complete text on the website. One of the major gaps in this book was the operational planning, which was done in Moscow for the Warsaw Pact, and in this respect this conference has been highly enlightening, because we have learned many important details from those of you in Russia who have been involved. All of us should be immensely grateful to our Russian visitors for the knowledge that they have been willing and able to share with us. Although there will be more available from the NATO side as the de-classification continues, we will still have to rely extensively on the eyewitnesses and the participants, both from the NATO and the Warsaw Pact side. So the more we can get of those who were involved, the better for us, the better for future historians, the better for understanding the lessons of the Cold War.

### Svetlana Savranskaya

Vojtech made almost all my points, but I would just like to emphasise again the need for documents. It is a completely different level of understanding that you get when you have eyewitnesses and the documents. You can refer to them, and so when we're thinking about the next conferences, if every participant here today could think about relevant documents from their country, from their archives that they know of and which we

130 Mastny and Byrne, *A Cardboard Castle?*

131 See: <http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/colltopic.cfm?id=15697>.

might not know of – if you could let us know and help us get to these documents, that would be great.

## Eighth working session

### Robert Legvold

The organisers of this event had wanted your moderator to summarise the discussion at this point. I think that for most of the people around this room, it would be, as the Russians say, “odna taska”,<sup>132</sup> so I’m not going to do that to you. Instead, let me make three larger points, and then we can continue the discussion. The discussion at this point is to turn specifically to the larger transcendent implications of the history that we’re looking at. We have already in several contexts begun discussing the significance of what we’ve learned about this period of time for contemporary international affairs, especially the issue of nuclear proliferation and weapons of mass destruction in the contemporary world.

The first thing that strikes me about the conversation is the conclusion several others have drawn, and that is, you’re now basically convinced that neither side wanted war or was prepared to be aggressive in a way that would have led to war, and that in the end, by the 1970s and into the 1980s, because of the nuclear shadow and the implications of general war, were it to have begun, that it was implausible, that it was unlikely, that it was improbable. The issue then becomes the issue that was raised by General Chalupa, and that is whether in the end the way in which you planned for this war, the way in which you thought about it, the way in which you postured yourself, and the way you planned for the war was, in fact, important in preventing war. I think that General Chalupa believes that it was. I’m not sure to what degree that opinion is shared around the table. The question is though, on other occasions when people have planned for war and in many ways war seemed unthinkable – that certainly was the conclusion drawn by those who fought the First World

132 “Quite a drag.”

War – we nonetheless still went to war a second time in a general war. So there are some questions about just how secure this view was, or this reality was, because neither side was aggressive or planned aggression, and neither side wanted war in these circumstances.

The second point is related to that, and that is looking at the present or the recent past and then reflecting even farther back to the period we looked at in the 1970s. The issue of miscalculation in a potential war context is not confined only to politicians. We talked earlier about the 1979 war in Afghanistan, and Aleksandr said quite correctly that the politicians calculated that the war, or at least the direct Soviet intervention, would be over in short order – a matter of weeks, three or four weeks – before the Afghan side would be able to sustain the effort with some assistance. And as he points out, the minister of defence was a civilian, Ustinov, who was part of that calculation. But in 1994, your minister of defence was Pavel Grachev, who was a professional military man, and the calculation was the same for the Chechen war. It was going to be over in three or four weeks. In the case of the Americans in the Iraq War, the calculation again was that the war itself would be over in very short order. I think the calculation was ten days or two weeks, something like that. That calculation was correct, including the role that the military played in it. But there was no calculation of the second war, this war of insurgency that we've been fighting for three years, and the military were involved in that calculation. The military – the retired military – is now criticising Rumsfeld and others for the way they conducted the war, but I don't hear yet criticism from the senior military, though I may be mistaken on this score, recognising the second half of the miscalculation. So one of the things that strikes me about the present is the degree to which we are still capable of enormous miscalculation on the edge of war and when we get ourselves into a war. I'm wondering whether there is something about the period we've been looking at that we haven't focused on that helped us to avoid miscalculation, or was it simply that the political situation never brought us seriously to the edge of the war, notwithstanding the Berlin crises, notwithstanding the Cuban missile crisis, notwithstanding the interventions in East Central Europe.

The third point that I would make flows from something that several of you have touched on, and that is the power of stereotypes. I think one of the reasons why neither side was really willing to think about the other side in the terms on which it saw itself and which you're now expressing at this table were the stereotypes that you worked with. General Folmer, I don't think it was simply that you only judged in terms of capabilities and did not factor in intentions, although that's true. But I think it was the power of stereotypes. And the significance of that is that those stereotypes are still alive in many circles. They are still alive within the General Staff of the Russian Ministry of Defence today. They are still alive in parts of the Pentagon, in national security and public policy organisations in the United States, and I assume they are still alive in some parts of NATO. So one of the great utilities of this exercise, it seems to me, is to begin exposing those stereotypes and their implications and their consequences so that we start examining the role that they are currently playing.

### Neal Creighton

Bill Odom asked what did you learn, and he actually asked our Russian friends and our Warsaw Pact friends that, but I've thought about the answer to that. As I sat here and listened to the gentlemen from the Warsaw Pact about how they developed their views and the studies that the colonel talked about, I came to the conclusion that it is exactly the same process that I went through. So, really, what I've come away with is, listening to you, that your military logic and reasoning went just like ours. I feel that the more I listen, the more I realise that we were really almost all the same and that we looked at the world in the same way. I've got to tell you that I think the propaganda or whatever it was and the lack of being with the Russians or people from the Warsaw Pact made us look at them as if they were completely different and they were going to attack us. But as you talk to them, you realise you're very much the same. We were serving our countries. Our thought processes were the same, and I originally put into that talk I gave my own conclusions that I thought nuclear war was insane. Vojtech said, "I don't think you want to put that in, because that's the first talk and we don't want to have that." But as I

listened, they came to the same conclusions that I did, so that I look at them not as enemies, but as contemporaries.

The other issue was whether we could have gone to war, and you just mentioned it. We talked about the fact that we didn't have any plans, so that made it very difficult to go to war, and it had to be an incident that would have caused us to go to war. The incident that must have been the closest to it had to have been the Cuba incident in 1962. Incidentally, we have somebody sitting here who knows a lot more about that than I do, and that's General Smith. But I think that was the closest, and that was the way we could have gone to war. So that kind of answers General Chalupa's question, which was why, if we had no intention of attacking each other, did we spend so much time and effort and money. I think it was all worthwhile, not only because we didn't have a Hot War. I also think that was because probably in the Cuba incident, each side was fully prepared to fight the war, and if we hadn't have been, if there had been an imbalance, we may well have had the war that none of us wanted. Here again, I think that it wasn't just that we didn't have plans for attack. Probably, if we were going to have any type of conflict, it would have come out of the area.

Finally, I just want to express some of my own personal concerns. I spent over a decade on the continent of Europe serving in NATO forces. I basically raised my children in Germany. One of them went to work for the German government, and the other just bought a company in Hamburg. They came over here actually from 1945 on. Millions of Americans and Canadians and everybody else came to Europe. I know Leo Chalupa as well as I know any general in our army. He's been around for years. I first worked with the German army in 1955, the first month that I was at Weiden, when they converted a Bundesgrenzschutz battalion into the German army. I went up there for the first month to help them train. Over the years, it's not just me and Bill and General Smith and all the others from the United States that have done this, it was our Army, Navy, and Air Force. There were millions of soldiers and sergeants. And they not only served over here, they got married. I know so many people in Chicago, where I lived for many years, who came over here, married girls, and then went back and raised their families. The closeness and the understanding

that we have is now going away because within one year from now, the US armed forces will only have one brigade on the continent of Europe. They may have another brigade down in the Balkans or in Italy. The other brigade in Germany is going to be at Vilseck. They are considering, and I don't know what point they are at, because I'm not current with it, having a rotational brigade probably down somewhere in Hungary. But if you compare this to the hundreds of thousands which we've had here over the years, we've built in the United States, not only in the military, a great understanding and a closeness to Europe. I was hoping that once the Wall went down, this would go over and we would be able to have the same thing with Russia and the former Soviet Republics, because it's been such a cement to bring us together, and I really worry if, in the future, our attention goes off to the countries of Islam or goes off into Asia and drifts away from Europe. Because I think there's a great state of all of us understanding each other and coming together better, and that goes back to my first point. What I'm really happy about is that as I listen to my Warsaw Pact friends, the closer I feel to you and the more I feel that you are very similar to us.

### **Robert Legvold**

On the Cuba thing, had we gone to war over Cuba, though the issue was framed in its fundamental form as a strategic nuclear threat with the risk of nuclear war, I assume that, given the state of the nuclear balance at that point, it would almost certainly have meant European war. That is, a NATO-Warsaw Pact war in that context, because the Soviet Union would not have been able to carry out simply a US-Soviet war with strategic weapons at that time.

### **Neal Creighton**

I assume that too, but can I turn that over to General Smith, who does know a lot more about that than I do.



## William Smith

In the United States, the CIA and the US military didn't agree on many things a lot of the time, but one thing they agreed on was that Cuba was not important enough to the Soviet Union that the Soviet Union was willing to go to war with the United States, and that war would have begun with a strategic nuclear attack, not in Europe. So Europe figured in this because they were our allies, but the idea was that if this war began, it was going to begin with strikes by the United States and the Soviet Union, and the Joint Chiefs were convinced that Cuba was not that important to the Soviet Union. President Kennedy was convinced that there had to be a way out of this other than war, and that if both sides compromised— this was not widely known at the time, though it is now known – conflict could be avoided. So what the military recommended was attacking Cuba, because for two years President Kennedy had told them that we've got to get rid of Castro, and the military weren't doing enough to achieve it. So when this crisis came, the military said: "If you want to get rid of Castro, well now here's your chance." President Kennedy said, wait a minute. What really complicated the situation was that those missiles in Cuba were getting ready, and they were going to be in a position to be fired within several days before there was this denouement, and the Joint Chiefs kept putting pressure on President Kennedy. So did the United States Senate: if you don't attack now, those missiles are going to be in a position where they can hit the United States from Cuba, and that's a quite different situation from a few missiles that can hit the United States from the Soviet Union, and so you'd better act now to get those missiles out of Cuba before they are ready to fire. So that gave it a sense of urgency that required action, both on the part of President Kennedy and on Khrushchev's side. Fortunately, both those leaders realised that they did not want to be head of a government that had led their country to destruction.

## **Robert Legvold**

The second observation is the more powerful point that you were making, Neal, and that is that in the end, those that guided the Warsaw Pact and the NATO alliance in Washington and Moscow on the military side, as you say, were very alike. You had a similar problem, and you approached the problem in a similar way, and it makes you feel now as though you're dealing with kindred spirits. It's clear from other things that have been said that what complicated that matter were these glasses that we wore on the two sides, the prism through which we were seeing it, and that is the factor of ideology, which led us to stereotypes and a lot of the other things I'm talking about. But using that point in order to bring it to the contemporary period evokes again Garry's point. That is, that the world that is now developing military power that incorporates weapons of mass destruction, including potentially nuclear weapons, may not be kindred spirits and may not think about these things in the same way that we now know that we were thinking about them at the time. One then wonders, it's not just ideological differences that are generating stereotypes, though that is a problem and that continues to be a problem, not just between Russia and the United States, East/West, but also North/South on these issues. But the question is, what are the implications if we are not at root kindred spirits or something approaching that? Or to put it another way, we are seeing groups and maybe even states acquiring weapons of mass destruction that are not deterrable, because both of us were deterrable in the context of the Cold War.

## **Garry Johnson**

I agree, Neal, with what you've just said and the emotions that were behind it. I very strongly support it. It's the issue you raised of miscalculation and why we got through this very difficult and dangerous period without miscalculation and why subsequently there have been miscalculations. I think there's something in this word "ideology". When we were dealing with the business of the nuclear, we were dealing with it on the basis of professionals doing our jobs, and we were dealing with politicians who did not feel a strong enough ideological drive to change the system on

the other side to one which they would have preferred, to take the risk to go to war. When Vitalii talked about going into Afghanistan, he talked about the objections and the judgement of the military, and this is, I think, where you get bogged down. It was overridden by ideology: These people who “wished to throw off a feudal yoke”. No, they didn’t, and you knew they didn’t, but the politicians believed that. When you look at going into Iraq, certainly the politicians in Washington and in London believed that all the ordinary Iraqi craved was democracy Western-style. Yes, you laugh, Svetlana, and we all laughed, but they believed it though ideology overrode it and, as with the Russian military in Afghanistan, so with our military we raised these objections to politicians. Our chief of Defence Staff raised them, and he raised the matter of the legality of the war.

This brings you onto the next layer, if you like, which is, and it has been raised before, that we are similar. It is the control of the civil over the military which the military finds extremely irksome, but to which it pays more than lip service, because a country is better like that than having the military control the civil, on the whole. So we go along with it. But then it raises the issue of what do you do as a military man when your professional judgement has been offered and rejected? Do you obey orders? Do you go and do it? Do you leave it to those who are out of the service to raise the issues? And I think it’s fairly plain to me, and it has been throughout my service, that in the military you obey orders. If you cannot bring yourself, from moral grounds or whatever grounds, to obey those orders, you leave the military and you get out of it. Now I think the problem is that there are quite a lot of people who don’t want to take that second step. If you push it forward into what you were now just saying about the future of this business, ideology comes very strongly through. The ideology of the people we might have to deal with is not the same as the approach of the Soviet Union, and it’s not the same as our own approach. Are we now going to get carried away by ideological miscalculation in dealing with these people? That’s the danger, I think.

### **Robert Legvold**

And the stereotypes.

## Vojtech Mastny

I would like to make a few observations on the theme of the lessons that we should or should not learn from these experiences. Somebody – I think it was you, Leopold – mentioned the connection between what we have been discussing here and the way the Cold War ended and why the Cold War ended peacefully, and was it perhaps because of the restraints that existed on both sides? I think that if you look closely at the way the Cold War ended in 1989, what is remarkable is how little military matters really counted. It was not because of the military balances or imbalances. It was other issues. The military postures were changed not as a result of the Cold War, but because of something that happened in the non-military sphere. Ideologies have been mentioned, mostly in negative ways, and probably rightly so, but if we think of ideas and changes in the minds of people, including the military – changes about the meaning of security that evolved particularly in Europe at this time and what influence this had on the non-violent end of the Cold War – then we have to conclude that the military issues are notable for their absence in determining what really happened in 1989. The peaceful ending of the Cold War came at a time when there was an overabundance of military power to be used to resist the peaceful ending of the Cold War. There are some wrong lessons that we can learn, and the wrong lesson would be to think that it could always be that way, and that all major conflicts like the Cold War could end without the military factors coming into the picture.

One should be careful about making these conclusions when we are dealing with other cultures, which have not had the experience that Europeans and North Americans had during the Cold War. We should be aware of how exceptional that situation was and how exceptional a conflict the Cold War was during those 40 years. The intensity of the conflict could take it to the verge of an abyss, and yet it ended, contrary to everybody's expectations, the way it did. We must not forget that nobody predicted the end of the Cold War. Nobody predicted the way it would end. The importance of the lessons is to avoid drawing the wrong lessons, namely that the military power would always be as unimportant as it was

in determining the end of the Cold War. It continues to be important, and let us not forget that.

### Robert Legvold

That reminds me of the lexicography of this issue for the Cold War. It was Walter Lippmann who coined the phrase “the Cold War” in the 1940s.<sup>133</sup> In the 1960s, Pierre Hassner, that brilliant specialist in Paris, complemented that by saying “Cold War with hot peace” which is what it was about.<sup>134</sup> And in the end, John Lewis Gaddis, the historian of the Cold War, earlier wrote a book called *The Long Peace* and tried to explain the long peace because of its exceptional historical character.<sup>135</sup>

### William Odom

Both on Gary’s comment and Vojtech’s. I quite agree with you on ideology, but I want to be sure that I understand you. I don’t think you can get rid of ideologies. Ideologies are used to justify preferences about who gets what, and I think the ideological transformation in Russia has only just begun. So we don’t know where that’s going, and a lot of people are very unhappy about that. I just wanted to make that point about ideology because I get a sense here that we think that if we get to know each other well, the ideology will go away, and I don’t see that. And I think that would be really a gross mistake as a conclusion. Vojtech, as you came out in the end I understand why you said what you said.

### Robert Legvold

Bill, would you let me interrupt you for a moment on the last point, because I think that the people who have spoken on this point would not disagree with your point about ideology not going away. But the point is

133 With a series of articles called *The Cold War* published in 1947, Walter Lippmann popularized the term ‘The Cold War,’ which was first introduced by Bernard Baruch in a congressional debate in April that year.

134 Pierre Hassner, “The New Europe: From Cold War to Hot Peace”, *International Journal* 27, 1 (1972), pp. 1–17.

135 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Long Peace: Inquiries into the History of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

that ideology then as a reality poses problems, it creates distortions, and it generates stereotypes, so one of the problems we need to focus on is how you cope with that reality that isn't going to go away.

### William Odom

I agree, and you cope with it with military power. That's what you do. When ideologies are irreconcilable, that's the alternative. We've heard it from General Liakhovskii. He really doesn't believe we were peaceful, I mean that we were without offensive intent, and both Vitalii and Aleksandr have pointed out the key importance of ideology; and if you're a good Marxist-Leninist, you know objectively and scientifically that we cannot help but be the enemy and wish them ill. That is an article of almost religious faith. That predisposes a whole range of political actions which I don't think you can change and cause to go away because you are nice and de-stereotype yourself. I'm a little worried about stereotypes as being something we can just get away from, that we can cause this ideological problem to go away with. I just want to make that point, not to settle the issue. But in the research for my book on the collapse of the Soviet Union, the thing that struck me with every military person I spoke to at every level, from bottom to top, was that no military person did not put the burden of military weight as the major factor that forced perestroika, and they were willing to go along with perestroika because they didn't see the collapse coming and I don't think Gorbachev understood that either.

If you look at the discussions among Iakovlev,<sup>136</sup> Ligachev,<sup>137</sup> and Gorbachev, all these people including Cherniaev, Shakhnazarov,<sup>138</sup> and Karen Brutents,<sup>139</sup> all saw that the key was offloading the military

136 Aleksandr N. Iakovlev, the chief ideological mentor of General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev.

137 Egor K. Ligachev, Gorbachev's second in command, who gradually became an opponent of his glasnost and perestroika reform programs.

138 Georgii K. Shakhnazarov, politician and political scientist, prominent aide close to Gorbachev.

139 Karen Brutents, a specialist in Third World affairs on the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

problem. This was the key to everything. Gorbachev thought, the way I'm going to offload this is to tell the West that I'm not going to attack them. We're going to do this by renouncing ideology. Go look at his book "Perestroika".<sup>140</sup> He says humankind's interest now transcends class interest.

I remember reading that in 1987 and I said, I believe they're serious now. If the general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union says I am revising the ideology so that we can now make compromises with imperialist enemies, scientifically objectively incapable of getting rid of the warlike tendencies, then this is like the Pope saying that the Immaculate Conception and the Resurrection and all this may have been valid in the Middle Ages, but we're renouncing it now. You know, you pull the rug out from under it. The way I put it in the book after listening to all the Soviet officers was, if you look at the ideology, it says, what is the threat you're planning against? You're planning against every country where there is private ownership of the means of production because, objectively, that is the enemy. They can't help it. Subjectively, they may want to be your friend, but objectively, they're going to be your enemy. I think we heard one or two of them say that war had to go elsewhere than just Europe because there were a lot of capitalists out there. So what's the scientific basis for peace in the Marxist-Leninist system? It is the destruction of all private ownership of the means of production. Well, I need a military to carry out this revolution.

That is a blank cheque on the federal budget, so you have a combination of bureaucratic interest and ideological definition that begins to power this big machine that Vitalii so compellingly described in its military-industrial sector as having become very path-dependent with a momentum that couldn't be stopped. Go back and look at Shakhnazarov's dialogues with Marshal Akhromeev<sup>141</sup> about why we ought to cut back military production. It's sort of a pragmatic argument, but finally he says look, it's the ideological international class struggle. We can't give up these things because of the ideological struggle. And it was the same

140 Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987).

141 Marshal Sergei I. Akhromeev, chief of the Soviet general staff, 1984–1988.

thing in the Politburo in the international department with the young people against – who was the old guy? – Ponomarev.<sup>142</sup> So the military is key here, absolutely key, in my view. When people like Gaddis and my colleague Bruce Russett<sup>143</sup> and others talk about the end of the Cold War, well it's simple. It's a case of voluntarism and political leadership. Gorbachev decided to change this, and when he started to change it he did it, as far as I can determine, because of this military burden. And once he starts that, it seems to me that it starts falling apart. To say that the military doesn't have a role here, well I see it as absolutely critical and essential, and what I give him huge credit for is allowing this big transformation in Europe without a war. That to me is incredible.

To me that is the most extraordinary phenomenon that we're dealing with the largest strategic realignment in Europe in history without a war. I think both parties deserve something here: West and East, the political leaders in Europe first and, finally, Reagan, who in Reykjavik disappointed his American staff there because they thought he'd given away the farm to the Soviet Union. Cherniaev and company think Gorbachev's given away the farm, but Gorbachev said, oh no, I had a personal breakthrough with Reagan. I had to puzzle for a while what this meant, and it became clear. He meant, I know that I can start disarming and Reagan won't take advantage of me and when he understood he had that, and he already had it with the Western European leaders, he could say, we're going to have an INF treaty whether the military wants us or not. And then we are going to have a unilateral 500,000-man withdrawal that the General Staff didn't want. Just read Shakhnazarov's chapters on dealing with the military as being the most critical aspect of launching perestroika, and you see that the military factor is just fundamental and key through all of this.<sup>144</sup> So this is the end of my little speech, but I just don't see how

142 Boris N. Ponomarev, chief of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1955–1986).

143 Bruce M. Russett, Dean Acheson Professor of International Relations and Political Science at Yale University.

144 Georgii K. Shakhnazarov, *Цена свободы: Реформация Горбачева глазами его помощника* [The Price of Freedom: Gorbachev's Reform through the Eyes of His Assistant] (Moscow: Rossika Zevs, 1993).



you can deal with this historical phenomenon without seeing that this is the bottom line and why it came apart.

### **Vojtech Mastny**

I entirely agree with Bill about the importance of the ideological change. As far as the primary, crucial importance of the military burden is concerned, let me just say here that there are different interpretations among historians, and different weight is attributed to different factors. One that I find important enough to take into account is the argument of economists who say that the Soviet Union, regardless of the burden, was still in a position to bear it. There were no irresistible economic imperatives that would have called for diminishing that burden. There would be those, and I would be inclined to go a long way with them, who do emphasise the importance of ideas. Gorbachev's common European house – one can think it was very vague, very much of a vision – but still the importance of being accepted as a normal European country at that time, with all the implications that it meant for overcoming the division of Europe, that had military implications. But what was primary and what was secondary? I would be prepared to go a long way in attributing importance to the changes in the minds of the leaders who were exposed to the other side through the increasing contacts that were going on within the elite, as well as to the greater responsiveness to the preferences of the people, particularly in Eastern Europe. Clearly, both factors mattered here, but I wouldn't overrate the strictly military one at the expense of the force of ideas.

### **Svetlana Savranskaya**

I will generally agree with Vojtech, but I just wanted to point out that when Gorbachev comes to power his primary expertise is domestic. He doesn't really know that much about international relations. All the international issues come a little later, and he is really disgusted with what's happening inside the country, both socially and economically, and that leads him to the need to alleviate the burden, but not so much the primary attention to the military balance.

## Roger Cirillo

I would first like to comment on the quality of the reasons and explanations that Vitalii has given over the last two days and I would like to respond to something that he has intimated several times, and that is the perception of generations. I was born in the Cold War. As a child, I practised hiding under a desk when the Russians were going to bomb the airfield 10 miles from me. My army fought a Communist army – the army that I came into had just come back from a war – and my first command was across from the 8<sup>th</sup> Guards Army. I was prepared to die in my position if necessary because I believed that this was going to happen. When we trained, we rehearsed for the war we thought we were going to have to fight. I came back to the army in Europe in 1985 and found out that nobody younger than me believed any of that. The training was to pass the test that the rigidity of tasks and beliefs of what we had trained towards in the 1970s was not there.

When I moved to become a planner in the Central Army Group, I looked at the German generals that I now saw, and none of them had World War II ribbons. I remember that in the 1970s we frequently invited German generals to come and talk to us about how they shot Russians. In 1985, that was politically unacceptable, and I think that what we did do was what General Chalupa said, that we had evolved from a belief that we would fight into a belief that presence and training meant deterrence, and I think that when Vitalii said they made plans, but they didn't believe they would use them, my contemporaries at major level had that belief. I once discovered what I thought was a major problem with our planning because I was one of the few people who used to go and read the assumptions paragraph. The world had changed, but the generals had not, so I prepared this briefing, and my contemporaries said, if you tell the general the plan doesn't work, you will be in trouble. Well, I told the general, and I was in trouble. There was no doubt, and you can probably gather from watching me over the past two days that I was never in danger of being put in charge of anything, but I always questioned the reason.

The interesting thing was, the people I worked for were true believers. My initial commanders wore World War II ribbons, and they remembered

the Russian threat from the 1930s. The Germans that we worked with wore World War II ribbons and they remembered half the country being over-run. When you got the position of the new 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenants and captains who showed up in the mid-1980s, to us, Germany was a wonderful experience because of schnitzels and fräuleins. It was not going to be a fight in the Fulda Gap, and I think that the generational thing, although it certainly doesn't affect foreign policy, certainly affects the perception of the people that live within those countries, because my suspicion was that if I met my Russian contemporary of my age, then he and I were the same guy. Just like our generals were the same guys, and there were different perceptions about whether we were a threat to each other. But that's a personal observation and, like I said, I ended as lieutenant-colonel, so I didn't worry about whether anybody was going to act on that.

### Leopold Chalupa

I just want to come back to the point of what importance the military had. I agree with Bill, but I disagree here that the military did not have the decisive or an important role in the end of the Cold War. I come back to this basic question: When we review now, how much have we done, good enough, big enough, our assessments, our plans – I do not think that we had the only viable and best plans. I think our NATO strategy of forward defence and flexible response was decisive in avoiding confrontation at the end of the Cold War. I still do not know why all the changes occurred, with all due respect to the changes in spirit and new ideas, or why we were spared the military option which we feared could have been taken once the leaders on the other side recognised the economic difficulties they were in. We know about these; the problem of the reliability of their partner countries – I just want to remind you of East Berlin and all the demonstrations etc. – and I personally feel the presence of our military capabilities threatened under the strategy of forward defence and flexible response were an important factor in leading a realistic Soviet leader to decide not to take a military option to overcome them. I think it could not have been only his domestic considerations about what his army and his armed forces would do economically to his country, but I think he also

looked at the opposing military capabilities, which I think were decisive in making this decision to end this Cold War without a military option or military intervention and, from a German point of view, I may add again, to reunite my country without a single shot being fired because of this. This of course is the main advantage we have.

You made comments today, I think it was you Vitalii, about political prerogatives based on ideological objectives which were more important than all other planning. Of course there was the disparity between capitalism and Socialism, and in the Western countries, we didn't have demonstrations that anybody wanted to come into the Socialist camp, by the way. We didn't have this problem. On the question of military establishment, I think you said, Aleksandr, something about dancing to the music of the politicians. In our system, of course the politicians dance to the music of the voters, and they can be quickly voted out of office at the next election. Therefore I personally feel, and thank goodness, that he had a strategy, and I didn't know that we were considered that strong and so capable of launching an attack against the Warsaw Pact. I think that we could not have done it in our region. I could not imagine that we could have had an attack into the opposing area. I am grateful that, whatever the final reason was, the Cold War ended without being a Hot War and that we can now discuss the problems or the consequences or the conclusions of why we have been able to get along this road of a peaceful solution to the conflict of those days.

### **Svetlana Savranskaya**

In the fall of 1983, if you look at all the available materials from the Soviet side, there is an extreme sense of being threatened in the Politburo, and there is a discussion about what should be done. There is SDI, and there is not yet an understanding that SDI is not doable. So there is a perception of direct threat – Pershings in Europe and SDI. In the summer of 1986, and unfortunately I don't have the date because I don't have the document with me, at the Politburo, Gorbachev talks about the need to disarm partially, or rather to accept some of the conditions because we

are perceived as threatening in the West, and that's a terrible thing.<sup>145</sup> The peoples of Europe look at us as a threat. We should deal with that. In 1985, 1986, and 1987 there is not one discussion saying that we are threatened by the West.

### **Leopold Chalupa**

I was CINCENT in those days, from 1983 to 1989, and I can assure you that if you meant a threat of aggression by NATO, either way, conventional or nuclear, I just want to convince you that from our operational level there was no plan to threaten... Do you mean you attacking us?

### **Svetlana Savranskaya**

No, no, no, no. In the fall of 1983 – first of all, in March the announcement of SDI is made, and then there's the decision to deploy Pershings – in the Soviet Union there is an acute sense of threat, a perception of the West. No one is saying that the West is going to attack in the next couple of weeks or so, but there is this perception of falling behind, and the West aggregating its military power with aggressive purposes. So what I'm saying is that in 1985, there is no perception of threat, so if the response was to a threat, then the response should have come in 1983 or 1984, but in 1985 the perception of threat changes completely. They don't believe they are threatened.

### **Robert Legvold**

In fact, Leopold, Svetlana's interesting point is that for Gorbachev, the problem is that the Soviet Union is perceived as a threat by the West Europeans.

145 Meetings of 15 and 22 September 1986. See: "The Reykjavik File," <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB203/index.htm>.

### **Aleksandr Liakhovskii**

I agree with what Vojtech has said about ideology. At the time of the break-up of the Soviet Union, its collapse was not due to economic conditions, and the country was actually able to carry the burden it had always carried before. Such things happen when a combine operator comes to power and such conflict situations arise. Also, I would like to tell General Chalupa that democratic elections do not always guarantee a reasonable guidance of the countries. We know that from Russia's experience.

I also would like to mention something else. Everybody says that the Cold War is over, and that it ended peacefully. Yes, maybe the Cold War between NATO and Warsaw Pact is over, but many aspects of it still exist even today, including the threat of force, and some elements of the so-called hot threat. Consider the example of the collapse of Yugoslavia. I think if there is no further cooperation and mutual understanding among the leading countries of the world, then the Cold War will continue, with potentially serious consequences for the whole world. Besides political and ideological interests, any country and each bloc has its own economic and national interests, and such interests should be taken into account, and it is wrong to pursue only your own interests. Maybe in such a case, we will be able to reach some consensus. If we stop now and say, "Everything is over", then the consequences may be unpredictable. My suggestion is that during our next discussion, we should talk about the global nature and the result of the Cold War, which ended, as we understand, between the USSR and NATO at the end of the 1990s. We should talk about some lessons of the Cold War and elaborate recommendations for our democratic governments and leaders in order to ease the tensions that arise in the world sometimes, and which are increasing at the present time.

### **Vitalii Tsygichko**

First of all, I would like to object to General Chalupa's statement that it was not the power of NATO, or Russia, that stopped the war. Unfortunately, or maybe fortunately, the internal situation in the Soviet Union was what stopped it. Mr. Gorbachev's merits were rightly mentioned in

this connection, but it is important to consider the internal motivations of Gorbachev's actions. When Gorbachev and his supporters had come to power, the leadership began to see the lack of prospects in the existing political system. I do not entirely agree with Aleksandr's statement that economic aspects were not taken into account. If you remember, they were taken into account, and they were considered very seriously. Besides, we need to understand that the Soviet Union was no longer viable in its economic isolation, and needed to be integrated into the global economy, since this economic gap was constantly growing. We had many good scientists who were aware of the actual situation. They asked questions such as: "Where are we going? What is going on with our industry?" I would like to tell you that the equipment of our key industries had depreciated by 60 or 70 per cent by that time. We possessed neither time, nor any resources for the replacement of our fixed capital. On the one hand, the burden of military expenditures was increasing. Our population was becoming poorer, and it was obvious. Hence, we knew that we needed to change something. On the other hand, the Soviet leadership and Mr. Gorbachev were aware of the living standards in the West, and they saw the way people lived there; thus, they wanted our people to have a similar standard of living. The ultimate goal was to restructure the system smoothly in a way that would allow the top leadership of the Soviet Union to remain in power. By the way, this approach seems to have given rise to many mistakes later on.

The decision of ending the Cold War, making changes in the country, and creating a new mentality was implemented by a certain group of people who intended to take over the economy and all the industries. National defence interests were disregarded, given that nobody cared about these problems. They needed to take over this field as well. This was the way the internal "kitchen" was functioning, and it is still functioning and determining some aspects of our foreign policy. One of these aspects includes the issue of acting on the advice of American economists. As I remember, the country was inundated with different kinds of foreign advisors. I used to work for several commissions. These experts, who lacked any knowledge of our domestic system or of the consequences of the break-up of such a system, offered us solutions that led to a catastrophe. The West is

partially to blame for what has happened to our economy. In this transition period, many assets were pilfered. Most of the economic advisors showed their incompetence. All actions were undertaken in a rush. For example, nobody even considered the consequences of the withdrawal of our troops from Germany, and they did not even ask themselves what would happen next. Even the Americans themselves asked us, “What are you doing? Why are you rushing? Let’s do this differently,” etc. A lot of mistakes were made.

That is why our attitude toward Mr. Gorbachev is very ambivalent. On one hand, he broke up both the economic and political structures of the Soviet Union. Of course, this structure was doomed. Now, on the other hand, we understand very well that the way the changes were carried out was detrimental to our national interests. Our people understand this, too; they understand that the process was based on false premises. We still have not made the transition to a normal market economy, due to the mistakes that have been made. It was an illusion to assume that the military was involved in problem-solving. Not at all! Mr. Gorbachev supported the West and made colossal concessions that should not have been made; he wanted to gain the trust of the West and he did everything for this purpose, even if it contravened Russia’s economic interests. Again, the attitude toward Mr. Gorbachev is ambivalent, especially after we evaluated his activity from the historical perspective. Yes, on one hand, we took the right path, but the changes were implemented in a wrong way that caused the collapse of the economy. Many things still cannot be corrected. This is all I wanted to say about the impact of the internal political situation on the Cold War.

Another thing I would like mention is that Russia was very unlucky with czars. It is frustrating to read the Russian history, because it looks like every other czar was a complete fool. We know from history that among all our czars, there were only few outstanding figures such as Peter,<sup>146</sup> Catherine,<sup>147</sup> and just few others. All other czars either had too mediocre personalities, or due to some peculiarities of their personalities

146 Peter I (Peter the Great), tsar of Russia (1682–1725).

147 Catherine II (Catherine the Great), empress of Russia (1762–1796).



were not capable of ruling such a huge country. This tendency with our leaders of the country has been noticeable in later history. Good examples of such degradation include Brezhnev's actions at the end of his rule, and Chernenko's reign,<sup>148</sup> who ruled the country as if he was in a coma.

As far as Gorbachev is concerned, I agree that when a tractor driver becomes a general secretary, he cannot understand the deeper causes of problems, due to his peculiarities of mind and personality. As a result, he will listen to the next best person. There were so many political frauds surrounding him, and they all pursued their own interests. Our next president<sup>149</sup> was not very smart either, as you know, and people tell a lot of jokes and anecdotes about him. I would like to say that this was the reason why the people were not ready for the Western-style democracy. The Soviet mentality is deeply rooted in people's minds, and this generation must pass before that mentality will die. I teach at universities and I see that young people perceive the world differently, and have different outlooks on many things. Our current leadership still represents the old generation; most of them used to be the Communist leaders of the Soviet Union, or worked in some similar positions. Such things have an impact on the development of our internal situation, especially in the economic sphere, and we are not sure of the "real face" of the capitalism we are building.

I would also like to mention something else on the topic that General Grachev has been talking about. Once I had a discussion with a professor who used to be a teacher at the General Staff Headquarters Academy. He told me: "Vitalii, I have never had a student who was more stupid than him. I do not know how he became the minister of defence and how he earned the title of the best minister of all times." I would like to say that the war in Chechnya was a reckless scheme and stupidity, and it is still Russia's tragedy. We do not know how and when it will end. Aleksandr is writing a history of the war in the Caucasus, and I think he knows better what a long-lasting war means; and everyone knows how it all

148 Konstantin U. Chernenko, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1984–1985).

149 Boris N. Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation (1991–1999).

ended. Anyone who has read *Hadji Murat*, by Tolstoy,<sup>150</sup> understands this. The shaky balance that existed in the Caucasus was disrupted by wrong actions. If the leader of Chechnya had been invited to Moscow at that time, and had been given another general's star, and had been promised support, perhaps the Chechen war would not have taken place. I will not go into the details, but the situation there is very difficult due to personal issues, the existing powers, and the clan system. The balance among different clans and among different religious groups requires a careful approach. In the Soviet Union, this was clearly understood, and the power was divided between the various influential groups. As soon as this changed, civil strife broke out. All of this led to separatism and other things. That is why I would like to say that internal problems in our country resulted in the end of the Cold War; the military aspects had nothing to do with it.

### **Robert Legvold**

The observation I would make is that we learned lessons mutually during the Cold War. The problem now is that we are autodidacts, and we are learning our lessons by ourselves in Iraq and in Chechnya, and that is not as productive as learning them mutually.

### **Aleksandr Liakhovskii**

I would like to say just a couple of words. Vitalii, I believe that Pavel Grachev has been characterized a bit harshly. I know him personally: we both fought in Afghanistan. As a commander, he is a valiant person, and he is a very good commander: He was awarded the title of a Hero of the Soviet Union. A minister of defence should be a good politician, but he was not very good at politics. It was not his fault: he was appointed minister of defence, and this task was very burdensome for him. Then came the difficulties in Chechnya. I talked to him; we spent one-and-a-half or two hours together, and he told me about how things were going.

150 *Hadji Murat* is a short novel, published after Leo Tolstoy's death in the year 1912, about a guerrilla struggle between Russia and Chechnya.

He was opposed to the introduction of troops to Chechnya, but nobody listened to him, and because he objected, they wanted to fire him from his position right at that meeting of the Russian Security Council. He objected, saying that the army was not ready and that four months of preparation and training were required. Nobody listened to him, and as he had been given the order, he had to fulfil it. Judgments and evaluations may be different. The mass media created a negative image of him, since journalists did not like him.

### **Vyacheslav Vasenin**

I would like say something about Pavel Grachev, because Boris Gromov<sup>151</sup> and I were present at the ceremony in Afghanistan where he was awarded the rank of a Hero of the Soviet Union.<sup>152</sup> Of course, I agree that he used to be a dashing fellow, a valiant general, and a wonderful commander. The fact that he turned out to be a deplorable politician contributed to the whole story. I had to deal with the results of the beginning of the war in 1994, when I was on the frontline in Chechnya. Of course, the results were distressing. However, the army was able to recuperate. I should mention that everyone, even the president, completely disregarded the army. Mr. Grachev fought for a raise of salaries in the army, and they were increased, but the average salary level has remained the same since then.

### **Vitalii Tsygichko**

I do not doubt the military valour of this person. But as a minister of defence and a planner, he was not a top-notch specialist.

### **Leopold Chalupa**

I would like to make two comments. First of all, Vitalii, I think it is our responsibility to help your side also to get on better terms economically. Germans paid a lot of money for the re-stationing of your troops back into the Soviet Union. But I would like to address this comment of the Cold

151 Boris V. Gromov, the last commander of the 40<sup>th</sup> Soviet Army in Afghanistan (1987–1989).

152 In 1988.

War not yet being over. Of course, my perspective during this conference was Central Region, was Europe, not a global view; otherwise, I could have also said from a European point of view that the Cuban crisis was a threat of possible war in Europe, because there the strategic capabilities would have been at stake. I am just thinking of the Cold War. We have in the meantime the front states of the former Warsaw Pact, the Baltic states, the Balkan states, Bulgaria, Romania, and Slovenia, which have all been admitted into the NATO alliance, not because we forced them in, but they became members at their request. In the NATO alliance, and maybe we will have a discussion later, this was the only alliance for security in Europe after the end of the Cold War, we have even more of them down to Malta being members of the European Union.

The advantage of being members of such a union, and many have told us Germans this from the beginning, is not only that we have security for countries, but that the alliance also has security between those countries in the alliance. I personally think that if Turkey and Greece had not been accepted into NATO in 1952, then one day they might also have had a little war about their differences of opinion about Cyprus and whatever it was. So I think that I do not see the Cold War in Europe in the context I understood you to be describing. Maybe you didn't mean that. I would not want to consider in a conference on the Central Region the global implications of the Cold War. In Europe, I think, we are in the situation now where we can hopefully establish good cooperation, economic assistance, and support and follow the one way to which there is no alternative, which is to live together, next to each other, and with each other in peace and hopefully also in friendship.

### **Robert Legvold**

I would make one comment that cuts across the last several interventions, particularly those of Aleksandr and Vitalii. As I understand their argument, the complaint against Gorbachev is not so much that he and his colleagues wanted to end the Cold War and were serious about ending the Cold War. It is the way in which he ended the Cold War, and in the process what he did to his country domestically in terms of perestroika

and the domestic programme. I am struck, however, by one thing that was happening during this period of time and which we have lost sight of, and I think we're paying a price for it today. During this period when ideas were changing – Bill first referred to some of them, and then Svetlana mentioned other ideas that were changing on the Soviet side – one of the things that the Soviet foreign policy intellectuals and diplomats began talking about, and Gorbachev picked up the theme, was examining what they called the image of the enemy. This willingness to re-examine the image of the enemy and to focus on it is precisely what we're talking about when we discuss ideology, or stereotypes: A readiness to rethink the way in which they had seen the enemy and in which they had defined the threat in Europe and everywhere.

The Western side, beginning with the Americans during the Reagan administration, were never as straightforward in saying “we ought to rethink the image of the enemy”. But Reagan in his sort of simple, straightforward gut feeling did something of the same thing. After he first met Gorbachev in Geneva in October 1985, he came out of that meeting and said something that struck me at the time. He said: “I know actors, and Gorbachev is no actor.” In 1988, when he did the walkabout on the Red Square with Gorbachev and the reporters asked him about the earlier reference to the “Evil Empire”, Reagan said: “That was another era. That was another period.” So the same thing is happening at that time. My point is that soon after the Soviet Union collapsed, leaders on all sides began to forget about re-examining the image of the enemy, and there is a residual form of the image of the enemy that is still alive, and you see it in my country in various circles, including parts of the US government, when they spend a lot of time looking at Russian foreign policy, particularly within its own neighbourhood, among the post-Soviet states. And you see it in Moscow today, including within your professional circles in the General Staff and, even though since 1993 the formal position of Russia has been that we do not have enemies and that NATO is not an enemy, the truth of the matter is that they continue to think about NATO as a direct threat. So even at the level of Putin, to continue Garry's religious metaphors, the problem is that the Russians have not become atheists. They are still agnostics about the West and the threat.

### **William Odom**

I would just like to give you two difficult subjects for a conference in the future. Both the United States and Russia have had experiences in Afghanistan. For the United States that's maybe still too current, but it would be interesting because we've both learned some things we didn't want to learn in that country. At some point – and as soon as possible, because I believe in recent history as well as ancient history – I think it would be useful if there is some way a group like this could discuss what each country has learned in Afghanistan, and I myself would push it forward to what we have both learned in Iraq, because it has not turned out as well as either of us would have liked.

### **Leopold Chalupa**

I would just like to add: Not just between the two countries, because Afghanistan is also a NATO commitment, and many other nations have also been committed there and are still committed, so I think it should be also in the context of that.

### **Aleksandr Liakhovskii**

As you know, I support this idea, of course. In my book I wrote that the Americans are making the same mistakes in Afghanistan as we made. That is why we need experience in order to avoid these mistakes and save the lives of soldiers and other people. I wrote this in my book, and I support all these ideas with all my heart.

### **Robert Legvold**

I want to thank all of you for allowing me to push you around as your traffic cop for two days. I'm also very grateful for the quality of the participation. I've learned an enormous amount, and I've enjoyed it even more, but now I turn the floor over to General Folmer.

## Jan Folmer

I apologise in advance for some duplication that is unavoidable having listened to the recent discussions here. If I would go outside this room and meet somebody who has not listened to our discussions today and tell him that the outcome of this discussion is that during the Cold War two parties armed to the teeth stood against each other, both in a defensive posture, he could easily come to the conclusion that the Cold War was just a charade. That might even be aggravated if I told him that both parties, to a certain extent, came to the conclusion that the use of nuclear weapons in the battlefield was also something that was deemed to be suicidal at the very least. Such a conclusion would be grossly underrating the fact that the Cold War had origins as well, and that those have led to a deep mistrust which has guided us through all the years. So I would think that this project is indeed worthwhile pursuing, especially to find out why all the assessments on both sides were always on the pessimistic side. Why have we always seen only the worst case and acted on that? I think that then automatically we could, at the same time, find out why we have so stuck to our perceptions, or to what our chairman said, to the stereotypes. I think that that would be a worthwhile extension of this study, and I would be very curious to see what comes out of that.

## Closing session

### Alyson Bailes

I am happy to say a last word on behalf of SIPRI. Thank you all again for giving us the opportunity to co-sponsor and take part in this discussion. I agree that it has been a fascinating experience that leaves one wanting more. I think all the suggestions we've heard for further discussions are well worthwhile. I think that my original hope for a good human contact and human atmosphere has been fully realised here. We've all shared that

experience. We've shared this strange feeling of, at the same time, feeling younger as we go back and put ourselves in the position in which we were in those difficult years, and older, also in a good way, because we can look back with some new wisdom and certainly with a wish to avoid repeating the same mistakes, if possible.

One thing I would take away from this is this great importance of transparency, of correct information, correct assessment. During the Cold War, many people struggled to achieve that: SIPRI and other NGOs in one way, and very professional spies in another way, and perhaps we should be glad that they spread a bit more understanding between the two sides. But information is never really good enough. Understanding is never really good enough. The present cases that have been mentioned here – Iraq, Iran, and perhaps also Chechnya – all prove that, and certainly it encourages me to encourage my institute to go on working for that transparency, and we will be happy to go on working with all of you.

### Lars Wedin

We are very happy that you have chosen our College here as a venue for this very important meeting. It has been a great experience. I was a student on the command course here from 1979 to 1981, so this has been a repetition of all those interesting abbreviations like MIRV, SSBNs, Forward Edge of the Battlefield, and so on. I also understand that you are now discussing having a session later on about the northern flank, and that will of course be a very good idea, and I hope that you will not forget a certain country in the middle of that northern flank which played, or didn't play, some kind of role during those difficult years.

There is another aspect which I personally feel very strongly about, because from 1990 to 1998, I worked in arms control and CSBM,<sup>153</sup> and things like that, and since that experience, I'm quite convinced that that



work with the Vienna Documents<sup>154</sup> and the CFE Treaty<sup>155</sup> and so on and so forth played an important role in changing the attitudes of Europe's military from their posture of deterrence and their feeling of distrust into some kind of culture of military cooperation and transparency and openness. The important question is, of course, is this something which we can keep? Can we still use these ideas, because as the moderator said, there are still some images of the enemies left? Have they lost their importance? And of course, this experience may possibly be used somewhere else.

I will end with a story which may be a bit sobering, but anyway I think it can shed some light on that issue. When I was a military adviser in Vienna in 1995 we had a meeting with a Pakistani general. I was with a couple of my colleagues – Russians, Americans, Dutch, and so on. After an hour or so, the Pakistani general said, “Well, really you don't understand this. We know each other, and we know that we hate each other.” And somewhere we lost track of what we said, so maybe this shows that in some situations there are other issues and possibilities that we need to find.

### **Vojtech Mastny**

Let me remind you that the PHP is a network rather than an institution, and it is often as a result of meetings like this that the network is reaffirmed and expanded, so I am particularly pleased that this has happened again at this meeting. We already have the prospect of no less than two follow-up conferences, one on the northern flank and one on the southern flank. I very much look forward to the continuation of the network, and with regard to the first conference, I want to assure our Swedish hosts that their not-so-little country in the middle of the North will certainly not be forgotten.

154 The 17 November 1990 Vienna document on confidence- and security-building measures and subsequent documents of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

155 The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), signed on 19 November 1990 by the members of NATO and the Warsaw Pact, established parity in major conventional forces and armaments between East and West from the Atlantic to the Urals.

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