Stalin's Postwar Army Reappraised

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At the end of World War II, the Soviet army was considered a major threat to the security of Western Europe, one that could be deterred only by U.S. possession of the atomic bomb. In the words of Winston Churchill, "it is indeed a melancholy thought that nothing preserves Europe from an overwhelming military attack except the devastating resources of the United States in this awful weapon."[1]

The perception of Soviet conventional armies as overly large, offensively oriented, and invincibly strong was the driving force behind the formation of a Western military alliance and a major determinant in the evolution of U.S. nuclear strategy.[2] In the United States, the popular press supported the notion that a Soviet conventional invasion of Western Europe could be countered only by U.S. strategic air power and nuclear weapons. As one *Newsweek* article from 1948 described the situation:

In the great Washington debate on American defense requirements, the chief emphasis is put on knocking out Russia in any future war. The temporary overrunning of Europe by the Red Army is taken for granted.[3]

The balance of East–West conventional forces presented—175 Soviet divisions and 75 East European divisions to less than a score of Western divisions— did indeed make the prospects for a nonnuclear defense of Western Europe appear bleak.[4]

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1. Winston Churchill, "The Peril in Europe," a political party broadcast, August 26, 1950, in *The Collected Works of Sir Winston Churchill* (London: Cassell, 1975), Vol. 29, p. 29.
2. For a discussion of other factors bearing on early U.S. nuclear weapons decisions, see Gregg Herken, *The Winning Weapon: The Atomic Bomb in the Cold War 1945–1950* (New York: Knopf, 1980).
3. *Newsweek*, May 10, 1948, p. 32.
4. A typical presentation is an article entitled "Russia's Edge in Men and Arms," *U.S. News and*

This study attempts to refute the common perception of an overwhelming Soviet conventional threat to Western Europe during the early postwar period by assessing the military capabilities of Stalin's army for launching a successful invasion. The analysis focuses on the period 1947–1948, which coincides with the completion of Soviet demobilization and the beginning of discussions in the West leading to the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1949. It seems now that the Soviet military threat was considerably exaggerated during this period. Indeed, the notion of an overwhelmingly large Soviet army facing only token Western forces was inaccurate. Moreover, it appears that Soviet troops were not capable of executing the kind of invasion feared in the West during the late 1940s, due in part to strictly military considerations, and also to the fact that many of them were engaged in nonmilitary tasks instead of in training for an offensive.

Early Estimates of Soviet Conventional Forces

As a starting point for assessing Soviet ground forces' capabilities and comparing them to those of the West during the early postwar years, one should consider the overall size of forces. This is the aspect of Soviet military power that dominated public discussion at the time, and does to a large extent today as well. Public perceptions of Soviet preponderance of ground forces divisions corresponded in general to U.S. intelligence reports of the time. For example, in 1948 the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) estimated Soviet divisions at about 175, the same number that most frequently appeared in the press.[5]

Unfortunately, U.S. intelligence reports of Soviet manpower in the early postwar period did not specify whether the 175 estimated Soviet divisions were full-strength, combat-ready divisions, or whether they were only partial-strength or cadre (paper) divisions. All 175 divisions were referred to as

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World Report, April 2, 1948, pp. 23–25, the first paragraph of which reads: "Russia, at this stage, is the world's No. 1 military power. Russia's armies and air forces are in a position to pour across Europe and into Asia almost at will."

5. For JCS estimates, see Joint Intelligence Committee, "Soviet Intentions and Capabilities 1949, 1956/7," December 2, 1948; Joint War Plans Committee, "'BROILER': Joint Outline War Plan for Fiscal Year 1949," December 18, 1947; "Planning Guidance for Medium-Range Emergency Plan," April 6, 1948. Nearly all of the intelligence documents cited in this essay are available either through a microfilm collection, *Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Part II: 1946–1953, The Soviet Union*, ed. Paul Kesaris (Frederick, Md.: University Publications of America, 1979), or a microfiche collection, *Declassified Document Reference Service* (Arlington, Va.: Carrollton Press, U.S. Historical Documents Institute, various years).

"line divisions," with no definition of the term.[6] During the mid-1950s, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in its classified reports began to describe line divisions as having about 70 percent of their average wartime strength. In 1957, a CIA estimate revealed what is now generally accepted about contemporary Soviet divisional strength—that actual manpower levels vary according to location of divisions. The report evidently went on to give more specific details, but these have been "sanitized" from the declassified version.[7]

Not until the Kennedy Administration did the public finally learn that not all Soviet divisions were full-strength and combat-ready, but even this information pertained solely to Soviet strength at that time.[8] Only recently have some observers questioned the notion that the Soviet army during the early postwar years fielded 175 full-strength divisions. Paul Nitze not long ago suggested that the breakdown at the time was on the order of one-third full strength, one-third partial strength, and one-third cadre.[9]

Despite this revelation, it is still commonly believed that the Soviet Union did not demobilize its ground forces at the end of World War II. This is not the case. The first two stages of demobilization took place during 1945, following a decree of the Supreme Soviet issued on June 23 of that year. Thirty-three classes of conscripts and 28,700 officers were demobilized. The

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6. See for example JIC Report, December 2, 1948, p. 22.
7. For estimates of line division strength, see CIA National Intelligence Estimate 11-3-55, "Soviet Capabilities and Probable Soviet Courses of Action through 1960," May 17, 1955, p. 49, and NIE 11-4-57, "Main Trends in Soviet Capabilities and Policies 1957–1962," November 12, 1957, p. 29. The latter is the report with information on Soviet deployments removed. In addition, most information on Soviet nuclear weapons development has been "sanitized," along with all CIA evidence for the "bomber gap," later disproved. Regarding Soviet divisional strength, one JCS report from 1946 suggested that 68 out of an estimated 156 rifle divisions were at only 75-percent strength, but this information never made it into subsequent reports or public discussion. See JWPC 432/7, "Tentative Over-All Strategic Concept and Estimate of Initial Operations—Short Title: 'PINCHER,'" June 18, 1946, p. 22.
8. See speech of Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Nitze to Council on World Affairs, March 2, 1963, cited in Richard J. Barnet and Marcus G. Raskin, *After 20 Years* (New York: Vintage Books, 1966), p. 4. Also see Chapter 4 in Alain C. Enthoven and K. Wayne Smith, *How Much Is Enough? Shaping the Defense Program, 1961–1969* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. 117–164.
9. See Samuel F. Wells, "Sounding the Tocsin: NSC 68 and the Soviet Threat," *International Security*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Fall 1979), pp. 116–158, and Paul Nitze's reply, "NSC 68 and the Soviet Threat Reconsidered," *International Security*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (Spring 1980), pp. 170–176, esp. p. 173. Enthoven and Smith wrote that, in the early 1960s, a "detailed review of the 175 [Soviet] divisions indicated that at least half of them were cadre divisions (that is, essentially paper units) with perhaps 10 percent of their manpower on board and far from 100 percent of their equipment." Enthoven and Smith, *How Much Is Enough?*, p. 136.

Table 1. Soviet Manpower Strength 1948

	Early U.S. Intelligence Predictions*	Later U.S. Intelligence Estimates**	Soviet Figures***
Total	4,500,000–4,750,000	4,000,000	n/a
Navy	700,000–950,000	1,100,000	
Air Force			2,874,000
Ground Forces	3,200,000	2,500,000	
Security Troops	600,000	400,000	n/a

n/a = not available
* Joint War Plans Committee Reports, June 18, 1946; May 15, 1947.
** Joint Intelligence Committee Report, December 2, 1948.
*** Speech by Nikita Khrushchev in *Pravda,* January 15, 1960.

third stage of demobilization was carried out from May to September 1946, and the final stages completed by the beginning of 1949.[10] The Western press at the time followed these developments while playing down their significance. Contemporary Western analysts now believe that Soviet reports of the pace of postwar demobilization are by and large accurate.[11] The main problem in public perceptions of Soviet demobilization is the fact that emphasis was always placed on the still large numbers of Soviet divisions instead of on the declining numbers of troops, an issue that will receive more attention below.

There is some evidence to suggest that the extent of Soviet demobilization took the American intelligence services by surprise. Following each stage of Soviet demobilization, U.S. intelligence reports announced downward revisions in both current estimates and predictions of Soviet strength. For example, JCS reports of June 1946 predicted that the Soviet Union would retain an armed force of 4,500,000 men, including 3,200,000 in the ground forces exclusive of security troops (see Table 1): "This figure is nearly commensurate

10. *Sovetskaia Voennaia Entsiklopediia* [Soviet Military Encyclopedia] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1976), Vol. 2, p. 351. Also see *Sovetskie vooruzhenye sily* [The Soviet armed forces] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1978), p. 374.
11. See Thomas W. Wolfe, *Soviet Power and Europe, 1945–1970* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), pp. 10–11. For contemporary coverage of Soviet demobilization, see Jerry S. Addington, "The Postwar Russian Army," *Field Artillery Journal*, March–April 1949, p. 81. For an example of downplaying Soviet demobilization, see *Newsweek*, March 29, 1948, p. 28. For a current example of the same, see *Time*, November 30, 1981, p. 40, in which a figure of 210 Soviet divisions is claimed for 1949.

Table 2. Soviet Division Strength 1948

	Early U.S. Intelligence Predictions*	Later U.S. Intelligence Estimates**	Contemporary Western Estimates***
Full-Strength	208	175	60
Partial-Strength	—	—	58
Cadre	—	—	57
Total	208	175	175
Occupation divisions in Europe	66	31	30
Occupation divisions available for an invasion of Europe	55	25–31	n/a
Additional divisions immediately available ("strategic reserve")	12	[12?]	n/a
Total divisions available for a surprise invasion of Europe	67	24–43	n/a

n/a = not available
* Joint War Plans Committee Report, June 18, 1946.
** Joint Intelligence Committee Report, December 2, 1948, except the figure of 25 which is
   from CIA Report, November 15, 1950.
*** Paul Nitze, in *International Security,* Vol. 4, No. 4 (Spring 1980), except the figure of 30
   which is from Thomas W. Wolfe, *Soviet Power and Europe,* p. 39.

with immediate occupation and security requirements, and it is doubtful if further large-scale reductions in total armed forces are contemplated during the first occupation years." The report estimated that 66 divisions out of a total 208 would be employed in Europe "on occupation duties" for several years (see Table 2).[12]

By 1948 it became clear that the Soviets had demobilized considerably more troops than U.S. intelligence reports had predicted. JCS estimates of that year (see Tables 1 and 2) began to place Soviet ground forces strength at 2,500,000 (out of a total armed forces strength of 4,000,000), and the number of Soviet divisions occupying Eastern Europe and Germany at 31 out of a total of 175. In other words, the Soviets were now deploying less than half as many divisions in Europe and altogether 700,000 fewer ground troops than the JCS had earlier deemed appropriate for security needs during the

12. JWPC Report, June 18, 1946, pp. 22–23.

first years of occupation. At this time, however, the JCS no longer described Soviet troops in terms of their occupation function, but rather as offensively oriented combat forces: "They are so disposed as to provide a highly mobile and armored spearhead for an offensive in Western Europe in the event of a war."[13]

Although most observers agreed on a figure of about 30 for Soviet divisions deployed in Eastern Europe in the late 1940s,[14] the final total for postdemobilization forces remained in dispute. Nikita Khrushchev claimed in a speech before the Supreme Soviet in January 1960 that the size of the Soviet armed forces (including, presumably, the ground forces, navy, and air forces) had decreased from 11,365,000 in 1945 to 2,874,000 in 1948.[15] This latter figure is considerably less than most Western estimates of the time, which fell around 4,000,000 for total Soviet armed forces (see Table 1).[16]

Most contemporary Western observers now agree that Khrushchev's numbers were generally accurate and that overall manpower strength of the Soviet armed forces was considerably exaggerated in the West during the early postwar years.[17] The more striking point, however, is that the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff at first predicted that the Soviets would need these large numbers of troops simply for occupation needs. Later, when the JCS was planning Soviet invasion scenarios, they used their overinflated estimates to predict invasions that the Soviets were incapable of executing, due to the decreased manpower levels resulting from earlier demobilization. The general conclusions resulting from these early studies—that the Soviets could easily sweep across Western Europe—were never revised to account for lower estimates of Soviet divisional and manpower strength.

THE INVASION SCENARIO AND THE CENTRAL BALANCE OF FORCES

In order to consider in more detail the prospects for a successful Soviet invasion, one must understand the type of attack envisaged and the forces that would be involved on both sides. Western military officials expected that the Soviets would launch a surprise attack primarily with standing forces

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13. JIC Report, December 2, 1948, p. 22.
14. Wolfe writes that this number remained fairly constant through the early 1950s, *Soviet Power and Europe*, p. 39. European military analysts, writing in the mid-1950s, expressed the same view. See, for example, *Allgemeine Schweizerische Militärzeitschrift*, December 1956, p. 928.
15. Khrushchev's speech is printed in *Pravda*, January 15, 1960.
16. See Wolfe's discussion, *Soviet Power and Europe*, pp. 10–11, esp. footnotes 3–6, where he reviews the sources of information on Soviet armed forces strength during the period.
17. Wolfe, *Soviet Power and Europe*, pp. 38–39.

in Europe (fearing that a major mobilization would spoil the surprise) and that they would employ a *blitzkrieg* strategy.

In 1947, the Joint War Plans Committee (JWPC) of the JCS described the probable attack as "developing in three thrusts, i.e., (1) across the north German plain, (2) from Thuringa [*sic*] southwest through the Lorraine Gap and thence, down the Rhone Valley, and (3) into the Danish Peninsula."[18] Soviet troops deployed in such an attack would presumably be those stationed in Germany, Austria, Poland, and the western USSR, and perhaps some transferred from occupation duty in the Balkans. The Soviets had no troops deployed in Czechoslovakia during these years (until 1968), although such deployments would have made sense for an invasion through southern Germany into France.[19]

The JCS considered the native troops of Poland and Czechoslovakia too unreliable to participate in a Soviet invasion, and expected that Soviet troops would most likely have to contend with uprisings in those countries in the event of war. With respect to Poland, for example: "The estimated 100,000 armed members of the underground would be joined by the majority of the Polish population in the event of an armed conflict between Russia and the Western Powers."[20] Another source considered the reliability of the Czechoslovak army "highly questionable."[21] The JCS made similar assessments of the armies of Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary. It should be noted that these views were in marked contrast to the popular perceptions of the time (and of the present), which envisaged 75 fully armed satellite divisions fighting loyally alongside the Russians.[22]

The JWPC estimated that about 67 Soviet divisions would be employed in an invasion of Western Europe. This figure was derived from the assumption that Soviet postdemobilization strength would be 208 divisions, 66 of which would be deployed on occupation duty in Europe (see Table 2). The report suggested that 55 of these divisions, plus 12 divisions "in strategic reserve"

18. Joint War Plans Committee, "Strategic Study of Western and Northern Europe," May 15, 1947, p. 36.
19. JWPC, December 18, 1947, p. 71.
20. JWPC, May 15, 1947, p. 62.
21. *Brassey's Annual: The Armed Forces Yearbook* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1951), p. 265. The JWPC Report, May 15, 1947, p. 36, expresses the same opinion in much the same words.
22. JCS 2073/7, "Intelligence Guidance for the US Representatives on the Regional Planning Groups of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization," n.d. [1949?], p. 92. For popular descriptions of the satellite divisions, see *Newsweek*, March 29, 1948, p. 28, or May 17, 1948, p. 30.

in the western USSR, would be "available for offensive operations outside the USSR within a relatively short time."[23]

Thus, 67 divisions would be available, but only on two conditions: (1) "provided some satellite divisions could be used to relieve Soviet divisions," and (2) "provided no serious disturbances occurred in occupied countries." The remaining Soviet divisions (estimated at 120), the report suggested, would "be utilized to run the complicated training and military administration within the USSR, and to perform the necessary garrison supply and security functions."[24]

Although U.S. military planners used estimates of Soviet divisions in their war scenarios and in public presentations of the Soviet military threat, these are not the relevant measure of Soviet conventional strength. The reason is that Soviet divisions are not equivalent to Western divisions. They are much smaller in manpower and lack the extensive logistical and support services of Western divisions.

Soviet division strength during the early postwar period ranged from 9,000–12,000 men, depending on type of division. A "division slice," including supporting troops, was estimated at 13,000–15,000.[25] Western division strength ranged from 16,000–18,000, while the strength of a Western division slice averaged about 40,000.[26]

Systems analysts of the Defense Department during the Kennedy Administration claimed that the support "tail" of Western divisions contributed significantly to the effectiveness of the combat "teeth," such that a Western division slice, if nearly three times larger than its Soviet counterpart, should be that much more effective as well.[27] The argument also holds for the earlier period. Thus, a relevant comparison of Soviet and Western forces should be based on manpower strength instead of division strength.

To test the plausibility of JCS war scenarios, it makes sense to translate their divisional estimates into manpower figures and compare these to the forces deployed in the West.

23. JWPC Report, June 18, 1946, p. 23. Another JWPC Report, from May 15, 1947, suggested that 58 Soviet divisions would be employed in an invasion of Western Europe.
24. JWPC Report, June 18, 1946, p. 23.
25. Joint Intelligence Staff, "Logistics Requirements of Soviet Divisions," November 4, 1946, pp. 1–6. See also Louis B. Ely, *The Red Army Today* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Military Service Publishing Co., 1949), esp. Appendix 1, "Comparison of Soviet and Western Divisions," pp. 211–219.
26. Joint Intelligence Committee, "A Comparison of Fighting Values of Russian and Allied Forces," September 21, 1948. See also Enthoven and Smith, *How Much Is Enough?*, p. 140.
27. Enthoven and Śmith, *How Much Is Enough?*, p. 140.

How many men, then, would have been available for a Soviet invasion of Western Europe? If most Soviet forces in Eastern Europe were not required for occupation functions, the maximum number of divisions available throughout occupied Europe and the Balkans would be 31. In the original scenarios, the JCS estimated that 55 out of a total 66 occupation divisions would take part in an invasion, but by 1948 had revised the estimate for total divisions down to 31 without specifying how many of these would now be used in an invasion (see Table 2). CIA estimates of the time suggested an attacking force of about 25 divisions.[28]

If 25 or 30 divisions were at full complement with supporting troops, they would represent a force of about 500,000, the figure usually given for total Soviet manpower in occupied Europe.[29] If the 12 divisions in "strategic reserve" were added to this figure, assuming full strength and support, this would mean a total of 700,000–800,000 troops. It is doubtful, however, that such a strategic reserve force, if it existed, would have been at full combat strength. Even in 1955, when according to Khrushchev the Soviet armed forces were at a postwar peak in manpower, the CIA estimated "line divisions" at only 70 percent of wartime manpower complement.[30] In any case, if the Soviets did have 700,000–800,000 troops immediately available for an invasion of Western Europe, what troops were deployed in the West to oppose them?

The Western forces available to face a Soviet attack of the type described by the JCS would be those on occupation duty in Germany and Austria, plus those in the countries being invaded: Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, and France.[31]

The Western occupation forces on duty in Germany and Austria in 1947–1948 consisted of those of the following countries: United Kingdom (140,000),

28. CIA National Intelligence Estimate, NIE-3, "Soviet Capabilities and Intentions," November 15, 1950, p. 5. None of these documents gave more detailed information on Soviet deployments in Europe other than an overall number of divisions, without even a breakdown by country. This is even true for the document cited above, JCS 2073/7, that was supposedly intended to assist NATO regional planning.
29. See Wolfe, *Soviet Power and Europe*, p. 39.
30. See Khrushchev's speech in *Pravda*, January 15, 1960. For the CIA estimate, see NIE 11-3-55, May 17, 1955, p. 49.
31. In one 1947 JCS Report, some doubt was expressed as to the reliability of the French forces, due to the presence of Communists in the French government and Communist strength in the trade union movement. By 1948, however, with Communists no longer represented in the government, JCS reports included French forces in the Western totals without reservation. See JIC Report, December 2, 1948, p. 30, or a later JIC Report, "Most Likely Period for Initiation of Hostilities between USSR and the Western Powers," August 22, 1950, p. 25.

United States (126,000), France (80,000), Belgium (24,000), Norway (4,400), and Denmark (4,000). To these nearly 400,000 troops should be added the home armies of France (270,000), the Netherlands (108,000), Belgium (50,000), and Denmark (22,000), for a grand total of somewhat more than 800,000.[32]

In short, the tally of East–West forces appears quite different from the one commonly accepted. Part of the difference consists simply in counting soldiers instead of divisions. It has been and still is common practice, especially in the popular press, to compare only numbers of divisions in assessing the East–West balance. For the early postwar period, such a method suggested a Soviet numerical superiority of a magnitude of ten. When one considers, however, that Soviet divisional manpower has historically numbered 50 to 60 percent of Western divisional manpower, and that Soviet divisions have far fewer support troops, the picture looks different. Considering the 700,000–800,000 Soviet troops estimated by the JCS as likely to take part in an invasion of Europe, and the 800,000 Western troops available to oppose them, an image of rough parity emerges.

One may argue, however, that as the JCS overestimated the number of Soviet divisions that would be used to occupy Europe, so they may have overestimated the number that would need to remain in the interior of the Soviet Union in the event of an invasion. It is also possible to disagree with the JCS evaluation of Eastern European armies, and to suggest that they could have been employed successfully in a Soviet invasion.

Even with the addition of such a sizable contingent of forces, however, the Soviets would not have had the three-to-one numerical superiority generally considered necessary for military commanders to feel confident of the success of an invasion. They would be far from the superiority in manpower,

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32. These figures are taken primarily from JIC Report, December 2, 1948, supplemented by a major *New York Times* study published in that paper on May 12, 1947, pp. 1, 14. The estimates given here are the lowest of those found in any of the studies—higher figures are possible. For example, the *New York Times* estimated British forces stationed in Germany as high as 250,000. Not included in the figures presented here are about 100,000 French forces fighting in Indochina, another 100,000 French forces stationed in North Africa, 60,000 Dutch troops stationed in Indonesia, and 17,000 Belgian troops stationed in the Congo. See *New York Times*, p. 14. The indigenous armies of Norway and Italy are not counted in this comparison, since they would not immediately be involved in a Soviet invasion of Central Europe. Nor are the British and American forces stationed in Italy included, although in the event of an invasion, they would most likely be transferred quickly, as would indigenous forces from Britain and the United States. Even with these forces excluded, the image is not the commonly accepted one, as described in one popular article: "Military strength [in Western Europe] is almost negligible. Except for England, there is no military establishment worth the name in all Western Europe. France is without an Army." *U.S. News and World Report*, March 19, 1948, p. 12.

weapons, and airpower that Soviet military writers credit with allowing the Soviet Army to drive back the Germans during World War II.[33]

Soviet Military Capabilities

Although, based on their capabilities or functions, the Western forces in early postwar Europe were not particularly suited to wage another war, the Soviet forces were even less so.[34] Soviet troops were not capable of executing the type of invasion that many Western observers expected during the early postwar period. Soviet forces were severely lacking in many important components of military capability, including transportation, equipment, and troop morale. They were not the "highly mobile and armored spearhead" of many Western popular and military writings.

Perhaps the most obvious major indication of an army's ability to execute a rapid invasion is military transport. Thus, if the Soviet army were oriented toward or capable of a *blitzkrieg* invasion of Europe during the early postwar period, this should be reflected in the transport capabilities of its forces.

One analyst of military affairs describes the Soviet transport situation during the war as follows:

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33. For example, in the drive from Warsaw to Berlin in the spring of 1945, Soviet sources claim an initial superiority of 5.5:1 in manpower, 7.8:1 in guns, 5.7:1 in tanks, and 17.6:1 in planes. See *Istoriia Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voiny Sovetskogo Soiuza* [History of the great patriotic war of the Soviet Union] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1960–1963), Vol. 5, p. 57, cited in Alexander Werth, *Russia at War 1941–1945* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1964), p. 953. German estimates are even higher— 11:1 in infantry, 7:1 in tanks, and 20:1 in guns. See Albert Seaton, *The Russo–German War 1941– 1945* (New York: Praeger, 1970), p. 527.
34. The notion of complete lack of coordination among the Western forces before the formation of NATO is not completely accurate. Already toward the end of 1946, the British and American military leaders in charge of the occupation of Germany were in such close collaboration that they began planning to merge their zones into "Bizonia," coordinating their political and economic policies. France added its zone in 1948. See Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), pp. 230, 333–334, 366, 370. Military coordination was proceeding as well. A National Security Council document of early 1949 instructed the American commander in Europe "to take offensive action against the USSR if the USSR attacks the forces or installations of other Western European occupying powers, even without actual attack on United States forces or installations," to "notify the Commander of the occupation forces of the United Kingdom and France of your intentions," and to "effect with them all practicable coordination measures." See NSC 39, "A Report to the National Security Council by the Secretary of Defense on Proposed Directive to the Commander in Chief, European Command, on Implementation of Emergency Plans," January 24, 1949, pp. 1–2. An NSC memorandum of the following day stressed that these coordination measures were in no way related to the Brussels Treaty or to discussions on the formation of NATO. See "Analysis of the Implications Involved in the Issuance of the Directive to CINCEUR Proposed in NSC 39," January 25, 1949, p. 3.

The quick support of tanks by infantry elements, and mobile combination between the two, was hindered by the lack of any armored carriers or other cross-country vehicles. That meant waiting until infantry brigades or divisions could be brought up in trucks—and these might be stuck far behind when the sandy roads turned into mud. . . . The mass of the army was much worse equipped. Even the volume of American supplies did not go far in making up the shortage of trucks, and most of them were needed to carry the infantry parts of the armored corps or for the rear services. The ordinary infantry divisions had to scrape along with a make-shift collection of horse transport—and little of that.[35]

In the immediate postwar years, the transport situation was no better. As late as 1950, half of the transport of the standing army was horse-drawn.[36] Horse transport was phased out by 1954–1955, but continued to be utilized in the reserves.[37] During the first five years of the postwar period, although the Soviet forces were extensively reorganized, they were still equipped with World War II materiel.[38] Such a state of affairs may have allowed the Soviets to drive back the Germans in a long war of attrition, but it indicates no serious capability for a *blitzkrieg*.

In addition to the poor state of Soviet transport equipment, the conditions of the roads and railways in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe would certainly have hindered an invasion of Western Europe. One report of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff described the state of road transportation in Eastern Europe in 1947 as follows:

Highways are in a very low state of repair. Practically all bridges of any consequence on east–west routes were destroyed during the war and are being replaced very slowly. There is little maintenance work in evidence in

35. B.H. Liddell Hart, "The Red Army: A Searching Analysis of Russian Men and Tactics," in *Ordnance*, July–August 1949, p. 27.
36. Edgar O'Ballance, *The Red Army* (London: Faber & Faber, 1964), p. 192.
37. A. Dunin, "Razvitie sukhoputnykh voisk v poslevoennyi period" [The development of the ground forces in the postwar period], in *Voenno–Istoricheskii Zhurnal* [Military–historical journal], Number 5 (May 1978), p. 33. Also, *Sovetskie vooruzhenye sily*, p. 393.
38. Wolfe, *Soviet Power and Europe*, p. 38, fn. 15. See also M. Povalii, "Development of Soviet Military Strategy," in *Voennaia Mysl'* [Military thought], Number 2 (February 1967), p. 68 (translation of the Foreign Broadcast Information Service). It should also be noted in regard to equipment that, as World War II demonstrated, Soviet weapons systems did not achieve nearly the high level of technical sophistication as their American and British counterparts. The most notable examples are in radar and radar beam technology, night fighter aircraft, and jet engine technology. See R.V. Jones, *The Wizard War: British Scientific Intelligence 1939–1945* (New York: Coward, McCann, and Georghegan, 1978).

Poland. Speeds on some of the principal roads are limited to from 10 to 15 m.p.h. because of rough surfaces and temporary bridge construction.[39]

Conditions in the Western regions of the USSR were equally bad:

At the conclusion of hostilities, the road system constituted a serious weakness in motor transport capabilities. Wartime demolition and excessively heavy use by the Germans without adequate maintenance damaged a total of 91,000 km. of main Soviet roads and destroyed 90,000 road bridges measuring 930 km. Although this damage in many places had been temporarily repaired or by-passed, a substantial volume of more permanent construction of roads and bridges is still needed to attain even the low prewar level.[40]

In the event of a Soviet invasion of Western Europe, troops in the western USSR would rely on the railway system, "the basic framework for military transportation,"[41] in order to travel to the front. During the early postwar years, they would have faced the same kind of problems as with the road transport system, due to extensive wartime destruction. From 35,000 to 65,000 km of railway track was destroyed during the war, and 80 percent of the railway bridges seriously damaged.[42]

Another major impediment to a rapid advance to the front would have been simply that Soviet and Eastern European track gauges are not the same. The Eastern European tracks are of standard European gauge (4 ft. 8 1/2 in.), whereas Soviet track is wider (5 ft.).[43] Thus, troops traveling from the western Soviet Union into Poland, for example, would have to stop at the border and transfer all of their equipment from Soviet to Polish cars before continuing the journey. As one JCS report stated, "The additional problems involved in transshipment between the Soviet Union and satellite areas resulting from gauge differences cannot be overemphasized."[44]

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39. Joint Intelligence Staff, "Soviet Logistics Capabilities for Support of Iberian Campaign and Air Assault on Great Britain," March 5, 1947, p. 22.
40. Joint Intelligence Staff, "Capabilities and Intentions of the USSR in the Post-War Period," July 9, 1946, p. 34.
41. Raymond L. Garthoff, *Soviet Military Doctrine* (Santa Monica, Calif.: The Rand Corporation, 1953), p. 292. According to the JCS as well: "Movement of Soviet troops and military reserves from widely dispersed points in Western USSR and satellite countries depends primarily upon rail transportation." See JCS, "Estimate of the Over-all Effect of Air Bombing on the Industrial Capacity of the USSR on the Soviet Capability to Prosecute a Campaign in Western Europe," May 28, 1952, p. 309.
42. JIS Report, July 9, 1946, for the figure of 35,000 km and the bridge damage assessment, pp. 29–30. For the figure of 65,000 km, *Tyl Sovetskoi Armii* [The rear services of the Soviet army] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1968), p. 274.
43. JCS Report, May 28, 1952, pp. 328–329.
44. JIC Report, December 2, 1948, p. 18.

Those problems would be further compounded by the fact that the Soviet reparations effort had entailed removal of a good deal of Eastern Germany's rails.[45] Such factors do not indicate the ability to execute a rapid invasion.

In addition to their transport problems, the very structure and equipment of postwar Soviet divisions would not have allowed for the flexibility and mobility necessary to carry out a successful *blitzkrieg*. This is due to the fact that, in achieving a high "tooth-to-tail ratio" (combat troops to support troops), Soviet divisions sacrificed important communications, reconnaissance, and logistics capabilities that Western units maintained. For example, each American artillery battalion of the late 1940s used two light airplanes for observation purposes and a radar system for locating enemy mortar. The Soviets, on the other hand, relied on the captain of a battery serving at an observation post, "seeing all he can, but seldom seeing enough."[46]

Western divisions, by utilizing more men to support their communications systems (nearly 1,500 per division compared to about 500 for the Soviets) were better able to maneuver their forces and achieve a quick massing of fire at the appropriate time and place—capabilities required by a *blitzkrieg* strategy.[47] Soviet maneuverability was hampered by the small number of personnel, relative to Western divisions, intended to handle ammunition, and the fact that Soviet divisions provided no replacements for the killed and wounded. As one contemporary observer described the consequences:

A Red Army unit commander is likely not to have sufficient ammunition at the right place at the right time in a rapidly moving, fluid situation. . . . When [personnel] losses occur, weapons move more slowly, fire control bogs down, ammunition fails to arrive. The Russian commander seeks to overcome this through demands for superhuman exertion, but his men are not superhuman. . . . Ultimately, a division engaged for long in serious fighting must be withdrawn from the line, refilled, perhaps retrained, and restored to combat.[48]

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45. In regard to the rail situation in eastern Germany, J.P. Nettl writes that, "by the end of 1946 some 5,500 km. of track had been dismantled, consisting of 1,800 km. of single or double track totally removed, and 3,700 km. of double or single track reduction. This is 29 per cent of the total system, and includes some 9,000 switches, or 35 per cent of the total. As far as track installations are concerned, dismantling was not confined to removed track, but extended to most of the central German main lines, Berlin–Leipzig, Magdeburg–Berlin, Berlin–Frankfurt/Oder and Berlin–Stettin, etc. Signalling installations, safety devices, and telephone facilities were mainly affected." See Nettl, *The Eastern Zone and Soviet Policy in Germany, 1945–50* (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), p. 185.
46. Ely, *Red Army Today*, p. 215.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid., pp. 215–216. Another contemporary observer, British Major General J.F.C. Fuller

Another important consideration in assessing the effectiveness of Soviet troops for executing an invasion is morale. Stalin recognized the significance of morale in listing it as one of his five "permanently operating factors" necessary for victory in war.

If Stalin truly judged his army on the basis of morale, he had much cause for dissatisfaction with his troops on occupation duty in Europe. CIA reports of the late 1940s noted a "high rate of disaffection and desertion prevalent among present Soviet occupation forces."[49] Low morale was the product of the extremely harsh conditions under which Soviet troops were forced to live, in countries quite hostile to Soviet occupation.[50] Desertions numbered in the tens of thousands.[51] Within the USSR too there were evidently serious

made the following comment: "Although Russia may have from 200 to 300 divisions, it is highly improbable, should it come to war, that the Soviets could maintain more than 20 to 25 divisions on a fighting footing in Western Germany because of the inefficiency of their communications." Quoted in *Newsweek*, February 28, 1948, p. 28.

49. CIA, "The Strategic Value to the USSR of the Conquest of Western Europe and the Near East (to Cairo) prior to 1950," ORE 58-48 (Appendices), October 27, 1948, p. 44.

50. One observer describes the Soviet soldiers' lot, even in the later postwar period of 1949–1952, as follows: "These years were the harshest for the ordinary conscripts and officers . . . especially those who were stationed abroad. . . . Rations normally consisted of a meat or fish soup and bread, with small quantities of coarse tobacco for cigarette and pipe smokers; canteens for enlisted men were poorly stocked, and items like tea or sugar were at this time almost impossible to obtain. During his first two years of service an enlisted man received about 95 kopecks a day, 25 cents at the official exchange rate in 1951, and no marriage allowance was payable unless he had five or more children; on top of this he was required to 'volunteer' part of his meager pay to state loans. . . . Enlisted men stationed in Europe were subjected to an exceptionally harsh code of discipline. They were permanently confined to barracks, except when marching out on duty in groups, and punishments for fraternizing with the local population ranged from demotion with short terms of imprisonment to twenty years of hard labor in Siberia." J.M. Mackintosh, *Juggernaut: A History of the Soviet Armed Forces* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1967), pp. 280–281.

51. "The wave of desertions which affected the Soviet forces in Germany and Austria in particular was unique in history for it concerned a victorious army, which did not include professional troops, in peacetime. A significant detail was that among the deserters there were many officers and a high percentage of Great Russians. It is obviously difficult to evaluate the number of desertions: the figure of 75,000 which is not impossible, has been suggested." Michel Garder, *A History of the Soviet Army* (London: Paul Mall Press, 1966), p. 129. Another historian mentions "the desertion of thousands of Red Army men in Rumania in the summer of 1944," and suggests that most Soviet soldiers deserted out of fear of returning to the USSR: "The main body of soldiers was submitted to a purge, which reached its height in 1947. Soviet troops who had been prisoners of war were treated very severely. Special attention was paid to military forces abroad, and large numbers of men were recalled for interrogation. One Soviet defector estimates that at least 20 percent of the Soviet administration in East Germany was arrested over a period of three years." R.W. Pethybridge, *A History of Postwar Russia* (New York: New American Library, 1966), pp. 28, 66. The numbers of desertions are impossible to determine accurately because so many deserters did not report to Western authorities, fearing the forced repatriation policies of Russia's allies. The scale of desertions may have some mitigating influence on the force estimates discussed in the first part of this paper, but probably not on more than

problems with morale and discipline.[52] This information suggests that, in terms of morale and reliability, the Soviet occupation forces were not likely to be the effective instruments of an all-out blitz against Europe, about which so many contemporary observers warned.

Functions and Activities of the Soviet Army

Soviet forces were employed for so many diverse functions during the early postwar period that training and preparation for an invasion of Western Europe clearly could not have been their primary activity.

Soviet military forces played a central occupation role in Eastern Europe and Germany, were agents of Soviet reparations policy, and carried out Stalin's campaign of political repression in Eastern Europe and among the national minorities in the Soviet Union. Finally, the Soviet army was a major source of labor, upon which Stalin relied for restoring the extensive damage left in the wake of the German armies. Soviet troops were engaged in activities ranging from de-activating German land mines, to working on collective farms, to rebuilding destroyed industrial facilities and apartment complexes. These largely civilian tasks are rarely taken into consideration when assessing Soviet military capability or the size of the Soviet armed forces.

Many Soviet troops in Germany were extensively engaged in occupation duties, to a much greater extent than their Western counterparts.[53] In addi-

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a short-term basis. Rather, it may serve as a partial rationale for the large body of trained reserves conscripted annually in the Soviet Union during this period—a point often emphasized by those who feared a Soviet ground forces invasion. In light of the notion that the Soviet military was forced to replace as many as several thousand deserters each month during the period 1945–1948, it was quite sensible to want to replace them with fresh, young, well-indoctrinated conscripts. These would not have suffered the rigors of battle and would be less inclined to flee the continued oppression of occupation duty in hostile countries.

52. This impression is obtained by reading between the lines in the official histories of the Soviet military districts. For example, from the Kiev district history: "It was necessary to subdue demobilization moods among a certain part of the soldiers, eliminate elements of self-satisfaction and presumptuousness, convince the personnel that even in peacetime high degrees of organization, discipline, and improvement of military mastery are needed." *Istoriia krasnoznamennogo Kievskogo voennogo okruga* [History of the Red Banner Kiev Military District] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1974), hereafter cited as *Kiev MD*, p. 303. Similar reports are found in the histories of the other military districts, for example in *Istoriia ordena Lenina Leningradskogo voennogo okruga* [History of the Order of Lenin Leningrad Military District] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1974), hereafter cited as *Leningrad MD*, p. 454.

53. One observer, who served as Chief of the British Mission in the Soviet-occupied zone of Germany, describes their role in the following manner: "In contrast to the methods of the Western Allies, all Russian occupation control at this period rested in military hands, and no civil officials were to be seen, except for a limited number of political officers at higher head-

tion, they played a role which had no parallel in the Western zones, by carrying out the Soviet reparations policy.

The issue of reparations was an extremely important one for the Soviets, one "on which the Soviet claims were strongest and most justified," according to Adam Ulam.[54] J.P. Nettl considered reparations "the most important reason for [Soviet] presence in Germany," and described the extent to which the Soviet Military Administration and the Red Army were obliged to assist Soviet reparations teams. At times, work was handled exclusively by untrained army personnel, resulting in considerable damage to the facilities being dismantled.[55]

Soviet soldiers carried out a "reparations policy" of sorts in Eastern Europe as well, and economic exploitation of this region served as a means of rebuilding the devastated Soviet economy.[56] The main role of Soviet military

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quarters, easily recognizable by their distinctive uniform. The occupational military government and administration was, in fact, carried out by entirely separate military headquarters and troops, the military governorships corresponding to the former provincial and lander [sic] divisions of the zone." Many of the staff officers serving occupation duty were either elderly or medically unfit due to having been wounded. The troops themselves were "of poor quality, indifferently clothed, and, as regards transport, at any rate, ill found in equipment." L.C. Manners-Smith, "The Soviet Army in Occupation: The Second Phase," in B.H. Liddell Hart, ed., *The Soviet Army* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1956), pp. 190–191. The potential of these troops for combat duty was apparently not great.

54. Adam B. Ulam, *Expansion and Coexistence: Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917–1973* (New York: Praeger, 1974), p. 392.

55. According to Nettl, over a thousand factories were dismantled and more than 500,000 wagonloads of reparations goods were shipped from Germany to the Soviet Union by mid-1947. See *Eastern Zone and Soviet Policy,* Chapter 7, esp. pp. 200–201, 232–234, 299–305. See also Frank A. Keating, "The Soviet Army's Behaviour in Victory and Occupation: The First Phase," in Liddell Hart, *Soviet Army,* p. 185.

56. Soviet sources discuss the nonmilitary functions of Soviet troops in Eastern Europe, particularly in regard to the Rear Services or *Tyl.* Needless to say, it is their role in economic reconstruction, not exploitation, of Eastern Europe that is emphasized: "To restore the economy of European countries, liberated by our army from the German fascist occupation, which had been ravaged and plundered by Hitler's armies, the Soviet Union delivered machines, machine tools, motor vehicles, fuel and industrial raw materials. Poland received a large amount of aid, especially in the restoration of the Upper Silesian coal basin, and so did the petroleum-extracting and petroleum-processing industry of Rumania." While there may be some doubt as to the nature of the Rear Services' work in Eastern Europe, the system was certainly quite extensive. During the early postwar period, 400 *Tyl* officers were stationed in Berlin alone. They supervised "the operation of transport, telegraph stations, bath houses, laundry establishments, bakeries, water supply systems, and other public services." In addition, the *Tyl* was responsible for handling the massive shipments of grain from the Soviet Union to Czechoslovakia in 1947, following U.S. refusal of food aid, and for salvaging works of art from the Dresden and Berlin museums. See I. Bagramian, "Development of Rear Services of Soviet Armed Forces," in *Voennaia Mysl',* Number 4 (April 1967), p. 31 (FBIS translation). On the grain shipment issue, see Yergin, *Shattered Peace,* p. 345.

force in Eastern Europe, however, seems to have been political repression. Stalin stationed his troops in those countries in which the potential for or reality of anti-Soviet activity was most evident, and did not do so in countries, such as Czechoslovakia and Finland, which he considered more reliable.[57]

Some Soviet sources acknowledge the explicitly political role of Soviet troops stationed in Europe. One such source describes in typical Soviet formulation the function of the Southern Group of forces in suppressing anti-Soviet activity in Bulgaria and Romania. Soviet troops were "entrusted with one of the most important political tasks—protecting the workers of Bulgaria and Romania from internal counter-revolution and external intervention, rendering them fraternal help in the construction of socialism." Their role in economic reconstruction, "carried out together with the population," is also stressed.[58]

Troops stationed in the western military districts of the Soviet Union during the early postwar years functioned much like Soviet occupation forces in Europe—to control hostile, anti-Soviet populations. Most estimates have set the number of Soviet troops deployed in the western USSR at 50–60 divisions, but there is no evidence that these were full-strength, combat-ready divisions.[59] The military districts in which they were most likely stationed correspond to the contemporary Baltic, Belorussian, Carpathian, Kiev, and North Caucasus districts. These five western districts represent areas populated by non-Russian nationalities: Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians in the Baltic district; Belorussians and Poles in the Belorussian district; Poles and Ukrainians in the Carpathian and Kiev districts; and Ukrainians, Moldavians, and others in the North Caucasus district.

Many of these national groups had strong traditions of anti-Russian sentiment and harbored irredentist claims to territories annexed by the Soviets before and during World War II.[60] Some groups had formed anti-Soviet

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57. For a discussion, see Matthew A. Evangelista, "Soviet Military Capabilities and Objectives in the Early Postwar Period, 1945–1953," Occasional Paper Number 2 of the Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies, Brookline, Mass., pp. 18–20.
58. V. Tolubko, *Nedelin* (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1979), p. 145. This is a biography of Marshal Nedelin, the Soviet rocket specialist who served for a time as Commander of Artillery for the Southern Group of Soviet forces.
59. Wolfe, *Soviet Power and Europe*, p. 39.
60. The Baltic states had been independent from 1918 until the Soviets forcibly annexed the three countries in June and July of 1940, on the basis of the Molotov–von Ribbentrop agreements. From the late eighteenth century, Belorussia had been part of the Russian empire, and it became one of the first Soviet republics. However, some Belorussians had inhabited eastern Poland from the fourteenth century, when all of Belorussia was incorporated into the Polish–Lithuanian

partisan bands during the war, and others had sided with the Germans.[61] The Soviets could only expect a similar situation in the event of another war with the West. Indeed, CIA reports from 1948 predicted mass desertions from the Soviet army and "anti-Soviet guerrilla action by Ukrainians and other Soviet peoples" in the event of war.[62]

Resistance to Soviet rule continued throughout the early postwar period. Soviet and Western sources alike mention the existence of armed, anti-Soviet groups active in the western regions of the USSR from the mid-1940s well into the 1950s. Such groups were particularly strong in the Baltics[63] and in the western regions of Belorussia and the Ukraine.[64] The Soviets relied on border guards, regular army units, and the political troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) to put down anti-Soviet activity.

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kingdom. The descendants of these Belorussians came under Soviet rule for the first time in 1939, when Stalin and Hitler divided Poland between themselves, and then again after the defeat of Germany.

The same is true for the Carpathian district. L'vov itself was ethnically Polish, whereas the surrounding countryside was overwhelmingly Ukrainian. In winning this region, Stalin won a potentially troublesome irredenta as well as several thousand more Ukrainian subjects.

The bulk of the Ukrainians were located in the Kiev military district. To the Russians these people presented a serious security problem. From the time of the Cossacks, Ukrainians had opposed Russian rule. During both world wars, many Ukrainians favored the Germans and formed anti-Soviet partisan groups to fight the Russian armies. See N. Galay's chapter, "The Partisan Forces," in Liddell Hart, *Soviet Army*, for a historical review of the major uprisings in western Russia from the fifteenth century through the Second World War, esp. pp. 165–168.

61. During World War II, many of these groups were active deep in the rear of the Soviet armies, in territory never occupied by the Germans. In addition to the unknown numbers of these partisans, over one million Soviet citizens served in auxiliary troops directly under German command. See Galay, "Partisan Forces," pp. 167–168.

62. CIA Report, October 27, 1948, p. 39. See also the discussion of anti-Soviet guerrilla activity during World War II, p. 41.

63. Pethybridge writes: "The critical situation in western Russia after 1945 was due partly to the havoc left by the German occupation and partly to discontent among the national minorities. Disciplinary measures that were applied throughout the USSR had to be applied with particular severity in this region. After the end of hostilities the state of war was declared to be still applicable in the Baltic republics and in those western provinces of the Ukraine and the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republics that had been under Polish sovereignty. Military courts of the Ministry of the Interior (the secret police) continued to apply criminal law in these areas. . . . Wartime dislocation and apathy or outright hatred on the part of the local population hampered the work of the party and government." *History of Postwar Russia*, p. 67. This somewhat understates anti-Soviet sentiment. Another source, citing anti-Soviet partisans, claims that in Lithuania from 1945–1952 over 100,000 Soviet MVD, NKVD, and regular army troops were killed by guerrillas. See Albertas Gerutis, ed., *Lithuania 700 Years* (New York: Manyland Books, 1969), p. 392.

64. In regard to the latter republic, Pethybridge writes that, "Armed resistance to the Soviet regime went on long after the Red Army had occupied the western Ukraine, and there were official references to fighting by underground groups as late as 1954 in the Ukraine, and well into 1956 in Lithuania." *History of Postwar Russia*, p. 67. Soviet sources claim that two predom-

A more extreme case of Stalin's political repression of non-Russian nation-
alities is found in the forced relocation program, by which large segments of
the populations of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia were removed from their
homes and resettled in Siberia. The program was largely carried out by
military forces, particularly those of the MVD, and met with considerable
resistance from the local populations. Hundreds of thousands of people were
deported in a series of campaigns which lasted through the early fifties.[65]

While many of the deportees were resettled in distant Siberian towns, as
many as 25 percent were sent to prison labor camps. The army participated
extensively in the system of prison camps, guarding German prisoners of
war, deportees, and Soviet citizens as well. In conscript labor camps, soldiers
were posted in every factory. Repatriation camps for Russians returning from
Germany were also heavily guarded. Thus, from the time of arrest and
deportation through the internment of hundreds of thousands of prisoners,
Soviet army soldiers played a central role.[66]

In order to consider the potential of Soviet troops for participating in an
invasion of Europe, one must first make the improbable assumption that
they would no longer be necessary to fulfill their roles of political repression
and control. In fact there were many other such activities, unrelated to

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inant Ukrainian guerrilla organizations operated until 1954: the Organization of Ukrainian Na-
tionalists (*Organizatsiia ukrainskikh natsionalistov*, or OUN), which had been in existence since
1929; and the Ukrainian Insurrectionary Army (*Ukrainskaia povstancheskaia armiia*, or UPA),
formed during the war. One Soviet source claims that "leaders of the OUN and UPA tried to
set up ambushes of border guards, mine roads, blow up bridges, set Soviet office buildings
afire, and commit sabotage at factories. . . . Fearing the inevitable punishment for their numerous
crimes, they rarely laid down their arms voluntarily. For this reason, the struggle with them
was complicated, demanded great vigilance, firmness, and courage, and took a long time." See
Pogranichnye voiska SSSR, 1945–1950: Sbornik dokumentov i materialov [Border troops of the USSR,
1945–1950: collection of documents and materials] (Moscow: Nauka, 1975), hereafter cited as
Border Troops, pp. 7, 19, 31, 33, 37.
65. David J. Dallin and Boris I. Nicolaevsky, *Forced Labor in Soviet Russia* (New Haven, Conn.:
Yale University Press, 1947), pp. 270–272, 288. Also, Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag
Archipelago*, trans. Thomas P. Whitney (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), esp. pp. 90–92, and
Border Troops, pp. 6–7. In Lithuania, mass deportations continued through 1951 and included
about 350,000 persons—12 percent of the population. See Gerutis, *Lithuania*, p. 387. The peak
year for Latvia was 1949, when wholesale deportations of urban populations as well as kulaks
were carried out. See J. Rutkis, ed., *Latvia: Country and People* (Stockholm: Latvian National
Foundation, 1967), pp. 260–261. JCS Reports include references to "removal of ethnic minorities"
from Poland and Czechoslovakia as well. See JIS Report, July 9, 1946, p. 158. Nettl writes of
mass transfers of German laborers in 1947–1948, conducted by the Soviet military administration,
involving as many as 100,000 Germans during a single two-month period. See *Eastern Zone and
Soviet Policy*, p. 141.
66. See Chapter 14 in Dallin and Nicolaevsky, *Forced Labor in Soviet Russia*, esp. pp. 269–274.

offensive military preparations, in which Soviet forces were engaged in the early postwar period.

One branch of the Soviet armed forces, the *Tyl* or Rear Services, has traditionally served nonmilitary purposes in peacetime, carrying out much work in the civilian sector. While no estimates for the size of the Rear Services are available for the early postwar period, contemporary estimates range from 100,000 to 400,000 troops.[67] According to Soviet sources, many of the tasks that technically fell within the purview of the *Tyl* during the early postwar years were handled by regular army troops, due to the vast quantities of work required. The most notable examples are those concerning restoration of war damage. One major task, for which the Soviet army was responsible, was the de-activation and removal of mines dispersed throughout the western regions of the USSR by the retreating German armies. All of the official Soviet histories of the western military districts discuss in some detail the extent of this work, which involved tens of thousands of soldiers and lasted until the mid-1950s. The engineer troops of the *Tyl* were nominally responsible for this work, but the volume was far too great for them to handle alone.[68]

As with the engineer troops, the construction and billeting troops of the *Tyl* were forced to rely on regular army units for assistance. Even for the rebuilding and maintenance of military facilities, their participation was required. One Soviet source reports that "the soldiers themselves often repaired barracks, built dining halls, set up military posts, camps, and sports fields."[69]

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67. See Chapter 7 in Harriet Fast Scott and William F. Scott, *The Armed Forces of the USSR* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1979), pp. 227–253.

68. One source reports that from 1944–1953 soldiers in Estonia and in the Leningrad, Pskov, and Novgorod regions (*oblasti*) de-mined 27,000 square kilometers of land, removing 30 million explosive devices. The Leningrad district command was obliged to call in regular army units to assist the engineer troops of the *Tyl*. During the first several years, 50,000 soldiers were assigned to de-mining work. See *Leningrad MD*, pp. 455–456. In Belorussia, military units cleared 36,000 square km of territory and 4,826 km of road. See *Krasnoznamennyi Belorusskii voennyi okrug* [The Red Banner Belorussian Military District] (Minsk, 1973), p. 480. In the Kiev district, over 300,000 square km were cleared of nearly 14 million "mines, aviation bombs, shells, and fougasses." See *Kiev MD*, p. 306. Other districts report comparable figures. See *Ordena Lenina Moskovskii voennyi okrug* [The Order of Lenin Moscow Military District] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1971), hereafter cited as *Moscow MD*, pp. 318–319. See also *Krasnoznamennyi severo-kavkazskii: Ocherk istorii krasnoznamennogo severo-kavkazskogo voennogo okruga* [The Red Banner Northern Caucasus: An outline of the history of the Red Banner Northern Caucasus Military District] (Rostov: Rostovskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1971), hereafter cited as *No. Caucasus MD*, p. 305.

69. Another source reveals that, although housing construction for the troops of the Baku air defense district was put under the command of a Lieutenant Colonel of the Military Construction Administration in 1947, military personnel were obliged to do much of the work themselves.

Many Soviet soldiers were engaged in activities completely unrelated to the military, let alone to preparation for offensive combat. Such is the case with the practice of *shefstvo* (literally "patronage"), which refers to the use of soldiers in civilian industry and agriculture. Although *shefstvo* had been common since the time of the revolution, some Western analysts felt that it was rendered unnecessary by Stalin's use of prison labor in the early 1950s, and was not revived until the mid-1950s when much of the prison camp system was dismantled under Khrushchev. In fact, Soviet military histories of the postwar period abound in references to the role of *shefstvo* during the years immediately following World War II. The accounts refer to the use of soldiers in construction work, as skilled labor in factories, as agricultural workers, and in disaster relief operations.[70]

The rebuilding of cities and towns destroyed by the Germans was a major task of the early postwar period: "Builders alone could not carry out the huge volume of this work. It demanded a broad call for troops as well."[71] By Soviet count, over 70,000 villages and 1,710 towns were destroyed during the war. In the Moscow district alone, troops were used in rebuilding, among others, the towns of Smolensk, Voronezh, Kalinin, Kursk, and Briansk, in addition to Moscow itself.[72]

This included construction of apartment buildings, cooking and dining facilities, and bath houses, and was not completed until 1954; the experience was considered valuable for training soldiers in civilian skills. See *Bakinskii okrug protivovozdushnoi oborony: Istoricheskii ocherk 1920–1974 gg.* [Baku Anti-air Defense District: An historical outline, 1920–1974] (Baku: Azerbaidzhan-skoe gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1974), hereafter cited as *Baku PVO*, pp. 205–206.

70. Agricultural *shefstvo* took many forms. Soldiers worked in the fields during sowing and harvesting times, local bases lent military equipment, especially trucks, to nearby collective and state farms, and military mechanics worked on farm machinery and even in tractor factories. See *No. Caucasus MD*, pp. 305–308, and *Leningrad MD*, pp. 457–459. The results suggest the extent of the work: during a 40-day period in 1948, soldiers stationed in the Ukraine threshed 8,000 tons of grain and transported another 155,000 tons. Soviet army troops were instrumental in harvesting and transporting grain during the 1947 and 1948 harvests in the Stalingrad *oblast'*. Border guards made such a substantial contribution that in several regions collective farms were named *Pogranichnik* ("Border Guard") in their honor. See *Kiev MD*, p. 307; *No. Caucasus MD*, p. 307; *Border Troops*, p. 43. For an example of Western underestimation of *shefstvo* in the Stalin period, see Roman Kolkowicz, *The Use of Soviet Military Labor in the Civilian Economy: A Study of Military "Shefstvo"* (Santa Monica, Calif.: The Rand Corporation, 1962).

71. *Leningrad MD*, p. 454.

72. *Moscow MD*, p. 319. See also *Inzhinernye voiska v boiakh za Sovetskuiu rodinu* [Engineer troops in the battles for the Soviet homeland] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1970); and A.I. Romashko, *Voennye stroiteli na stroikakh Moskvy* [Military builders in the building of Moscow] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1972). In the Kiev district, "troops cleared streets, restored dwelling places and cultural-com-munity establishments, laid streetcar lines, secured the supply of electricity and water," partic-ipated in restoration of the 25 largest coal mines of the Donbass region, and installed industrial machinery in factories. "It is possible to name tens or hundreds more plants, factories, mines

The purpose here is not to claim that these troops would be unable to fight in the event of war. Rather, it is to suggest that preparation for an offensive war against Western Europe was not the major activity for the bulk of Soviet troops. Rebuilding of the war-torn economy and control of political dissent within the USSR and bordering countries took precedence.

One branch of the Soviet military that clearly was preparing for war in the early postwar period was the PVO Strany, or Air Defense, forces. Their task was to defend the Soviet Union from atomic air attack. Discussion of the PVO troops is relevant to this analysis in that their numbers have traditionally been included by Western observers in assessing ground force strength and potential for a Soviet invasion.

Estimates of the size of the PVO forces during the postwar period have always fallen within the 500,000–600,000 range.[73] According to Western sources, half this amount consists of ground elements (and the other half of fighter–interceptor forces). They are usually counted with army manpower estimates despite the fact that the PVO has been a separate branch of the Soviet armed forces since 1948, with a status equal to that of the ground forces, air force, or navy.[74] Including the PVO ground elements in an assessment of the offensive capabilities of the Soviet ground forces is extremely misleading, since their major function consisted of operating anti-aircraft artillery in defense of important industrial and economic centers.[75] In the

and pits, the restoration of which is connected with the self-sacrificing, truly heroic work of the district troops. Soldiers, non-commissioned officers [*serzhanty*], and officers denied themselves rest, and worked as much as circumstances demanded." *Kiev MD*, p. 307.

73. See, for example, Garthoff, *Soviet Military Doctrine*, p. 357; Asher Lee, "Strategic Air Defense," in Asher Lee, ed., *The Soviet Air and Rocket Forces* (New York: Praeger, 1959), p. 125; *The Military Balance* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, various years); David R. Jones, "National Air Defense Forces," in David R. Jones, ed., *Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual* (Gulf Breeze, Fla.: Academic International Press, various years).

74. In fact, the PVO was long considered an elite branch, and its personnel were given special benefits and treatment. See Garthoff, *Soviet Military Doctrine*, p. 357, and Matthew A. Evangelista, "The Evolution of Soviet Tactical Air Forces," in David R. Jones, ed., *Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual* (Gulf Breeze, Fla.: Academic International Press, forthcoming).

75. During the Second World War, 60 to 90 percent of medium calibre and one-third to two-thirds of small calibre anti-aircraft artillery fulfilled this function exclusively (the rest being used primarily in defense of railroad junctions and troop formations). More than 40 percent of the AA batteries were assigned to the defense of three major centers: Moscow, Leningrad, and Baku. G. Zimin, "PVO Strany troops in the Great Patriotic War" (FBIS translation), in *Voennaia Mysl'*, Number 5 (May 1965), pp. 102, 105. It is possible to use anti-aircraft artillery in roles other than air defense of strategic objectives. I am grateful to Ben Miller for pointing out that the Germans used anti-aircraft artillery for direct-fire roles in support of their ground forces during World War II. During the first months after the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, Soviet front commanders also used PVO forces for nonstrategic roles, such as air defense

event of a Soviet invasion of Western Europe, it is hardly likely that these forces would have been diverted from their roles of strategic air defense, especially considering the Western preponderance of air power.[76]

Evaluations of the Soviet Conventional Threat

This essay has attempted to demonstrate that Stalin's postwar army was not capable of a successful *blitzkrieg* invasion of Western Europe during the period preceding the formation of NATO. The argument has been based on a numerical comparison of available Soviet and Western forces and a consideration of the type of invasion expected by U.S. military planners, as well as on an analysis of Soviet military capabilities and nonmilitary functions.

Although the conclusions of this paper are in contrast to the prevailing wisdom concerning the postwar Soviet army, they are consistent with many early postwar intelligence reports regarding Soviet military capabilities and intentions. One such report, from November 1945, enumerated the Soviet Union's "important weaknesses which seriously limit her military capabilities," and estimated "the time required to remedy them to a degree sufficient to make the USSR willing to risk a major armed conflict":

a. War losses in manpower and industry and the set-back in a far from fully developed industry. (15 years)
b. Lack of technicians. (5–10 years)
c. Lack of a Strategic Air Force. (5–10 years)
d. Lack of a modern navy. (15–20 years for a war involving major naval operations)
e. Poor condition of railway and military transportation systems and equipment. (10 years)

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of their troops and sometimes anti-tank defense, leaving defense of strategic centers as a secondary concern. Stalin responded in November 1941 by putting all ground elements of the PVO under the command of a central PVO administration in order to preserve their role in strategic defense. Even during the last year of the war, when some ground and air elements of the PVO were used in offensive operations, the main task of the PVO remained air defense of the large centers. See Zimin, "PVO Strany troops," p. 110, and *Voiska PVO strany v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine, 1941–1945* [Troops of the PVO Strany in the Great Patriotic War] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1981), p. 264.

76. For U.S. plans for strategic air retaliation against the USSR, see Part II of Herken, *Winning Weapon*. Some observers felt that Western air power provided considerable defense capability against a possible Soviet invasion as well. This was the opinion of several Chiefs of the British Air Staff, one of whom declared, "I cannot believe that 500,000, 1,000,000, or even 2,000,000 men could advance without being stopped by the power of the Royal Air Force, backed by the power of the American Air Force." Quoted by Liddell Hart, "The Red Army," p. 28.

f. Vulnerability of Soviet oil, rail and vital industrial centers to long-range
   bombers.
g. Lack of atomic bomb. (5–10 years, possibly less)
h. Resistance in occupied countries. (5 years or less)
i. Quantitative military weakness in the Far East—especially naval. (15–20
   years)

The report concluded that the Soviets would be unlikely to risk a major war
for at least fifteen years.[77]

   Similar assessments of the likelihood of a Soviet-initiated war were made
by the CIA well into 1949 and were supported by reports from foreign
observers.[78] Subsequently, estimates by the CIA and other U.S. intelligence
agencies exaggerated Soviet capabilities and intentions to such a great extent
that it is surprising that anyone took them seriously.[79]

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77. Joint Intelligence Staff, "Soviet Capabilities," November 9, 1945, Appendix C.
78. In an untitled report from August 1946, the CIA mentioned a personal communication
between Marshal Zhukov and Viacheslav Molotov, somehow obtained, in which the former
insisted that his armies were unprepared to fight a war. A CIA report of 1948 suggested several
reasons why the Soviets would not initiate a war, including, "The resulting global conflict would
place the entire Soviet system at stake in a war to the finish at a time when the USSR is inferior
to the West in potential military power." The report also mentioned the risk of engendering
popular discontent at home and creating internal security problems. See ORE 58-48, October
27, 1948, p. 39. In a report from 1949, the CIA stated, "There is no conclusive evidence of Soviet
preparation for direct military aggression during 1949," and "A deliberate Soviet resort to direct
military action against the West during 1949 is improbable." See ORE 46-49, "The Possibility of
Direct Soviet Military Action during 1949," May 3, 1949, p. 1. Following a trip to the USSR in
1947, British Field Marshal Montgomery made these remarks in a letter to General Eisenhower:
"The Soviet Union is very, very tired. Devastation in Russia is appalling and the country is in
no fit state to go to war. . . . It will be 15 to 20 years before Russia will be able to remedy her
various defects and be in a position to fight a major world war with a good chance of success."
Letter dated February 1, 1947, p. 3. According to Milovan Djilas, Stalin also expected that the
Soviet Union would not be involved in another war for 15 to 20 years. See his *Conversations with
Stalin*, trans. Michael B. Petrovich (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962), pp. 114–115.
79. While the CIA claimed in 1948 that the West was militarily superior to the USSR, and in
1948 and 1949 that the Soviets would not deliberately provoke a war and were "likely to exercise
some care to avoid an unintended outbreak of hostilities with the United States" (CIA Report,
May 3, 1949, p. 1), in 1950 the agency made the following assessment: "In the belief that their
object cannot be fully attained without a general war with the Western Powers, the Soviet rulers
may deliberately provoke such a war at the time when in their opinions the relative strength of
the USSR is at its maximum. It is estimated that such a period will exist from now through
1954. . . . From the point of view of military forces and economic potential, the Soviet Union is
in a position to conduct a general war now . . . if the Soviet rulers should consider it desirable
or expedient to do so." A *partial* list of the operations the Soviets would undertake "simulta-
neously" followed later in the report: "(1) A campaign against Western Europe including Italy,
(2) An aerial bombardment against the British Isles, (3) Campaigns against the Near and Middle
East including Greece and Turkey, (4) Campaigns in the Far East, (5) Attacks against Canada
and the United States, including Alaska and the Aleutians, (6) A sea and air offensive against
Anglo–American sea communications. . . ." CIA National Intelligence Estimate, NIE-3, "Soviet
Capabilities and Intentions," November 15, 1950, pp. 1–2, 66.

One may well ask how Soviet conventional forces could have been so exaggerated during the early postwar period. Why were divisional figures used instead of manpower figures, when the latter would have made for more relevant comparisons?[80] Why were the striking weaknesses in Soviet military capabilities—in transport, communications, and logistics—never discussed, and the extensive role of the military in postwar reconstruction and in political control of Eastern Europe ignored? It is difficult to avoid the impression that many in the West intentionally exaggerated the Soviet conventional threat to Europe, for a number of reasons.

In order to gain U.S. congressional and popular support for the NATO alliance, the State Department and the military emphasized NATO's role as a counter to a potential Soviet military offensive, although according to U.S. intelligence documents, such an event was unlikely in the near future.[81] In addition, Soviet-supported political actions, such as the communist coup in Czechoslovakia, were described as if they were no different from outright military aggression and indicative of Soviet military intentions.[82] It seems

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80. Part of the reason the CIA relied primarily on divisional estimates instead of overall manpower estimates is that the former were more dependable. Although it is never easy to obtain information concerning CIA research methodologies, recently declassified reports offer some hints regarding the agency's estimates of Soviet manpower. It seems that the number of 175 Soviet divisions was derived from Soviet tables of organization and equipment (TO&E) and was considered reliable. Estimates of number of men per division were evidently less so, considering that they were constantly revised downward from the mid-1950s until the present interpretation of three classes of divisional readiness was agreed upon. Unfortunately, there was no attempt made by intelligence analysts to reveal the tentative nature of some of these estimates, and all were consequently accepted as equally reliable. See CIA Special Intelligence Estimate Number 11-6-60, "Strength of the Armed Forces of the USSR," May 3, 1960, pp. 1–2.

81. See Ambassador George F. Kennan's discussion in a telegram sent from Moscow in 1952 and reprinted in his *Memoirs, 1950–1963* (Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown, 1972), pp. 327–351. Kennan gives this reason for the formation of NATO: "Large numbers of people, both in Western Europe and in the United States, were incapable of understanding the Russian technique of penetration and 'partial war' or of thinking in terms of this technique. They were capable of thinking about international developments only in the old-fashioned terms of full-fledged war or full-fledged peace. It was inconceivable to them that there could be real and serious threats to the independence of their countries that did not come to them in the form of foreign armies marching across frontiers; and it was natural that in undertaking to combat what they conceived to be a foreign threat they should have turned to the old-fashioned and familiar expedient of military alliance." See pp. 333–334.

82. Not only Americans were prone to confuse, deliberately or not, Soviet political threats for military ones. Winston Churchill best expressed this confusion over the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia in a speech at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in March of 1949: "I must not conceal from you tonight the truth as I see it. It is certain that Europe would have been Communized like Czechoslovakia, and London under bombardment some time ago but for the deterrent of the atomic bomb in the hands of the United States." If Churchill feared that Europe would be "Communized" by Soviet-backed coups, as in Czechoslovakia, then the deterrent effect of the U.S. atomic bomb would be negligible, since it had failed to prevent the

clear that most American proponents of NATO actually valued it primarily as a way of solidifying America's political commitment to Western Europe, but felt that NATO could be better sold by emphasizing its military necessity, with constant reference to the Soviet conventional threat.[83]

Elements of the U.S. military, particularly the proponents of strategic air power and a 70-group Air Force, found it desirable to exaggerate the Soviet conventional threat, because this left American atomic weapons as the only alternative to Soviet ground forces. In 1949, Air Force Chief of Staff Hoyt S. Vandenburg expressed this early version of nuclear deterrence of conventional threats in the following manner:

A prime objective of this country must be to find a counterbalance to the potential enemy's masses of ground troops other than equal masses of American and Allied ground troops. No such balancing factor exists other than strategic bombing, including atomic bombs.[84]

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, most Americans were unwilling to support a conventional defense of Western Europe because their military leaders presented the prospects as hopeless. As Enthoven and Smith wrote much later,

In a perverse sense it is rather comforting to be outnumbered 5 to 1 [in conventional forces] by your enemy, because then there is no point in making the effort to deploy your forces in the right place, or to ensure that your forces are ready, or to insist on proper training standards. If, however, the opposing force numbers are approximately equal, these factors become more important. We have more incentive for making sure that our forces are ready, well trained, and well equipped.[85]

The U.S. military gave the American people no incentive to favor improving conventional forces for Europe's defense during the 1940s and 1950s. Stra-

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coup in Prague. If, on the other hand, the Soviet threat was of a military nature, one that would include "London under bombardment," then there is no sense in using the case of Czechoslovakia as an analogy. Churchill's speed is reprinted in *His Complete Speeches, 1897–1963* (London: Chelsea House, 1974), Vol. 7, p. 50. It is certainly true in any case that the Czechoslovak coup gave special impetus to the move to form an anti-Soviet alliance. See Claude Delmas, *L'O.T.A.N.* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969), pp. 18–21. For further discussion, see Evangelista, "Soviet Military Capabilities and Objectives," pp. 3–8.

83. See Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War 1945–1975* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1976), pp. 83–87. See also Barnet and Raskin, *After 20 Years*, esp. Chapter 1.

84. U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, *Hearings on National Defense Program* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, n.d.), Vol. 1, pp. 454–456. See also Herken, *Winning Weapon*, pp. 291–293.

85. Enthoven and Smith, *How Much Is Enough?*, p. 141.

tegic air power with atomic weapons was proposed as the solution to American security problems, and the popular press and the public generally supported the policy and the assumptions about Soviet conventional superiority that led to it.[86]

The evidence provided here, however, indicates that these assumptions were unfounded and consequently that American security policy, in the late 1940s at least, was based on an illusory conception of the Soviet threat. It is interesting to note in this context that recurrently over the last two decades analysts attempting to appraise the NATO–Warsaw Pact conventional balance have argued that NATO is in much better shape than is commonly believed. During the early 1960s, for example, the Defense Department reexamined the European balance and concluded that NATO was *not* hopelessly outmanned and outgunned in Central Europe; this analysis contributed to the adoption of NATO's new policy of "flexible response."[87]

During the 1970s, some analysts again presented evidence to support the notion of NATO–Warsaw Pact parity in conventional forces, based primarily on the introduction into Western forces of sophisticated precision-guided munitions, particularly anti-tank weapons.[88] More recently, several analyses have found the prospects quite good for conventional deterrence in Europe and favor less reliance on nuclear weapons in NATO military policy.[89]

Such analyses hint at the possibility that the exaggeration of Soviet military power has continued down to the present day. Could it be possible that the

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86. See John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 121–122, 147–150. See also David Alan Rosenberg, "'A Smoking Radiating Ruin at the End of Two Hours': Documents on American Plans for Nuclear War with the Soviet Union, 1954–55," *International Security*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Winter 1981–1982), pp. 3–38.

87. At the same time, however, the number of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons in Europe increased by 60 percent. See Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, pp. 220–221. Also Chapter 4 in Enthoven and Smith, *How Much Is Enough?*

88. For example, John J. Mearsheimer, "Precision-guided Munitions and Conventional Deterrence," *Survival*, March–April 1979, pp. 68–76; Phillip A. Karber, "The Soviet Anti-Tank Debate," *Survival*, May–June 1976; and Karber, *The Impact of New Conventional Technologies on Military Doctrine and Organization in the Warsaw Pact*, Adelphi Paper, Number 144 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1978).

89. John J. Mearsheimer, "Maneuver, Mobile Defense, and the NATO Central Front," *International Security*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Winter 1981/1982), pp. 104–122; and Mearsheimer, "Why the Soviets Can't Win Quickly in Central Europe," *International Security*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Summer 1982), pp. 3–39. Mearsheimer's work was discussed in a series of articles by Tom Wicker in *The New York Times* in April 1982. See also Jane Sharp, "Nuclear Weapons and Alliance Cohesion," *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, June 1982; McGeorge Bundy, George F. Kennan, Robert S. McNamara, and Gerard Smith, "Nuclear Weapons and the Atlantic Alliance," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (Spring 1982) pp. 753–768.

current conventional wisdom about Soviet superiority in Europe is the legacy of the original overestimation of the Red Army in the late 1940s? Given the extent to which powerfully formed impressions can persist, it seems plausible that the origins of our views of Soviet military power in Europe today can be traced to the misconceptions of the early postwar period. And whatever the truth about the balance today, the evidence now available shows that in the late 1940s the "Red Juggernaut" was anything but.