

THE FUTURE OF INF

by

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On 23 November 1983, the same day that the first US Pershing II missiles arrived in Mutlangen, West Germany, the Soviet Union abandoned the two-year-old negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) in Geneva.¹ "Since by its actions the United States has torpedoed the possibility of reaching a mutually acceptable accord," declared a statement issued in then Soviet President Yuri Andropov's name, "the Soviet Union considers its further participation in these talks impossible" until the West demonstrated "readiness" to return to the pre-US deployment situation, i.e. withdraw the missiles. Thus concluded the first chapter of one of the most intensely controversial East-West negotiations in post-World War II history, and yet another episode in a long history of intra-NATO disagreements.

Soviet suspension of the INF negotiations had long been anticipated. The Soviet Union had consistently warned that any steps to deploy the planned US force of 108 Pershing II ballistic missiles and 464 Tomahawk ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCM) would destroy the basis for agreement and prompt Soviet "countermeasures" to preserve the "existing balance" of theater nuclear forces. As of January 1984, however, the alleged "existing balance" in Soviet-US land-based, longer-range (1800-5500 km) INF warheads on deployed launchers stood at roughly 1371:25.² Although the Soviets claimed that a balance continued to exist throughout the course of the talks, more than 100 SS-20 launchers were deployed over this period for

a net increase of more than 300 warheads (excluding refires) in the Soviet land-based, longer-range (LRINF) inventory. As of January 1985, the Soviet-US LRINF warhead balance had only marginally narrowed at 1281:102.³

Even before the arrival of US missiles in Europe, however, failure in Geneva seemed inevitable. Although the talks ostensibly narrowed some differences on issues such as including aircraft and making warheads the accountable units, from the other's perspective each party had pursued jaundiced negotiating platforms on the central issues despite oft-spoken paeans to "seriousness" and "flexibility." Indeed, if "negotiation" is defined as the process of arriving at the mutually satisfactory settlement of some matter, then "negotiations" probably would be too generous a characterization of the Geneva episode. Whereas every Soviet proposal maintained as its ultimate outcome the preservation of Soviet LRINF preponderance and the prohibition of any US LRINF missiles in Europe, every US proposal required bilateral equality between Soviet and US systems not only in Europe but on a global basis, without compensation for the British, Chinese, and French nuclear forces targeted against the Soviet Union and against which Soviet LRINF are, in part, targeted.

To some extent, lack of progress reflected tension between two approaches to arms control: whether a limitations regime should "reflect the international alignment of its era and grant a state the right to a level of armaments matching those of the com-

bination of states likely to be arrayed against it [the Soviet approach], or should the regime instead reflect the juridical fact of a world of sovereign states and allow states of equal status equal quantities of weapons [the US approach]?"⁴

To a greater extent, however, because the Soviets engaged in a four-year propaganda effort directed at Western European public opinion to prevent US deployments and obviate the need for a balanced, negotiated outcome, the INF negotiations assumed from the outset more the air of a public relations duel than an earnest reciprocal diplomatic enterprise. From the US perspective, prospects for progress would remain negligible until US missiles began to be emplaced, whereas the overriding Soviet objective pursued in and outside the negotiations was to prevent that deployment from ever occurring.

Ironically, the NATO 1979 dual-track ministerial decision calling for simultaneous preparations for missile deployments and arms control, with deployment commencing in December 1983 if no agreement was reached by that date, may have preordained such an unproductive course. As Henry Kissinger has observed:

This [NATO] decision was fateful. Experience with arms control negotiations—or Soviet diplomacy—should have warned us that an unambiguous outcome of such talks was nearly impossible. Instead, the decision guaranteed a domestic crisis in most countries slated to receive missiles. Indeed, it almost surely supplied an incentive for the Soviets to procrastinate and thus test the resolve of Western governments.⁵

Kissinger also contends that the various adjustments in the US negotiating position⁶ may also have inadvertently promoted Soviet intransigence. "Fuel is given to the argument that we are cynical, that we do not know what we are doing, that our basic position is flawed. The Soviets will have no incentive to change course if they perceive the alliance as engaged in competitive gimmickry."⁷

Of course, as events unfolded the Soviet course never altered and the negotiations collapsed. Despite this, however, the primary political challenge the negotiations posed for NATO—whether the will could be sustained to implement both the arms control and the deployment tracks of the 1979 NATO ministerial decision amid intense Soviet pressures and anti-missile parliamentary and public sentiment in Western Europe—had been won. This NATO "victory," however, was one purchased at the expense of domestic discord within Alliance countries, enduring aspirations for an arms control panacea, and, in the case of the Netherlands (one of the five basing countries for the US missiles), failure to implement promptly the dual-track decision (a course which some observers believed Belgium would also follow).

However, after a 13-month abstention from bilateral arms control negotiations, on 8 January 1985 the Soviets agreed to resume INF discussions using an "umbrella" format under which strategic nuclear arms, INF, and space weapons would be concurrently discussed "with all the questions considered and resolved in their interrelationship."⁸ This important procedural breakthrough, however, did not speak to the substantive question of whether, as a result of new umbrella negotiations, a mutually satisfactory INF treaty would obtain in the future. The purpose here, therefore, is to address the substance of this by discussing some contemporary questions concerning future directions for NATO INF negotiating strategy. Three cardinal issues are analyzed below, followed by some thoughts on the broader question of whether arms control can realistically play an effective role in redressing gaps in NATO's doctrine of flexible response and extended deterrence.

SHOULD THE US AGREE TO A DEPLOYMENT MORATORIUM?

As December 1983, the scheduled date for Pershing II and GLCM initial operational capability, approached without progress in Geneva, and with mounting public protest,

suggestions were heard on both sides of the Atlantic for a moratorium on US missile emplacement so as to allow the negotiations additional time. In Western Europe, various Social Democratic and other circles argued that US deployment should not be "automatic," despite various NATO ministerial decisions setting down timetables for implementing the dual-track decision. For instance, in early May 1984, Italian Prime Minister Bettino Craxi proposed in Lisbon that deployment be suspended if the Soviets would agree to resume negotiations. On 1 June 1984, the Dutch government announced that cruise missile deployment in the Netherlands (48 GLCMs) would be canceled if the Soviets froze their SS-20 arsenal, and postponed a final decision on deployment until November 1985. On 13 November 1984, former Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau also proposed a delay in US missile deployments to gain Soviet arms control concessions. Even US INF Ambassador Paul Nitze reportedly considered proposing that the United States suspend missile deployment in exchange for unilateral Soviet reductions to the level of British and French nuclear forces, in the context of folding INF into START.⁹

Of course, since 1979 the Soviet Union has argued for a ban on new INF systems in Europe. On 16 March 1982, Brezhnev purported to effect unilaterally a moratorium on SS-20 deployments, and extended this moratorium on 18 May of that year to include "preparation" for deployment, including "construction of launching positions." Nevertheless, construction continued at locations near the Urals within range of NATO Europe, and new sites were initiated farther east in Siberia, from which SS-20s can still threaten NATO Europe owing to their range (5000 km), mobility, and transportability.

As a precondition for resuming the INF negotiations, the Soviets repeatedly stated that the "existing balance" in theater nuclear systems could not be upset. For example, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko repeated the long-standing Soviet position in an address to the United Nations General

Assembly on 27 September 1984: "The United States must remove the obstacles it has erected to the holding of [START and INF] talks [the Soviets abandoned START on 8 December 1984]. Unless these obstacles [Pershing II and GLCM] are removed, of course, these talks will not take place."¹⁰ However, on 16 October 1984 then Soviet President Konstantin Chernenko did not repeat the "removal" demand, and upon announcing the resumption of arms control discussions in 1985, the Soviets again did not insist on US missile withdrawal from Europe as a precondition to discussing INF issues.

With this apparent Soviet "concession" (putting aside the fact that the demand was preposterous at the outset), suggestions were raised that the United States should reciprocate in good faith by way of temporarily halting Pershing II and GLCM deployment in exchange for similar Soviet restraint. A White House spokesman stated on 23 November 1984 that "mutual restraint is an appropriate item in the [then forthcoming] talks,"¹¹ whereas Gromyko bluntly declared on 13 January 1985 that if the United States "continued the stationing of the intermediate-range nuclear systems, it would question the necessity of the talks that are to be started in accordance with the agreement reached in Geneva."¹²

Would a freeze on US INF deployments, in exchange for reciprocal Soviet restraint, make sense?

On the one hand, it could be argued that because the US deployments are stretched out

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over several years (1983-88), a short-term pause would not appear militarily significant, even if no agreement is subsequently reached. The principal military advantage, assuming the moratorium was global in scope, would be to stem the proliferation of SS-20s and forestall Soviet deployment of longer-range SSC-X-4 GLCMs (reportedly scheduled to commence in 1985). Politically, a temporary deployment pause could help catalyze discussions by terminating, even if only for a finite period, actions that each side regards as coercive. Moreover, a pause might politically assist deployment prospects in the Netherlands by way of demonstrating US good faith in attempting to seek an arms control solution.

On the other hand, the disadvantages to such an option are substantial. First, as a matter of principle, preconditions make for unsound negotiating practice. Were the United States to agree to professed Soviet preconditions for resuming INF, then similar Soviet pressures could be expected to be brought to bear in other negotiations. For example, the argument would invariably be raised that if the United States is willing to emplace a mutual moratorium on INF deployments, then surely a moratorium on ASAT and ballistic missile defense testing is also possible. Second, a freeze might prove politically difficult to terminate in the West, thereby merely perpetuating the Soviet LRINF near-monopoly and implying a kind of Soviet right to influence NATO security policy. Third, a freeze could politically embarrass those NATO countries that have accepted deployments (Britain, Italy, Belgium, and West Germany) and strengthen "peace" activism in the basing country that has not (the Netherlands). Fourth, a freeze on SS-20s would pose difficult verification problems—although these difficulties would be similar to those associated with verifying any INF treaty apart from zero/zero. Finally, and most important, it should be recalled that immediately following the 1979 NATO dual-track ministerial decision, the Soviets claimed that only rescission of that decision would allow for arms control. A similar argument was then advanced with respect to resuming

the INF negotiations (withdrawal of US missiles) and is now being suggested in another form with respect to preventing the collapse of the resumed negotiations (freezing deployment). However, the INF negotiations began in November 1981 without rescinding the dual-track decision, and the INF negotiations resumed in March 1985 without withdrawing US missiles. The Soviet moratorium suggestion, hence, may be no more than the third such Soviet bluff.

As before, full adherence to the dual-track decision remains probably the sole incentive for the Soviets to negotiate seriously. Although emplacing a moratorium could limit the pace of the Soviet buildup, it could also invite procrastination and perpetuate inequities. To believe that a few months or so of a deployment pause could accomplish what the better part of two years of negotiations over 1981-83 could not seem naive, and would be interpreted as demonstrating only a lack of NATO resolve. One could easily imagine that as the freeze expired without tangible negotiating results, the Soviets would again demand its renewal or extension with empathy from segments of Western European public and parliamentary opinion.

In short, a moratorium would leave the Soviets with preponderance in LRINF systems, remove the most effective incentive for serious negotiations, and invite the Soviets to drag out the talks indefinitely while SS-20s could be surreptitiously produced and stockpiled. As US national security adviser Robert C. McFarlane stated on 25 November 1984: "For us to sign onto a moratorium while they [the Soviets] enjoy an advantage would pull the rug out from under any hope of arms control."¹³ If the Soviets insist on this point as INF proceeds, the United States should respond by stating its willingness to consider a deployment pause only if during such a pause the Soviets unilaterally reduce their SS-20 arsenal.

IS AGREEMENT POSSIBLE?

This, of course, is the key question. Despite resumption of the INF negotiations,

and with the deployment of US missiles now a fait accompli, do realistic prospects exist for mutual accord on the substance of the INF questions?

The outstanding barriers dividing the sides throughout the course of the talks have rested with the issues of *legitimization of US LRINF deployments* and *third-country nuclear force accountability*. The Soviets argue that French and UK nuclear forces are targeted against Warsaw Pact countries and therefore must be taken into account, and that a balance exists when third-country forces are included thereby obviating the need for US missiles (as an aside, one wonders, then, why the Soviets would be willing to reduce). The United States argues that these forces must be excluded for the following reasons:

- British and French nuclear forces represent minimum national deterrents intended to prevent attack against sovereign territory and not against other NATO countries.

- Only US systems maintain the crucial link between central strategic forces and the defense of Europe.

- NATO exercises no control over British and French nuclear forces (French forces being completely independent and Britain reserving the right to withdraw its forces from SACEUR).

- Even were all Soviet LRINF missiles removed from consideration, the Soviet Union would still have thousands of INF aircraft and other nuclear systems (e.g. variable-range SS-11 and SS-19 ICBMs) arrayed against Western Europe.

- Britain and France are not parties to the bilateral talks.

- The Soviet demand for third-country compensation is tantamount to a position that the USSR should be granted the sole right to possess nuclear forces equal to those of all other nuclear powers combined.

The Soviet demand for such compensation has been viewed as a red herring, intended to mask the true Soviet intention of preserving an LRINF monopoly and to deny the United States the realistic option of

executing a nuclear defense of Western Europe.

Another view holds that third-country nuclear forces were already taken into account in SALT I and II by virtue of the inequities those agreements codified (e.g. Soviet advantages in throw-weight and heavy ICBMs) and therefore should not be double-counted, as it were, in INF. This argument, however, also supports the proposition that if in START the United States continues to seek almost de facto equality in comparable strategic nuclear capability, such as in warheads and in throw-weight, requiring much larger (and probably non-negotiable) reductions on the Soviet side, the issue of third-country nuclear force compensation is then reopened.

If these issues—legitimization of US LRINF in Europe, and British and French forces—truly rest at the heart of the Soviet position, the US approach rules out a solution. For instance, the extent of US deliberations on INF negotiating strategy in 1985 reportedly was limited to variations of the same theme: whether to offer a specific cutback in US missiles if the Soviets would scale back their SS-20 warheads to the US level, or to let the Soviets choose any force level they want so long as all SS-20 warheads above the agreed common ceiling were destroyed, i.e. whether to propose a level or let the Soviets propose a level based on US-Soviet equality.¹⁴

If not, however, and Soviet agreement to resume INF discussions could be interpreted as resignation to the fact that some US missiles will be permanently deployed, an accord probably could be reached in the foreseeable future (leaving aside verification issues) based on two promising developments that occurred during the 1981-83 negotiations. First, in November 1983, Soviet INF Ambassador Yuli Kvitsinskiy, according to the US version, approached then-US INF Ambassador Paul H. Nitze (replaced in January 1985 by Maynard W. Glitman) to suggest that if the United States deployed no missiles in Europe, the Soviets would defer compensation for third-country nuclear

forces to a future forum and make further reductions in their SS-20 inventory (to roughly 120 launchers in Europe). Although this informal demarche still prohibited any US missiles and, in effect, permitted a Soviet LRINF global level more than matching British and French nuclear forces, the reported willingness to defer third-country compensation may be significant. Second, in July 1982, the two ambassadors developed a "joint exploratory" formula that came to be known as "the walk in the woods." Under this "nonpaper" package, each side would be allowed 225 LRINF missile launchers and aircraft, with a subceiling of 75 missile launchers. The United States would not deploy the Pershing II, and SS-20s in Asia would be frozen. The "walk in the woods" formula "is seen by most Western officials as the most equitable basis for agreement."¹⁵ Although objections within the Administration to that package reportedly concerned unilateral US forfeiture of the right to deploy LRINF ballistic missiles, "very few U.S. officials believe that the military advantages of the Pershing II so outweigh the GLCM that the missile should be considered non-negotiable."¹⁶ Moreover, even though the Soviets rejected the walk-in-the-woods formula and officially deny having had anything to do with it, as Strobe Talbott suggests: "In allowing [Soviet INF Ambassador] Kvitsinskiy to associate himself with the deal [denied by the Soviets], the Kremlin may have tipped its hand, providing the briefest glimpse of its own fallback."¹⁷ Although the walk-in-the-woods formula, or any agreement which reduced Pershing IIs to a nominal level (say four batteries or 36 launchers), would still be unequal per se because of differences in US and Soviet systems, the NATO decision to deploy 572 primarily second-strike systems—GLCMs—never purported to achieve de facto equality with Soviet LRINF forces, for a variety of perhaps misguided political reasons.¹⁸ In addition, the time-urgent role of removing rear echelon targets in Eastern Europe could be assumed by the shorter-range Pershing IB in development, and thereby dispose of the Soviet argument that Pershing II is intended

for launching a precursor strike against Soviet C³ assets and other strategic targets on Soviet territory.

With US missile deployments now a fait accompli, and continued Soviet warnings about continued US missile deployments, the walk-in-the-woods formula seems the best of all possible worlds if Moscow is truly interested in reaching an accord. The Soviets might then agree either to drop the entire third-country issue in INF or attempt to seek compensation elsewhere for existing British and French forces and projected increases in these systems (from 870 warheads in 1983 to 1483 by 1990¹⁹). Whether this will happen in the near future, of course, is unpredictable. The ingredients for an accord, nevertheless, may already exist.

SHOULD INF BE LINKED TO OTHER NEGOTIATIONS?

An argument that gained public currency as it became increasingly evident that the INF negotiations were getting nowhere concerned merging INF with another arms control negotiation, principally START.²⁰ The assumption seemed to be that putting more cards on the table would somehow facilitate resolution of the INF dispute. For example, as retired Rear Admiral Gene R. Ia Rocque argued: "The factor of British and French forces could be more easily handled, formally or informally [i.e. tacit compensation via some arcane US concession in the strategic nuclear area], as a small part of a much larger whole."²¹ As events evolved, of course, the Soviets broke off both INF and START in 1983, so the issue became at least temporarily moot.

The linkage question, however, by virtue of the formula by which the United States and the Soviet Union agreed in January 1985 to resume bilateral arms control talks, has been recast as: should progress in INF be linked to progress in other arms control talks, or should the three talks—INF, START, and space weapons—proceed independently of each other? The two sides have expressed substantial differences on this question, which Administration officials concede was

left unresolved at the January 1985 Shultz-Gromyko meeting in Geneva.

The Geneva communiqué was phrased in the following rather vague language:

The sides agree that the subject of the negotiations will be a complex of questions concerning space and nuclear arms, both strategic and intermediate range, with *all* questions *considered and resolved in their interrelationship*. The objective of the negotiations will be to work out effective agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in space and terminating it on earth, at limiting and reducing nuclear arms and at strengthening strategic stability.

The negotiations will be conducted by a delegation from each side, divided into three groups.²²

The ambiguity concerns "resolved in their interrelationship." The United States wishes to pursue research into strategic defense, and reportedly would prefer to reach separate agreements on offensive nuclear weapons, but "to hold what amounts to a seminar with the Russians on the advantages that might accrue from introducing effective defensive weapons into the arsenals of both countries."²³ Hence, according to Secretary Shultz, "it remains to be seen what will happen if we agree on something in one area" but not in another.²⁴ US strategy was sketched by Paul Nitze on 25 January 1985 as follows:

For the next 10 years, we should seek a radical reduction in the number and power of existing and planned offensive and defensive nuclear arms, whether land-based or otherwise. We should even now be looking forward to a period of transition, beginning possibly 10 years from now, to effective non-nuclear defensive forces, including defenses against offensive nuclear arms. This period of transition should lead to the eventual elimination of nuclear arms, both offensive and defensive.²⁵

The Soviets, conversely, have clearly implied that no compromise on offensive nuclear weapons will be possible without limits on

strategic defense, or what the Soviets term "preventing the militarization of space"—including a ban on research and on testing. As Gromyko has declared: "If there were no advancement on the issues of outer space, it would be superfluous to discuss the possibility of reducing strategic armaments."²⁶

Hence, at least from the Soviet perspective, progress in INF and in START will not be possible without movement on space issues, which represents the thorniest of the complex arms control issues. What exactly the Soviets will demand to constitute "advancement" on space issues, of course, remains to be seen; some restraints on ASAT testing, say, may suffice in the near-term to allow INF to go forward. Nevertheless, it seems clear at this point that INF will not be allowed to progress in a vacuum, even if accord can be attained on the merits of the specific INF issues. Offensive and defensive systems are necessarily related, of course, and the US strategic defense initiative may hold portentous consequences for European security. For instance, "a terminal defense system using near-term technology, such as non-nuclear interceptors and airborne surveillance, could perform well against shorter range missiles and could be appropriate for defense of our European allies,"²⁷ even though NATO European allies are overwhelmingly opposed to deployment of ballistic missile defenses. The consequences of this offensive-defensive linkage, however, are equivocal at this stage: the quest for a space arms control regime will invariably retard progress on nuclear offensive weapons controls (or, some observers argue, even derail arms control altogether and prompt an offensive buildup to ensure any defensive systems will be saturated), but the US technological lead in ASAT and strategic defense may also provide a compelling incentive for movement in all three negotiations. As Strobe Talbott recently observed, if perhaps somewhat optimistically, "the long-term bargaining relationship, as opposed to the short-term military relationship, may favor the U.S. and therefore constitute an inducement for the Soviets to bargain seriously, sooner rather than later."²⁸

PROSPECTS

Hence, although the INF negotiations have resumed under the "umbrella" format, prospects for agreement remain incalculable. The talks have resumed, however, in an atmosphere different in kind than that which characterized the 1981-83 Geneva negotiations and which may have some bearing on opportunities for progress. On the positive side, two conspicuous incentives exist for the Soviets to negotiate "seriously," i.e. begin to move toward acceptance of US criteria. First, the event transpired that the Soviets sought so desperately to prevent—deployment of US LRINF missiles in Europe for the first time since the Thor, Jupiter, Mace, and Matador systems were withdrawn over two decades ago. Pershing II deployments will probably be completed by the end of this year, with GLCM final operational capacity scheduled for 1988. If these US deployments, especially the "first strike" Pershing IIs, are as troubling to the Soviets as they claim they are, the USSR has ample opportunity to negotiate its disquietude. The appreciable subsiding of the European "peace" movement, although not dormant, may also steer the Soviets closer to quiet diplomacy. Moreover, the Soviets cannot be sure whether, conditioned upon future events, the limited number of US missiles (572) represents a floor or a ceiling, whether the Pershing II will not be MIRVed at some point, and whether other US LRINF initiatives may occur, perhaps with regard to SLCM and longer-range theater strike aircraft. Second, the prominence of ASAT and strategic defense issues is also a relatively new development that can provide considerable impetus to all three bilateral negotiations.

The downside, however, is that INF has also become more complex and delicate because of the new umbrella arms control format, and because of evolutionary developments in the nuclear ground environment that NATO will confront in the form of modernization of Soviet shorter-range INF in Eastern Europe and eventual deployment of Soviet GLCMs—billed by the Warsaw Pact as "countermeasures" to the

US deployments necessary to restore the "balance" of theater nuclear forces. The post-deployment arms control balance sheet, hence, does not necessarily favor either side.

Another new factor concerns the somewhat diminished eminence of the arms control factor in the INF equation. Although negotiations, even if superficial, will continue to play an important role to buttress in a political sense US deployments, the second track of the 1979 NATO decision (arms control) was largely required to realize the first track (deployment). With US missiles in place, a pause might now be taken in the West to reassess what arms control should accomplish. For instance, it was primarily the fact of strategic "parity," and not the debut of the SS-20 (which, after all, was only a follow-on to Soviet LRINF missiles deployed since 1956), that prompted attention to the need to redress the INF imbalance. Proposals like the zero/zero option, hence, however masterful a political stroke, were at best questionable on military grounds because the need for NATO INF modernization existed regardless of the SS-20. Although Pershing II and GLCM are now probably inextricably associated for arms control purposes with Soviet LRINF, the NATO arms control cart should not again be allowed to come before the defense posture horse, as it were, for future weapon decisions. Otherwise, operational requirements will be confused in the public mind as either automatically negotiable or baneful to "peace."

In the final analysis, the question endures as to whether INF is negotiable on terms acceptable to the West. The fundamental issue persists as to whether the Soviet Union is prepared to forfeit through negotiations at least a portion of its capability for escalation dominance in Europe, and the geopolitical benefits that accrue from such superiority. Even if all LRINF missiles are deployed, in the absence of an agreement, well before the end of the decade (1987?) the Soviet LRINF inventory may well exceed 1800 warheads (excluding refires), allowing for a 3:1 advantage over projected NATO deployments,²⁹ and that is *not* including new Soviet INF assets in development or being

deployed, such as GLCMs and shorter-range INF systems (SS-23 [500 km], SS-22 [900 km]) that can reach from East Germany and Czechoslovakia a target array similar to that of Soviet-based LRINF missiles. The rate and scope of Soviet theater nuclear force modernization do not offer grounds for exceptional optimism, and the Soviets appear well prepared to more than match US deployments.

Even if the Soviets do at some point agree to modest or better LRINF reductions, however, a deeper and more vexing question will linger concerning the conflict between operational requirements and arms control negotiations. Even if an INF treaty were to be concluded in the near future, whether based on the "walk-in-the-woods" formula or some other variant based on equal rights and limits, would such a treaty materially improve NATO's flexible response posture, or what has been termed "an inadequate conventional defense backed by an incredible nuclear guarantee?"³⁰ That is, in the context of strategic "parity," Soviet theater nuclear advantages apart from LRINF missiles, and continued NATO conventional disadvantages, and even assuming that US LRINF survived raiding or other preemptive Soviet attack early on in a conflict, would, as the issue is often posed, a US president be more prone to authorize release of the Pershing II than an ICBM in the defense of Western Europe with the knowledge that either could provoke global nuclear retaliation? Put another way, does LRINF missile "equality" really provide a sufficient improvement over NATO inferiority, all other things being equal, to enhance the credibility of extended deterrence and flexible response? Therein rests the true INF issue that Americans and Europeans have yet to jointly articulate, let alone resolve. If the controversy surrounding the missile deployments contributes to that objective, however, therein may rest the most valuable consequence of the entire INF episode.

NOTES

1. Portions of this manuscript will appear in "Arms Control and European Security," in *NATO in the 1980s*:

Challenges and Response, ed. Linda Brady and Joyce Kaufman (New York: Praeger, forthcoming 1985).

2. Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *United States Military Posture FY 1985*, p. 37.

3. "Arms Talks: The Record So Far," *The New York Times*, 7 January 1985, p. A9.

4. Richard H. Ullman, "The Euromissile Mire," *Foreign Policy*, No. 50 (Spring 1983), p. 41.

5. "Arms Control and Europe's Nuclear Shield," *The Wall Street Journal*, 31 January 1984, p. 34.

6. The US position changed in formulation, but not in substance, over the course of the talks as follows: zero/zero land-based LRINF missiles globally (November 1981); "interim" equal global LRINF missile warhead ceiling (March 1983); willingness to consider not offsetting in Europe the global Soviet LRINF inventory, apportioning Pershing II and GLCM reductions, and including aircraft limits (September 1983). The full account of the talks, albeit from NATO's perspective, can be found in NATO Special Consultative Group, *INF: Progress Report To Ministers*, 8 December 1983 (available from the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency). The "inside" story of INF is provided by Strobe Talbott, *Deadly Gambits* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), pp. 21-208.

7. "Arms Control and Europe's Nuclear Shield," p. 34.

8. "Text of the Communique," *The New York Times*, 9 January 1985, p. A11.

9. Talbott, *Deadly Gambits*, pp. 165, 195.

10. "Key Sections of Speech by Gromyko to the General Assembly," *The New York Times*, 28 September 1984, p. A12.

11. Francis X. Clines, "U.S. Would Make Mutual Restraint Arms Talk Topic," *The New York Times*, 24 November 1984, p. A1.

12. "Excerpts From Interview By Gromyko on Arms Talks," *The New York Times*, 14 January 1985, p. A5.

13. James F. Clarity, "U.S. Called Ready To Be Flexible At Talks On Arms," *The New York Times*, 26 November 1984, p. A1.

14. William Beecher, "Next Task for US is Selecting Positions," *Boston Globe*, 10 January 1985, p. 1.

15. *Post-Deployment Nuclear Arms Control in Europe*, Staff Report to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 23 February 1984, p. 4.

16. *Ibid.*

17. Strobe Talbott, "Buildup and Breakdown," *Foreign Affairs*, 62 ("America and the World" edition, 1983), 597.

18. A convincing and coherent rationale for the choice of 572 Pershing II and GLCM systems has yet to be advanced. The 1981 Senate Foreign Relations Committee attempted to rebuff charges that the level and mix were chosen "out of a hat" by offering the following contributory factors. The number had to: be large enough to penetrate Soviet air defenses and survive preemptive attack; constitute a politically visible (land-based) response to Soviet theater nuclear force modernization; encourage the Soviets to enter into negotiations; not be perceived as constituting a separate nuclear capability that would be perceived as "decoupling"; bear a relation to the size of the Soviet modernization program; and maximize difficulties for Soviet planners, e.g. both in targeting US systems and in organizing an offensive. See *Interim Report on Nuclear Weapons in Europe*, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations print, 97th cong., 1st Sess. (1981), pp. 15-16. However, these objectives are difficult to reconcile logically. For instance, if the idea was to counter the SS-20, the warhead level of the planned US deployments was surpassed by SS-20 deployments one year before the negotiations began. If the purpose was to attack Soviet rear echelon targets, complicate Soviet offensive strategy by forcing greater Pact

dispersion, and strengthen extended deterrence in the context of strategic parity, then the zero/zero option and its follow-on US proposals were illogical by their implication that but for the SS-20 no need would exist for NATO LRINF modernization. Indeed, the argument could also be advanced that by creating the semblance of a balance in LRINF systems, linkage is actually degraded and a premium placed on conventional and self-detering battlefield nuclear weapons. For critiques of the dual-track decision, see Donald R. Cotter, James H. Hanson, and Kirk McConnell, *The Nuclear "Balance" in Europe*, USSI Report 83-1 (Washington: United States Strategic Institute, 1983); and Jeffrey Record, *NATO's Theater Nuclear Force Modernization Program: The Real Issues* (Cambridge, Mass.: Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, 1984), p. 73.

19. Barry M. Blechman, Edward Luttwak, and Joel S. Wit, eds., *International Security Yearbook 1983/1984* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), p. 73.

20. See especially David S. Yost, "START, INF and European Security," *The World Today*, 39 (November 1983), 417-28; and Philip A. G. Sabin, "Should INF and START be merged? A historical perspective," *International Affairs* (London) 60 (Summer 1984), 419-28. President Reagan reportedly authorized US agreement to a START-INF merger if such had been proposed by Gromyko during the January 1985 Geneva meeting with Shultz. The Soviets did not propose such a merger, although Gromyko stated on 13 January 1985

that it would be impossible "to try to reach agreement [on strategic weapons] without resolving the issue of medium-range weapons." Leslie H. Gelb, "Unused U.S. Option In Geneva Related," *The New York Times*, 1 February 1985, p. A4.

21. *The Defense Monitor*, 12 (No. 6, 1983), 8.

22. "Text of the Communique," *The New York Times*, 9 January 1985, p. A11.

23. Bernard Gwertzman, "Arms Talk: 'Star Wars' Becomes the Key Issue," *The New York Times*, 14 January 1985, p. A4.

24. Ibid.

25. Hedrick Smith, "Arms-Control Talks Scheduled in March, Administration Says," *The New York Times*, 26 January 1985, pp. A1, A4.

26. "Excerpts From Interview By Gromyko on Arms Talks," *The New York Times*, 14 January 1985, p. A5.

27. James C. Fletcher, "The Technologies For Ballistic Missile Defense," *Issues in Science and Technology*, 1 (Fall 1984), 26.

28. "The Second Reagan Term: Arms or Arms Control?" *Arms Control Today*, 14 (December 1984), 4.

29. *Post-Deployment Nuclear Arms Control in Europe*, p. 13.

30. Lawrence Freedman, "NATO Myths," *Foreign Policy*, 45 (Winter 1981-82), 55.

