Chapter IV:

ARMs CONTROL AS A FACTOR IN THE QUEST
In today's military planning arms control has an important place. In the quest for military balance, it has all the potentials of positively/negatively influencing the military developments which stabilize/undermine military relationships between adversaries. However, effective arms control measures which strike a balance are largely dependent upon positive responses of nations involved who are asked to think beyond the sectoral national interests. This aspect of arms control undermines its effectiveness as a balancing act and the outcome somehow becomes debatable. Nevertheless, in NATO-Warsaw Pact relationships arms control occupies an unique position so much so that any discussion on the two alliances' quest for military balance remains incomplete if this aspect is ignored. We shall now seek to correlate the theory and practice of arms control in the light of the experience gained over the last 40 years.

4.1 Arms Control and Stability of Balance: Theoretical Aspects

Lasting peace probably is not a natural condition of human living but it certainly is a desirable proposition and in spite of regular threats, durable peace perhaps also is feasible. Not only the confirmed idealists but most people share this overpowering belief and it has been universally accepted that peace is normal to human affairs and war is a breakdown of the normal system. To avoid war the idealist proponents of disarmament call for global renunciation of all military means, banning all weaponry and force establishments. In its absolute sense, disarmament is general, i.e. it covers all the states, and comprehensive, i.e. it applies to all
weapons and forces.

A complete ban or total abolition of armaments, however, has never been deemed to be easy to achieve and the task became more difficult with the advent of nuclear weapons. It is rightly pointed out that secret manufacture and circumvention of international control in the absence of fully effective modes of verification and inspection would prove a complete ban on nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction futile. Moreover, "it is difficult to see, why the nuclear weapons states would agree to an arrangement that would deprive them of the pre-eminence they enjoyed over the nuclear have-nots. Expectations for a ‘change of heart’ on part of the nuclear weapons states in effect defy the rationale of realpolitik. Highly inflated aspirations generally introduce a sense of dejection in the long run".¹ No wonder, disarmament approach has failed to achieve desired results, rather it has often been used as propagandist exercise in public relations.

One may, however, argue that it is not necessary for disarmament to be general and comprehensive at one stroke. One, for instance, can follow a step-by-step approach, gradually reducing the numbers or eliminating completely one type of weapons at a time. The ultimate goal remains the same, i.e. to free the world of the grave effects of weapons - conventional and nuclear. This partial disarmament was often identified with arms control that in the beginning was viewed as nothing but "a kind of modest

¹ Majumdar, Anindyo J. "Thorns and Thistles: Are we Fooling Ourselves?" Indian Dominion, 1(7-8), January-February 1993, p.27.
disarmament. There always existed a minority within the arms control community who reflected a more prevalent perception among the general public, that arms control was disarmament in easy stages". At any rate, disarmament involves reductions of arms at any given time and here lies its point of departure from arms control which may involve reduction of arms but, if necessary, can even prescribe further increase in weaponry.

The advocates of arms control are ready to promote some kind of weapons which they feel might contribute to the creation of an environment of stability, the aim being strengthening the balance of military power. In this context, "the essential feature of arms control is the recognition of common interest, of the possibility of reciprocation and cooperation even between potential enemies with respect to their military establishments". The moot question becomes: how much is enough to maintain the stability or what is required for each party to deny the other certain apparent military advantages.

It has been observed that "while the nuclear balance of terror is seen as a positive development it is not assumed that this balance itself will maintain. Constant care and fine-tuning are required if the stability of the balance is to be continuously maintained, and while unilateral initiatives can play a part in achieving this end, negotiations with the potential adversary are

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a crucial element". In general, "conflict of interest is a social phenomenon unlikely to disappear, and potential recourse to violence and damage will always suggest itself if the conflict gets out of hand. Man's capability for self-destruction cannot be eradicated - he knows too much! Keeping that capability under control - providing incentives to minimize recourse to violence - is the eternal challenge." Accordingly, irrespective of the sizes and numbers of military forces and arsenals going up or down, arms control measures are (theoretically, at least) fashioned in a manner so as to minimize the destabilizing influence of new technologies and/or strategies.

From yet another angle, "conceptually, the goals, direction and execution of arms control policy represent a means by which strategic goals are realised .... in the most acute sense, arms control policy is a means of seeking to reduce the risk of war without increasing the risk of defeat were war to occur". And in many quarters, it is understood as a means of preserving a nation's "vital interests while minimizing the economic cost and maximizing the military effectiveness of security". On the whole, arms

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4 Sheehan. No.2. p.10.
5 Schelling and Halperin. No.3. p.5.
7 Ibid. p. 77.
control measures have to have "a restraining effect".  

Military balance is inherently unstable. Still, as we have seen earlier, it is an important source of international security and in the absence of any other effective alternative arrangement, military balance remains a much sought-after option. Between the opposed blocs, both possessing vast arsenals of weapons of mass destruction, a 'rough balance' of military capability is required to avoid war, even if it is unstable and needs constant care.

The immediate objective of arms control is to secure stability. In a way, arms control makes the 'inherently unstable' military balance somewhat 'stable'. "If there were to be a stabilization of military balance, it would have to be by the adjustment of armaments. Moreover, if it were to last for any length of time it would have to be by arms control", and those "measures of arms control which undermine the balance of power will defeat their own purpose". Almost similar arguments were advanced by Buchan and Windsor: "A negotiated reduction of armaments would be to the advantage of both alliances in Europe, as long as it was consistent with a stable military balance, it could free large numbers of men and significant economic resources for more inspiring purposes than holding the line across the continent, and

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10 Ibid. p. 45.
would make it more difficult for any major conflict to begin a new war".\textsuperscript{11}

In fine, arms controls not only seeks to stabilize military balance, it also helps the balance to exist at lower levels of deployments and expenditure; and it is concerned with, in the words of Hedley Bull, "discriminating between those kinds or qualities of forces and weapons that promote the stability of balance of power, and those which do not: to tolerate or even to promote the former, and to restrict the latter".\textsuperscript{12} Paradoxically, in this context, disarmament and armament become two sides of the same coin; while independently they give opposite impressions, together they come within the fold of arms control which seeks to buy peace in exchange of a judicious mixture of both.\textsuperscript{13}

However, all these theorizings hold good only when the opposed blocs have a common interest in the avoidance of war and are truly serious about it. Imperialist ambitions, willingness to indulge in blackmailing, and desire to project military strength are factors that scuttle the plans for restraining armaments. As nations tend to opt for a favourable margin of balance, arms control becomes an


\textsuperscript{12} Bull. No.9, p.48.

\textsuperscript{13} It is to be noted that whatever may be the long-range objectives of arms control, for our purpose, we are only concerned with the role of arms control measures in establishing, restoring and maintaining military balance. Later we shall confine ourselves to an examination of the real worth of arms reductions and limitations in strengthening the balance of military power of NATO and the Warsaw Pact.
instrument of deriving maximum advantage - military or political. Furthermore, arms control remains "a hostage to the degree of detente present at any particular time". As Gray wrote in 1984: "Both historical experience and common sense tells us that progress in arms control cannot be achieved when East-West political relations are bad and deteriorating or when the forces deployed is markedly advantageous to one party". In the same manner Nye observed: "Arms control agreements during the Cold War were concluded only when neither side had an appreciable advantage, and agreements could not be reached when either side had a strong preference for development of a new weapon".

Arms control negotiations have huge potential in managing public opinion and propaganda exercises and often nations prefer to enter into negotiations primarily to exploit this potential while the balance-stability consideration takes a backseat. The intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty negotiations of early 1980s prove this point. Proposals from both the camps were presented in a manner so as to maximize the possibility of their rejection by the other and consequently to reap the benefit of accusing each other as 'warmongers' never ready to accept 'reasonable restrictions/reductions'.

14 Sheehan. No.2. p.11.


Gray, however, sought to negate the earlier understanding on the subject when he observed:

People of all political and doctrinal persuasions agree that an arms control process should, via its ability to help stabilize a strategic relationship, contribute to peace with security. But the meaning of stability that has inspired Western arms control theorists and would be practitioners has been overwhelmingly technical.

Unfortunately, that technical approach has not rested upon an adequate understanding of the causes of wars. Because the problems of security are preponderantly political, they cannot be evaded by legal, ethical, administrative-managerial, or technical-military approaches. Those approaches, severally or ensemble, can express prior political wishes, but they cannot reshape political reality independently. There is no autonomous arms control process that can transform the lead of conflict into the gold of international cooperation.

Specifically, the notion that through an arms-control process states can help fire-proof a strategic relationship is almost certainly wrong. Arms do need to be controlled, but they cannot be usefully controlled by the activities typically identified as arms control. The reason, simply, is that the use of arms is not an autonomous military decision.17

The validity of Gray's observation can only be verified once the history of NATO-Warsaw Pact arms control measures is analysed. But usually when ambitious expectations failed to materialize, arms control came to be criticized at many quarters.18 We have already observed that 'highly inflated aspirations generally introduce a sense of dejection in the long run', and in this context Gray's

17 Gray, Colin S. "Arms Control Does Not Control Arms", Orbis, Summer 1993, pp. 341-42.

18 For example, see Rostow, Eugene, "The Case Against Salt II", Commentary, February 1979, p.25 for the view that arms control lulled Americans into a false sense of security hostile to necessary defence spending and also Schelling, Thomas C. "What Went Wrong with Arms Control?" Foreign Affairs, Winter 1985-86, p.224.
observation simply codified the human inadequacy in living upto the expectations formulated at the theoretical plane. There is no denying the fact that if not in concrete measures but the idea of arms control itself (indirectly though) did play an important role in the adjustment of armaments of both the blocs during the cold war years. At any rate, maintaining balance through arms control, however, does not lose its relevance as Gray himself says that "the control of arms is achievable by policies designed both to balance the power of possible rogue states and to diminish the political incentives for conflict".\(^9\) However, before we start analysing the role of arms control vis-a-vis the quest for military balance of the NATO and the Warsaw Pact, an evaluation of the views and approaches of both the blocs towards arms control might prove helpful.

4.2 Stability through Arms Control: Views of the Alliances

It is perhaps easier to reach arms control agreements when the process involves two or three individual states but it becomes increasingly difficult to achieve a meaningful agreement when two formal alliances are concerned. Because in the latter, the primary task becomes to bridge the gaps among various intra-alliances differences regarding individual security objectives of the alliance-members to obtain a coordinated common policy on arms control. What is sauce for the goose may not be so for the gander and each member while agreeing upon a common security threat may

\(^9\) Gray. No.17, p.347.
hold divergent views in pursuing suitable policies. Arms control negotiations can only be initiated once such differences are at least apparently reconciled.

It is interesting to note that the Warsaw Pact enjoyed an upper-hand in this regard, as the domineering influence of the Soviet Union over the other members of the alliance made it possible for the WTO to behave like a monolithic bloc while NATO, with its more sovereign members, had to take up serious negotiations first to allay apprehensions among its members before it could respond to Soviet/Warsaw Pact arms control proposals or initiate negotiations. Absence of a coordinated policy might adversely influence relations of members; for instance, it was observed that the lack of a comprehensive concept for arms control had negatively affected the German-American relations during the days of strategic nuclear weapons and the INF negotiations.20

On the whole, however, NATO’s security policy was based on the Harmel Doctrine of 1967. In accordance with this doctrine, it was observed that "NATO is committed to a two-pronged approach to security: the maintenance of adequate military strength to deter aggression and a search for progress toward a more stable relationship in which the underlying political problems can be solved. Arms control and disarmament can contribute to a stabilization of East-West relations in a manner which should

enhance rather than detract from military superiority. The two prongs are complementary in nature".\textsuperscript{21} Over the years, specific proposals emanated from various member-nations but it was the Political Directorate of the Division of Political Affairs under the Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs that was "particularly concerned with the extensive preparatory and follow-up work" and the Disarmament and the Arms Control Section of the Directorate prepared "the work of the High Level Task Force formed by the 16 Allies as the vehicle for political decision-making in the area of conventional arms control."\textsuperscript{22}

Attitude toward arms control was repeatedly shaped by perceptions of security threat that emanated from the Soviet Union, NATO's perception of the Soviet threat often wavered as

"throughout the period uncertainty about Soviet intentions was a continuing factor in the Alliance's attempt to analyse the threat it faced from the Soviet Union ..... The anxious questions raised about the course likely to be pursued by Stalin's successors in 1953 or the riddles which surrounded the dismissal of Khrushchev in 1964 were mirrored in Western circles in 1985 when Gorbachev appeared on the scene with his new thinking. Once again, as in period of detente since 1951, Western leaders were confronted with the question to which no certain answer could be given: was the new line emanating from Kremlin merely tactical or did it involve substantive changes?"\textsuperscript{23}


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Recent history has provided with convincing answers but NATO which could not foresee the future, had perforce to adopt a cautious approach.

NATO members had divergent views over the tactical nuclear arms control but they unanimously preferred to have a secure and stable balance of conventional forces in Europe at lower levels and also "the elimination of disparities prejudicial to stability and security, and the elimination of the capability for launching surprise attack and for initiating large scale offensive action". The role of technology had been much emphasised in this context.

Authors like Carlo Jean opined that

> technological stability ....is ....less important for conventional than for nuclear forces. In the conventional field the time between invention, innovation and updating of an operationally-significant parts of the equipment in service requires long lead-times that allows the adoption by the other side of compensation measures. Again, in the conventional field the impact of technological instability is partially compensated by other instabilities like those issuing from the so-called intangible factors of operational capability such as morale, training and the quality of commanders. Moreover, a technological superiority, especially on the ground, can be countered with indirect measures, by modifying tactics or by improving security measures. 24

From another angle, Faringdon observed: "the defender, as the party in place, has always enjoyed the advantage of a superior knowledge of the scene of operations. This is a state of affairs which NATO

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is well-placed to exploit." 25 But be that as it may; relative advantage in modifying tactics or benefit gained through strategic geography notwithstanding, the question of technological superiority influenced the choice of both the alliances.

It had been reported that East German officers in mid-1970s used to teach recruits that the Western concept of a military balance in Central Europe was 'a deception of the imperialists for obscuring the real relationship of forces.' These officers were of the view that numerical superiority of WTO was an effective deterrent against a better-equipped NATO. 26 No wonder, initially WTO offered to agree only to equal percentage or equal numerical cuts when the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) Talks started.

On the other hand, even by late 1980s NATO maintained:

Member countries of the Alliance have also lost some of the technological advantage which used to permit NATO to rely partially to compensate for qualitative disadvantages...(Thus) purely numerically equal reductions in the size of military forces and the extent of their armaments are inadequate. At best they perpetuate existing disparities; at worst, in circumstances of imbalance, reduced force levels can place NATO countries at a greater military disadvantage and consequently weaken deterrence, adding to insecurity and rendering war and conflict more, rather than less likely. 27


27 No.22, p.228.
As a consequence, the alliances approached the MBFR issue from different angles. Military preponderance to maintain the credibility of conventional threat posed to the West European nations was a necessity for the Soviet Union. On the other hand, NATO felt the need to build up its conventional forces and sought asymmetric cuts to ensure a conventional parity.

However, "comparative survey of continuity and discontinuity between the 1950s and the 1980s leads to a twofold conclusion" argued Schweitzer in 1990. To him, even after arms control announcements made by Gorbachev, NATO's suspicion of military preponderance had not been overcome and secondly, in the late-1980s the issues of full recognition of human rights in the Eastern bloc and the implementation of the provisions of Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) obligations became important. The human rights issue is essentially a political issue and during the late 1980s the fast-changing military and strategic considerations made it possible for this issue to gain limited prominence.

The external security threat for the non-Soviet members of the Warsaw Pact stemmed from a possible East-West military confrontation and, being a buffer zone protecting the Soviet Union from the first direct onslaught of the West, it could be very well assumed that they would prefer both the Soviet Union and the West to act in restraint. However, the East European regimes were solely dependent on Soviet support for their existence and in effect had little influence over Soviet arms control diplomacy.
wonder Soviet arms control objectives had been thus presented as coordinated Warsaw Pact policy.

It is, of course, true that sometimes, the role of the East European states within the alliance had been sought to be upgraded. In 1976, for instance, the Political Consultative Committee (PCC) established a formal council of Pact Foreign Ministers with its own secretariat for better coordination of policies. East European leaders were invited through the 1970s to attend its annual meetings to have their views heard. "These high-level meetings - either at heads of state level, or as the PCC, or gatherings of Foreign and Defence Ministers - (were) used to both launch new Soviet arms control initiatives with WTO backing, and to respond to Western proposals" and these meetings were used to "endorse a litany of proposals embracing the principal long-standing Soviet security objectives." However, one should not assume that the East European security interests were sacrificed altogether at the alter of Soviet dominance.

The Warsaw Pact was formed as a response to NATO and it was expected that the alliance-members would act in a concerted manner as they had common threat perceptions. Weak, non-nuclear states as they were, the East European nations were afraid of possible nuclear blackmail by the West and though unnerving was the fear of being involved in a nuclear conflict for no fault of their own, the non-Soviet Warsaw Pact members had to cling to the Soviet Union for

protection. Also to a limited extent the Eastern bloc shared with the Soviet Union identical security threats. Foremost among those was the fear of German revanchism as Bonn had its expressed objectives to reunify Germany, refused to recognize the Oder-Nisse line as the German-Polish border, failed to disengage forces from Central Europe and till the late 1960s "would not even repudiate the infamous Munich pact of 1938 which inter alia laid claim to Czechoslovak territory."

Once the threat of German revanchism reduced with Bonn accepting the post-1945 political and territorial realities, approach to arms control was geared to maintain a stable military balance favourably inclined to WTO through quantitative cuts leaving out the question of bringing in any qualitative change. In short, while NATO maintained that glaring imbalances in selected weapons types and numerical superiority in favour of the Soviet Union were to be rearranged through asymmetric conventional arms control, WTO was of the view that a rough kind of parity in conventional weapons was already existing and arms control was necessary to lower the level of this parity and, further, strategic nuclear parity should be regarded as the natural state of Soviet-American relations.

Analysing the Soviet approach to arms control over the years, Western authors derived different conclusions. According to Holden, one school argued that the Soviet Union aimed at "the avoidance of war if the desired ends (could) be achieved without it

\[\text{Ibid. p.166.} \]
and favour(ed) only measures of disarmaments which (would) not undermine areas of Soviet strength and advantage." Another school would not believe that the Soviet Union followed such 'rigorously self-interested policy' for search of advantage. Rather, it accepted treaties that had fallen "short of the optimum demands of the Soviet military." At any rate, the Soviet Union could fully exploit the propaganda potential of arms control through taking initiatives as almost each new military (sometimes political) development in the West provoked not only reaction but also a barrage of new arms control proposals from the Soviet side.

Soviet arms control and confidence-building or peace proposals had been of varied nature and many of these were not confined to the area of military balance. Jane Sharp usefully summarised the standard themes present in the Soviet/Warsaw Pact proposals since the mid-1950s under the following headings

1 recognition of the inviolability of post-1945 territorial borders in Europe;

2 need to improve East-West economic, scientific and technological relations;

3 conclusion of a non-aggression pact between NATO and the WTO;

4 abolition of foreign military bases and return of

foreign based troops within their national territories;

5 replacement of the two opposing military alliances with a pan-European security system and, pending such a system, the dismantling of the integrated military command organizations in NATO and WTO;

6 establishment of nuclear-free zones in Europe and the mutual renunciation of weapons by both German states;

7 outlawing of new weapons of mass destruction; and

8 setting ceilings on the military expenditures of NATO and WTO countries.  

Further, Sharp observed, "variations (were) added when necessary to address innovations in NATO military doctrine, to curb the latest round of NATO weapons modernisation or counter unwelcome political developments." Sharp gave a number of instances of such 'variations'. For example, "the news that Spain was planning to join NATO generated a Pact proposal to freeze the current membership of both alliances".

Thus it would appear that the Warsaw Pact was more inclined to use arms control as a political tool to achieve political objectives with military ramifications rather than to strike an effective military balance. Confronted with this approach and also its failure to ensure asymmetric cuts which to NATO was the key for any meaningful arms control agreement, the Atlantic Pact members in effect pursued regular armaments programmes to rearrange the military balance in their favour. In this context, arms control as

32 Sharp. No.29, p.164.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid.
means of ensuring stable military balance had very little value.

Though 'the nature of the US-Soviet interaction in arms control negotiations can work both for and against each side' given the nature of superpower politics, agreements between the two giants naturally affected the ups and down of NATO-WTO relations. Detente and the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks eased the tensions between the alliances. But what affected the Central European security situation the most was perhaps the INF Treaty. The only arms control treaty between the Warsaw Pact and the Atlantic Alliance, the Conventional Forces Treaty was a later development which came just before the demise of the Pact. At any rate, these two agreements constituted the core of arms control measures in Europe which greatly affected the prevailing alliance politics.

4.3 Nuclear Arms Control in Europe: the INF Treaty

Nuclear weapons have been viewed by many, interestingly, as weapons not for actual use in war but to generate fear sufficient to prevent any actual war. In other words, nuclear weapons are viewed as a guarantor of armed peace. In fact, the peace that prevailed in Europe from the late 1940s to early 1990s has very often been attributed to the presence of nuclear weapons in Europe. Says Zuberi, "the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact without resort to armed force was certainly facilitated by the presence of nuclear weapons

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in Europe", and he continues to argue that "the treaty providing reduction of conventional forces in Europe was also made possible because the nuclear stockpiles reduced the practical significance of balance in conventional forces". Though one may differ on this point and observe that possession of nuclear weapons does not necessarily make conventional forces redundant and minimise its strategic and tactical significance (as despite pronounced strategic preparedness of nuclear weapons for first use, nuclear weapons are really the weapons of last resort providing an insurance in case of a conventional debacle), one can hardly deny the fact that the absence of war among the antagonistic alliances in Europe in the last forty years or so was largely due to the fear of 'unacceptable damage and destruction' as a result of possible nuclear exchange outweighing any benefits to be gained by waging a war.

"NATO, from its inception, has been primarily a nuclear alliance with emphasis on first use of nuclear weapons in case of a conventional conflict. The threat that leaves something to chance

* Part of this section is based on and borrowed from the author's M.Phil dissertation on *Leadership Factor in Nuclear Arms Control: Ronald Reagan, Mikhail Gorbachev and the INF Treaty*, 1990, JNU.


37 Ibid.
is a cornerstone of its strategy\textsuperscript{38}. Moreover, the distinction between conventional and nuclear forces gets somewhat blurred as NATO member states have thousands of nuclear weapons of the United States integrated into their conventional forces. With an emphasis upon judicial mixture of both conventional and nuclear forces in war strategy to facilitate the optimum military outcome, there remains not much scope to deal with those in exclusivity but on the whole "the ideology of peace through nuclear terror is firmly entrenched. As conventional balances are unstable while destruction is assured with nuclear weapons, NATO has been opposed to complete elimination of nuclear threat".\textsuperscript{39} Instead, they insisted upon maintaining a credible nuclear threat to suit 'flexible response'. No wonder, nuclear arms control in Europe never actually became a priority item on the agenda.

Nuclear weapons in Europe, though placed under Alliance military commands, mainly came from the US and the Soviet Union. French weapons were not integrated in the NATO Force structure and Britain, in spite of assigning her nuclear weapons to NATO, retained the right of independent use in the event of its supreme interests being at stake. No other member of the alliances possessed its own force of nuclear weapons and was either incapable or restrained by treaty obligations to develop an independent


\textsuperscript{39} Ibid. p.166.
force. Accordingly, nuclear arms control negotiations were conducted mainly between the two military superpowers and with the passage of time they could agree on various measures to provide certain restrictions upon certain kinds of weapons' development and deployment in order to help improve bilateral relations, to preclude accidental outbreak of war and to curb arms race to a limited extent.

As we have said earlier, East-West detente and the SALT I package generated much hope and optimism and eased tensions. However, they did not alter the European security environment or the prevailing positions of the alliances. A new crisis situation was developed soon with the stationing of the intermediate-range nuclear weapons in Europe only to be resolved by the conclusion of the INF Treaty. It remained a treaty between the USA and the USSR and not between the alliances but it had strong implications for alliance combat effectiveness and balance.

Our objective in this chapter is to examine the role of arms control in the quest for military balance. The INF Treaty - the first real arms reduction treaty - provides us with certain conflicting considerations. We shall come to that shortly after

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40 The Soviet Union insisted that France and Great Britain should be included in the INF negotiations as they too had their own intermediate-range nuclear weapons deployed in Europe. Mikhail Gorbachev had proposed to open separate and direct negotiations with them but finally "accepted the Western proposition that the British and French forces were independent and out of the jurisdiction of bilateral arms reduction". For a fuller treatment of shifts in the Soviet position in this context see Sherr, Alan B. The Other Side of Arms Control (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1988). Especially Chapter 5 - "Nuclear Arms Control in Europe".

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analysing the factors that contributed to the conclusion of the agreement.

The strategy of 'flexible response' presupposed that war in Europe would start at the conventional level and through escalation would proceed to tactical and then to strategic nuclear levels. With the Soviet Union achieving strategic parity, the West European worry was that if conventional war started in Europe, the United States might hesitate to launch nuclear retaliation as that would make them a target of Soviet strategic attack. Accordingly, NATO's European members "concluded that new American missiles were needed in Europe to strengthen the ties between two parts of the alliance".\footnote{Holloway, David, \textit{The Soviet Union and the Arms Race} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), p.70.} In a double-track decision they agreed to modernise their existing nuclear capability and at the same time to open negotiations with the Russians for possible control of arms. Further the deployment of SS-20 missiles by the Soviet Union in 1979, achieved according to the NATO assessment, 'escalation dominance' in Europe. This made "the NATO threat to resort to nuclear weapons in the event of Soviet attack much less credible, and therefore much less effective as a deterrent. NATO claims its December 1979 (double track) decision was necessary to restore the military balance in Europe".\footnote{Ibid. p.71.} However, the reaction of the Soviets can be well ascertained from the speech of Marshall Ogarkov, Chief of the General Staff in June 1980 when he observed

\footnote{Holloway, David, \textit{The Soviet Union and the Arms Race} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), p.70.}
\footnote{Ibid. p.71.}
that the NATO plan, if materialized "would not only disrupt sharply the approximate balance of medium-range nuclear systems that has been created in Europe, but would also lead to sharp qualitative changes in the military political situation, since it would create the threat of a surprise suppression of the launchers of our strategic nuclear forces". Opined Holloway in 1983:

What has been taking place between NATO and the Warsaw Pact is not only a competition in arms, but also - and perhaps more importantly - a competition in strategies. Each side believes that the other is attempting to make its strategy workable and thereby undermine its security. NATO sees Soviet policy as an effort to destroy the credibility of the strategy of flexible response, and thus to give the Soviet Union a military and political advantage through its preponderance of conventional forces. The Soviet Union claims that NATO is attempting to achieve military superiority, in order to be able to deal with the Soviet Union from a position of strength. The installation of the Cruise and Pershing II missiles in Europe was apparently to counter the new, more accurate Soviet SS-20s, each with three independently targeted warheads. In actual fact, they were "to fill the gap in the ladder of escalation, thereby reinforcing the credibility of the American nuclear guarantee to Europe". These missiles were to be under complete American control and sought to augment the United States' counterforce capability by reducing the time in which American nuclear missiles could reach Soviet targets from thirty to five or six minutes. "The

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44 Holloway, No.41, p.72.

INF deployments", opined Alexiev, "demonstrated a renewed American dedication to the defence of Europe and a reassertion of US leadership in the (NATO) alliance".46

The Soviet Union’s view that the SS-20s were balanced by the existing British and French intermediate-range forces in Europe was supported by former West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt who, in an interview to the newspaper Kolner Stadt-Anzeiger in February 1981, observed that despite the SS-20s, the balance of forces had not changed in the USSR’s favour.47 If one is to believe E. Petrunin, Consul of USSR Information Department, Calcutta in 1987, then "there is evidence that the first contracts for Pershing II were signed in 1969 and those for cruise missiles in early 1960s. In 1975, on the insistence of the then US Defence Secretary, Mr. James Schlesinger, the Pentagon had its budget increased for these purposes. The same year, with not a single Soviet SS-20 yet installed, NATO decided to modernize its nuclear potential".48

By November 1981, when negotiations between the US and the Soviet Union began in Geneva, the American administration’s negotiating position was made clear by President Ronald Reagen. It was to be the zero option - an understanding to cancel the deployment of American cruise and Pershing II missiles in Europe if


47 Quoted in Petrunin, E.P. "Commitment to 'Star Wars' has thwarted Reykjavik's achievements" The Telegraph (Calcutta), December 9, 1987, p.9.

48 Ibid.
the USSR would remove and dismantle its entire arsenal of intermediate-range missiles, the SS-4s and SS-20s, including those which were located behind the Ural mountains and could theoretically strike Norway if retargeted. In fact, while the Russians were asked to destroy 350 SS-4s and SS-5s and 250 SS-20s (1,100 warheads in total), the US in exchange would simply refrain from installing 572 missiles carrying one warhead each. "The Russians responded to the zero option with a barrage of counter proposals. Their initial proposal was to limit by each side (by which they meant NATO and Warsaw Pact, and not just the US and the Soviet Union) to 300 intermediate-range delivery-vehicles which included aircraft as well as missile-launchers. Later they proposed their own zero option which called for the elimination not only of land-based intermediate range missiles but also of submarine-based intermediate range air based theatre nuclear weapons". 49

Proposals and counter proposals continued to emanate from both the sides without any sign of agreement. Meanwhile, fear spread in Europe about a possible nuclear war and in the early 1980s this fear gave birth to anti-nuclear demonstrations. The strategy to frighten the nation to secure enhanced defence budget using the bogie of Soviet threat had in turn boomeranged in the form of public pressure and peace movements in America and Europe which eventually forced the administration to open negotiations with the Russians on the control of both strategic and theatre nuclear weapons. The view of the administration regarding these anti-

49 McMohan, No.45, p.64.
nuclear 'freeze' movements was expressed by the Secretary of State Haig who maintained that

It is the duty of any administration to listen to messages contained in great popular movements and to try to understand their deeper meanings. But if the demands of a popular movement are likely, if adopted, to bring about results opposite to the aims desired by the movement itself, then leaders must not yield to popular pressure.

and he added

if democratic governments have an obligation to listen, they have no mandate to yield and must remember that even if there are a million demonstrators in the streets, they remain demonstrators.\(^5^0\)

Nevertheless, when public pressure could no longer be ignored and the administration was compelled to confront the issue of arms control, it started playing to the home crowd. Reagan and his men made it a point to make proposals that were unacceptable to the Russians and thereby bound to be rejected by them.

Soviet political goals and security concerns in the European continent included among others two specific objectives: 1) undermining the military and political cohesion of the Western alliance and 2) decoupling the United States from Western Europe, preferably by means of American and European self-isolation.\(^5^1\)

Understandably, the deployment of American INF in Europe threatened to undermine the hoped-for political and military utility of the Soviet SS-20 programme. "Moscow sought to exploit and reinforce


\(^5^1\) Alexiev. No.46, p.319.
Table 4.1: Soviet and U.S. views of the balance of medium-range nuclear forces in Europe, November 1981.

United States View: USSR leads by 6 to 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>USSR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IRBM</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>250 SS-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>350 SS-4/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100 SS-12/22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLBM</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30 SS-N-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bombers</td>
<td>164 F-111 in W. Europe</td>
<td>45 Backfire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>63 FB-111 in USA</td>
<td>350 Blinder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>265 F-4</td>
<td>2700 Su-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>68 A-6/7</td>
<td>630 MiG-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>560 Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,825 Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Soviet View: USSR and NATO in balance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>USA+NATO</th>
<th>USSR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IRBM</td>
<td>18 French</td>
<td>243 SS-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>253 SS-4/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLBM</td>
<td>80 French</td>
<td>18 SS-N-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>64 British</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bombers</td>
<td>65 US FB-111 Backfire</td>
<td>461 Blinder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>172 US F-111</td>
<td>461 Blinder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>246 US F-4</td>
<td>246 Blinder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46 French Mirage IV A</td>
<td>461 Blinder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>55 British Vulcan</td>
<td>55 British Vulcan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>986 Total</td>
<td>975 Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

growing European doubts about the US nuclear guarantee, as well as European uneasiness with the Reagan administration’s policy of greater assertiveness."\textsuperscript{52}

The Soviet initiatives too were packaged to create an impression of Russian sincerity in producing a significant agreement and, when rejected by the Americans, provided opportunity to describe Reagan and his men as irresponsible, reckless individuals deliberately engaged in harming the interest of the European masses. Had the Americans accepted the Soviet proposals, it could result in perpetuating Soviet INF superiority and keeping the American INF machinations out of Europe. Eventually, however, "for the United States, the ensuing large-scale anti-nuclear demonstrations in Western Europe...made the INF issue primarily a political competition with the Soviet Union over the loyalty of NATO and the capacity of NATO governments to make defence decisions."\textsuperscript{53} Dissidents voiced their demands in the Soviet bloc too. An "appeal from Prague, dated 11 March 1985, proposed that NATO and the Warsaw pact should immediately enter into negotiations for the dissolution of their military organizations, for the removal of all nuclear weapons from Europe, and for the withdrawal of American and Soviet troops from the territories of the European allies. It also advocated the scaling down of conventional armed

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid. p.324.

forces in Europe."

The first summit meeting between Reagan and Gorbachev took place in Geneva in 1985 which failed to produce any substantial result. For Reagan, INF was a self-contained package: agreement on these weapons was to be achieved separately irrespective of the progress in Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START). Gorbachev, however, declared that Soviet concessions in strategic and intermediate-range arsenals could take place only after complete renunciation of the American SDI programme. Reagan believed that the Soviets could only be sobered down by massive US arms build-up. By making Gorbachev return from Geneva empty-handed he was simply serving American interests. Observed Krepon: "In an administration that equals leadership with giving speeches and confuses rhetoric with reality, the President's core beliefs are a surrogate for national security policy." However, the two leaders agreed in principle to accelerate arms control negotiation with an assertion that a nuclear war could never be won, and hence, should never be fought.

The second summit, which took place at Reykjavik, the capital of Iceland, on October 11 and 12, 1986, was to consider mainly the INF. On the insistence of Gorbachev, however, START, SDI and other issues, such as nuclear testing were included in the agenda. Regarding INF, the Soviet leader suggested that American and Soviet

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54 Also for other instances of appeals for peace and related activities, see Zuberi, No.38, pp.162-63.

intermediate range missiles should be withdrawn from Europe and he also agreed to lower the number of Asia-based SS-20 warheads from 513 to 100 which was to be equally matched by US-based missiles. He was also ready to freeze the SS-21 and SS-23 shorter-range missiles in Europe and to negotiate their reduction. Approving the offers, Reagan in addition proposed intrusive verification measures including on-site inspection and suggested not only removal but destruction of the missiles. 'Doveryai no proveryai' (Trust but verify) was Reagan's favourite Russian proverb. Gorbachev on his part agreed.

However, the summit too collapsed on the question of SDI though there was a significant shift in the Soviet position. While still opposing the deployment of any space-based anti-ballistic missile system, the Russians accepted 'laboratory research' part of it. But Reagan was not ready to withstand any effort to 'kill' or do away with his favourite Star Wars programme. He was looking for as much concessions as possible to extract from the Soviet side by using the leverage of SDI. "The 'problem' was that the Soviets kept moving toward U.S. positions. The Reagan administration's solution, apparently was to keep raising the minimum."\(^5\) But the administration's negotiating strategy came under sharp criticism this time. The Soviets "did not want to allow Reagan's supporters to claim, as they had after the Geneva meeting, that standing tall and holding firm had paid off and that Gorbachev had knuckled under

\(^5\) Haley, P. Edward. "'You could have said yes': Lessons from Reykjavik", *Orbis*, Spring 1987, p.95.
to the President."\textsuperscript{57} To put it bluntly "the encounter at Reykjavik was an elaborate minuet, part propaganda, part negotiating maneuver. Both nations approached the meeting in an attempt to put the other on the wrong foot in the eyes of the most important target audiences, the people, legislators and news media of Western Europe and North America."\textsuperscript{58} "Nevertheless", as Pick maintained, "Gorbachev has tried. At least this is the impression he has managed to convey."\textsuperscript{59}

Yet another pragmatic turn was taken by Gorbachev in February 1987 when the Soviet side announced that they would accept a separate agreement on INF as a self-contained package. Delinking INF from START or SDI was a clear departure from the Soviet position at Geneva, or even at Reykjavik. "Since the superpowers could not agree on limits for strategic or space based weapons, the INF agreement was held hostage, though the two sides were not far apart on this issue. Gorbachev's concessions broke the log-jam".\textsuperscript{60}

Gorbachev's proposals suggested that both sides should remove their intermediate range missiles from Europe with each retaining missiles outside it. He promised to eliminate the medium-range missiles from the European part of the Soviet Union, agreed to

\textsuperscript{57} Mandelbaum, Michael and Strobe Talbot. "Reykjavik and Beyond", \textit{Foreign Affairs}, 65(2), Winter 1986/87, p.219.

\textsuperscript{58} Haley. No.56, p.97.

\textsuperscript{59} Pick, Otto. "How Serious is Gorbachev about Arms Control?" \textit{World Today}, April 1987, p.68.

exclude British and French nuclear arsenals from the talks and announced his intention to destroy remaining 100 missiles based in the Asian part without a parallel US commitment. Also following American insistence to include shorter-range missiles (with ranges between 500-1000 km) in the agreement, Gorbachev promised to remove all shorter-range missiles from East Germany and Czechoslovakia (these had been installed in response to deployment of American intermediate range missiles in Western Europe). Thus Reagan’s original zero-option was converted into the double-zero option which now included both shorter-range INF (SRINF) and INF proper.

The basic framework of the INF Treaty was finalised through negotiations between the US Secretary of State George Shultz and the Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Schevardnadze. During the summit in Washington, the treaty was signed on the afternoon of December 8, 1987 by Reagan and Gorbachev. The treaty was subsequently ratified at the Moscow summit of early 1988. The so-called ‘double zero’ Intermediate range Nuclear Forces Treaty provided for: dismantling over a period of three years of 436 US missiles (108 Pershing II, 72 Pershing IA and 256 crusie missiles) stationed in West Germany, Great Britain, Belgium and Italy and destruction of 703 Soviet missiles (441 SS-20, 130 SS-22/SS-12, 112 SS-4/SS-5 and 20 SS-23 missiles) installed in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and the Western part of the Soviet Union. As a result, the USSR was to destroy 1585 warheads and for the United States, the number of warheads to be eliminated was 436. The agreement also contained stringent verification measures.
While for some, "the INF Treaty would result in a 'missing rung in the ladder of escalation'"\(^{61}\) for others, it was useless as "the INF negotiations address only a fraction of each other's nuclear forces. Concessions have been made with the knowledge that an INF Treaty will not fundamentally alter the overall superpower military balance".\(^{62}\) An American expert warned that "the decoupling of Arms Control from geopolitical issues is bound to limit American policy perhaps in a dangerous way".\(^{63}\) And even more, it was suggested that "eliminating the most survivable and highest priority NATO targets (i.e. Pershing II and crusie missiles) frees Soviet conventionally armed short-ranged missiles and strike aircraft to concentrate on NATO's vulnerable airpower infrastructure".\(^{64}\) But the shift in Moscow's negotiating strategy which had accepted an asymmetric cut was the indicator of things to come. Observed Shulman in 1987:

Gorbachev’s foreign policy, and policies on defence and arms control, are subordinate to his concerns with the domestic economy. This is a period of turning inward for the Soviet Union. Gorbachev has insisted that his domestic priorities require tranquility abroad and not adventurism... Remarkably enough, the Soviet Union has sought doggedly to engage the United States in productive


\(^{62}\) Gordon, Michael R. "INF: A Hollow Victory?" Foreign Policy, Fall 1987, p.160.


dialogue and negotiations, as uncompromising as this prospect has appeared to them on repeated occasions.  

At the first summit meeting in Geneva with Gorbachev, Reagan said "The world breaths again, because we two have met and talked to each other" but observed Inga Thorsson, "the treaty might not have been signed if both leaders had not considered it in their own political interests to do so. Thus the (Washington) summit was arranged to force the treaty toward conclusion. The end result was not very promising".  

The INF Treaty by and large can be said to be a product of various political compulsions that the leaders of the two superpowers faced at that time. The main driving force behind the treaty was the personal political considerations of the leaders involved. While for Reagan, it was his ambition to "go down the history as a peace-maker" and to restore his image after the Iran-Contra affair and failure of Reganomics symbolized by the Wall Street crash of 1987, for Gorbachev the treaty was necessary to give a boost to his new political thinking, to his image and to perestroika for which he needed some kind of break in the continuing antagonistic US-Soviet relations.  

The whole saga of INF deployment and the consequent Treaty  

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67 For further elaboration on these points see the author's Leadership Factor in Nuclear Arms Control: Ronald Reagan, Mikhail Gorbachev and the INF Treaty, M.Phil. Dissertation, 1990, JNU.
provides an example of how superficial on times the quest for balance could be. Threat perception is essentially a subjective matter and the deployment and removal of the INF missiles in Europe constituted an elaborate exercise in the physical aspects of this threat perception. A country’s unique threat perception is difficult to ascertain but it responds to it through concrete practical measures which set a new chain of events in motion. Nevertheless, if INF deployment was a response to a threat, then their removal was not advisable. If removal of the missiles was a step to ensure more equal combat-effectiveness then their deployment itself was not necessary. The INF Treaty, as we have seen earlier, was to ‘let the world breathe again’ and not to strike a military balance as it did not fundamentally alter Soviet-American combat-effectiveness. At any rate, the INF issue does not serve as a valid example of arms control as an effective instrument of ensuring military balance.

4.4 Conventional Arms Control in Europe: The CFE Treaty

The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) was signed by the member-states of NATO and the then Warsaw Pact on November 19, 1990. Within years the Warsaw Pact was dissolved and the Soviet Union disintegrated into several states. Without firing a single shot, NATO achieved something which it could not even imagine to achieve through war. Thus the CFE Treaty was not a means to achieve military balance between two powerful alliances but, as it were, a final silent shot in a long drawn hidden war.
Ideas for a conventional arms control had been gaining ground since the 1950s but as we have seen earlier it was the Harmel Report of 1967 which recommended as a task for NATO to engage the Eastern Bloc for mutual arms reductions. The Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction Talks (MBFR) thus called for by NATO in 1968 provoked a cautious Soviet response. "Soviet leaders made WTO participation in MBFR conditional on NATO participation in their proposed European Security Conference, later convened as the CSCE, and on conclusion of a series of agreements between Federal Germany on the one hand and the Soviet Union, the GDR, Poland and Czechoslovakia on the other. The essential feature of these 'Eastern Treaties' was Bonn's acceptance of post-1945 political and territorial realities in Europe." President Nixon and General Secretary Brezhnev endorsed the idea of force reductions in Europe in 1972 during the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) I and soon NATO and the Warsaw Pact members met to negotiate the terms of reference for the MBFR talks (January 1973); in July 1973 the CSCE process was initiated and MBFR negotiations began in October 1973.

Lacking continuity in negotiations, MBFR talks which ended in February 1989 suffered from various other political developments being accorded greater priority. The interim years saw the progress in the SALT II negotiations, deployment of INF in Europe, Reagen's Strategic Defence Initiative, progress in the CSCE process and, finally, the INF Treaty. All these developments influenced the pace of MBFR talks.

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68 Sharp. No.29, p.167.
The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) first convened at Helsinki (July 1973) and then in Madrid (November 1990), was instrumental in putting forward various Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBM). In Madrid a separate Conference on Confidence-and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe (CDE) was also arranged but this forum's objective was to place restrictions upon the activities of military forces and not to negotiate force reductions. CDE sessions in Stockholm and Vienna, however, made the path easier for Force Reduction talks through creating a congenial environment, though most of its CSBMs were not accepted by the parties.

The rise of Gorbachev on the political horizon initiated an era of greater importance for arms control whom many viewed as a person of pragmatic thinking refusing to be guided only by military considerations. In April 1986, he proposed "substantial reductions in all components of the land forces and tactical air forces of the European states and the relevant forces of the USA and Canada deployed in Europe", the area of interest covering Europe from the Atlantic Ocean to the Ural Mountains with technical

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70 It was observed that under Gorbachev the military's influence on arms control and security policy had decreased. In contrast to the Brezhnev period it was no longer able to dominate the policy process. Many of Gorbachev's major arms control initiatives had been worked out by a small group of trusted civilian advisers. See Larrabee, F. Stephen. "Gorbachev and the Soviet Military", *Foreign Affairs*, 66(5) Summer 1988, p.1011.
means of verification including on-site inspection. In June 1986 he followed up with the Budapest Appeal for initial troop reductions of 100,000 to 150,000 troops in two years, followed by mutual alliance reductions of 25 percent by the 1990s. These initiatives were responded by NATO’s Brussels Declaration of December 1986 which also fixed the area of negotiations to be the Atlantic-to-the Urals (ATTU) and sought for a ‘verifiable, comprehensive and stable balance of conventional forces at lower levels’.

NATO and Warsaw Pact members met in Vienna in April 1987 and the mandate talks (i.e. discussions to set the objectives, rules, organisation and procedures to be used in the formal Negotiations on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe) started in July 1987. The CFE Mandate was approved, after 20 months of negotiations, on February 9, 1989.

Meanwhile, in the United Nations Gorbachev announced (December 1988) the unilateral withdrawal of 50,000 soldiers; 10,000 tanks; 8,500 artillery systems; 800 combat aircraft; assault loading troops; and bridging units from Eastern Europe - as an overall military force cut of 500,000. Gorbachev’s speech also motivated announcements by other Warsaw Pact members declaring unilateral reductions in troops, armaments and defence budgets. These reductions amounted to some 46,000 men; 2700 tanks; and 860

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71 Darilek. No.69. p.16.

artillery pieces.\textsuperscript{73}

No wonder, when the CFE talks began on March 9, 1989, the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc appeared to be much willing to reach an agreement and the fact that the similarities between NATO's objectives (prepared by a NATO High Level Task Force in December 1986) and the CFE Mandate objectives (agreed upon by the NATO and Warsaw Pact members in February 1989)\textsuperscript{74} indicates how inclined the Warsaw Pact was to initiate the final stages. However, there had been challenges to a speedy successful CFE conclusion. These challenges had been summarised thus:

* The categories of weapons systems that should be included;
* Soviet proposals to create zones of low concentrations of offensive armaments;
* An overall ceiling on the number of tanks and artillery in Europe as well as ceilings in each country;
* The place of naval forces and tactical nuclear weapons in the negotiations; and
* The place of U.S. Follow-on Forces Attack (FOFA) concept in the arms talks.

The approach of the United States was still very cautious. They believed that reductions would require larger Soviet cuts than Western reductions as the Warsaw Pact forces held a great advantage in numbers, Secretary of Defense Weinberger warned against the "accounting tricks used by those who for whatever reason are determined to prove that the Soviets' four-and-a-half to one


predominance in tanks over NATO, to take one example, does not give the Soviets an advantage". 75 Moreover, to persons like Robert Blackwill, the former U.S. representative to the MBFR talks, "to believe that Gorbachev will rescue the West from its conventional inferiority is to be on the lookout for Santa". 76 However, proposals and counter proposals continued to be revised and modified in subsequent sessions of the CFE. Several aspects of the NATO position were altered by the speech of President George Bush on May 29, 1989. "Finally reversing a long-standing alliance policy and bending to Soviet wishes, he proposed.... land-based combat aircraft and helicopter cuts as part of CFE agreement". These forces, he proposed, should be reduced to a level 15 percent below the NATO figures. In addition, he suggested that the United States and the Soviet Union each reduce their 'stationed forces' in Europe to 275,000 personnel, a reduction that would see the Soviets remove approximately 325,000 men and the United States 30,000". 77

Efforts to reach agreement upon verification, weapon-system production, monitoring, weapon system definitions, non-circumvention measures, information-exchange and such other related themes took the whole of 1989 and a good part of 1990. At the Paris


76 Quoted in Record, Jeffrey and David B. Rivkin, Jr. "Defending Post-INF Europe", Foreign Affairs, 66(4), Spring 1988, p.753.

Summit in November the Treaty was signed by the 22 NATO and Warsaw Pact members.

In specific terms the CFE Treaty restricted each side to 20,000 battle tanks, 30,000 armoured combat vehicles, 20,000 artillery pieces, 2000 attack helicopters (excluding combat support helicopters and land-based naval helicopters), and 6,800 combat aircraft (excluding unarmed basic trainers, strategic bombers, and land-based naval aircraft). It was said that "this massive reduction will eliminate the quantitative advantage of the Soviet Army over NATO in weaponry and ground force units - an asymmetry that bred fear and uncertainty in the West throughout the cold war. It will not only remove the risk of surprise attack by Soviet forces based in Eastern Europe, but will also severely hamper the longer-term ability of the Soviets to mobilize forces from their own territory". Moreover, "under the terms of the agreement", it appeared, the Soviets could maintain "forces about two-thirds the size of NATO forces. This means that for the first time the conventional armed forces of NATO European countries, without the United States, will be larger than Soviet forces, as well as technologically superior". In fact, the CFE Treaty embodied not the norms of military balance but the terms of surrender of the Warsaw Pact in the competition for military balance with NATO.

Before we end a few words are necessary on naval arms

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79 Ibid.
control. Arms control negotiations on regulating the activities and
growth of the naval forces of the alliances never became a major
issue till the late 1980s when the Soviets felt it necessary to
include naval arms control in the agenda. In 1989, Soviet Chief of
General Staff, Marshal Sergey Akhromeyev observed that talks on
naval arms control should be viewed as a priority and he opined
that final agreements on CFE negotiations were unlikely unless
naval talks began.\(^8^0\) However, before anything substantive could be
achieved, the world changed dramatically and with the demise of the
Warsaw Pact and disintegration of the Soviet Union, the issue all
but lost its relevance.

As long as the navy remains a coastal-defense force its role
and importance remain basically limited. As it becomes a ocean-
going force, it expands overall military capability and in this
century, the United States with a number of military bases and
installations at foreign territories has always enjoyed an open-
ocean superiority over any other power. Some of the lesser allies
of the United States too have formidable naval power and NATO's
naval task forces during the cold war years were permanently
stationed in strategic parts of the world with land-based targets
of the Warsaw Pact countries within the reach of their strike
capability. On the other hand, the Soviet naval aviation (was)
designed for fighting naval forces, rather than striking at the

American continent' was an oft-repeated Soviet official view.\textsuperscript{81}

The traditional weakness of the Russian Navy was geographical; land or ice locked seas and annual winter freeze-up reduced strategic mobility of the Soviet navy within, as well as beyond, the Soviet Union. Therefore, efforts were made to connect up all the seas peripheral to European Russia through deep-water routes.\textsuperscript{82} Consequently, in the late 1960s, it was observed that the main strength of the Soviet navy was its submarine fleet.\textsuperscript{83} Around this time, the predominant thought in Western Europe was that the Soviet Union had been involved in the development of blue-water naval forces or in other words, "in the process of transforming her naval forces from their traditional role as a mere adjunct to landpower into an instrument for global support for Soviet interests."\textsuperscript{84}

With the passage of time the Soviet navy, facing the challenges from Western aircraft carriers and Polaris-submarines, sought to adopt ways to achieve a naval deterrence but "because of unbalanced structure of her fleet .... and the West's naval predominance", it was asserted in 1970, "the Soviet navy does not have the capacity to sustain general naval operations in a hostile


\textsuperscript{82} Brown, Neville, Strategic Mobility (London: Chatto & Windus, 1963), pp. 134-35.


maritime environment at a distance from Russian shores". Even in 1987, a publication from Moscow recorded

The United States has 20 aircraft carriers, five of them nuclear powered while the Soviet Union has none. The US Navy has 12 air-capable ships, including helicopter carriers and versatile amphibious ships, while the Soviet Navy has only six air-capable ships, including two antisubmarine cruisers. The US Navy has three battleships and nearly 230 other big surface ships armed with cruise missiles to fire at sea - and land - based targets; the Soviet Navy has no such battleships and just half the number of US missile ships and barely a quarter of NATO’s.\(^\text{86}\)

Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact members’ naval capability, however, largely was a coastal defence arrangement. NATO naval officers periodically expressed concern about overall increase in Warsaw Pact naval strength though they were aware of the NATO advantage of geography and a large number of bases. In 1984, Admiral Wesley McDonald, Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT) observed

NATO also has a qualitative lead in important platforms like carriers, Quieter submarines, better anti-submarine warfare capabilities and superior logistic and amphibious warfare assets. Additionally, unlike the Warsaw Pact, the Alliance has a sea-going heritage and traditions at sea unmatched by our opponent. And our people are better trained, better cared for, and more highly motivated. They are really the most important edge we have over the Warsaw Pact.\(^\text{87}\)

In the context of a Quest for balance 'the differences in naval capabilities mattered. They helped assess both the likely future


\(^{86}\) No. 81. p.77.

Table 4.2: Weapon Holdings Before and After the CFE Treaty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weapon</th>
<th>Alliance/country</th>
<th>Holdings before CFE</th>
<th>Holdings after CFE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tanks</td>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>23,700</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>5,900</td>
<td>4,000</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other NATO</td>
<td>17,800</td>
<td>16,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Warsaw Pact</td>
<td>33,200</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soviet Union</td>
<td>20,700</td>
<td>13,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Warsaw</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>6,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armored combat vehicles</td>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>5,700</td>
<td>5,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other NATO</td>
<td>24,300</td>
<td>24,300</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Warsaw Pact</td>
<td>42,900</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soviet Union</td>
<td>29,300</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Warsaw</td>
<td>13,600</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery</td>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>19,000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>2,600</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Other NATO</td>
<td>16,400</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Warsaw Pact</td>
<td>29,200</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Soviet Union</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Warsaw</td>
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<td>6,825</td>
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<td>Combat aircraft</td>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>5,500</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>700</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Other NATO</td>
<td>4,800</td>
<td>4,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Warsaw Pact</td>
<td>8,500</td>
<td>6,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soviet Union</td>
<td>6,500</td>
<td>5,150</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Warsaw</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>1,650</td>
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<td>Helicopters</td>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>1,700</td>
<td>1,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other NATO</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>1,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Warsaw Pact</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>1,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soviet Union</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Warsaw</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures on Holdings before CFE were released at the time of signing the treaty. The parties had 90 days to review and amend these declarations. East Germany equipment turned over to the Unified German government (2,300 tanks, 6,500 armoured combat vehicles, 2,200 artillery pieces, 400 aircraft and 100 helicopters) is not included above.

Soviet ambitions and the resulting conflicts and plausible parity adjustments between the two super powers'. However, the land-based capability of the Warsaw Pact was of greater concern to NATO and till the end no significant naval arms control treaty was negotiated. This gave credence to the views of Joseph Nye and Colins S. Gray, as cited earlier, that arms control agreements cannot be achieved when one party enjoys an appreciable advantage in a particular aspect.

Summary

Theoretically, arms control should create an environment of stability and strength in the balance of military power. It thereby becomes a means of reducing the risk of war without increasing the risk of defeat were war to occur. In other words, stabilization of military balance can be done by the adjustment of armaments which also helps balance to exist at lower levels. At the same time, arms control negotiations have huge potential in managing public opinion and propaganda exercises and often nations enter into negotiations to exploit this potential. When the balance-stability consideration takes the back-seat, the very purpose of arms control is defeated. In this context, Colin S. Gray's apprehensions appear to have certain validity.


89 For a fuller treatment of politics of negotiations on naval arms control in the late 1980s, see Furst, Andreas, Volker Heise and S. Miller (eds). Europe and Naval Arms Control in the Gorbachev Era (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).
Both NATO and the Warsaw Pact developed an infrastructure to initiate or respond to arms control measures from each side. With the domineering influence of the Soviet Union in the WTO, it could act as a monolithic bloc while NATO had various intra-alliance policy problems on arms control. NATO preferred arms control to have a secure and stable favourable balance and to eliminate such disparities which, in NATO's view, made the Soviet Union capable of initiating large-scale offensive action. The Warsaw Pact all along maintained that arms control was necessary to lower the existing level of parity, though the non-Soviet Warsaw Pact members had their own unique interests in effecting an East-West detente.

Most of the arms control proposals came from the Warsaw Pact (read the Soviet Union). The West thought it to be a deliberate ploy of wrestling initiative and of acquiring propaganda-advantage. But it could also be an indication of weakness and desperation. The INF Treaty was signed, as we have argued, for all the reasons save one - its objective was not to strike a military balance. And the CFE Treaty struck at the root of this idea, as it defied all norms of balance, by giving clear advantage to NATO.

NATO came into being as a response to Soviet conventional threat. The Warsaw Pact came as a response to nuclear NATO. With the demise of the Warsaw Pact and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, NATO, for all its functional purposes, has lost its relevance too. It is still there as an institution because of reasons which have no bearings upon alliance politics and threat perceptions (see Postscript).
In conclusion, we find that arms control was the least effective measure in striking a balance of military power between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Despite theoretical promises, arms control followed other political/military developments but failed to move history in keeping with its assigned tasks.