Ref: A09343

MR. BUTLER

Want to read this in detail but you may like to know that a brief har been prepared as you requested.

Prime Minister

Earlier this year the Prime Minister saw a copy of a Soviet booklet
"Whence the Threat to Peace" which portrayed the East/West military balance
so as to support the Soviet thesis that they were not responsible for the
escalation in the arms race and that the United States has both nuclear and
conventional advantages over the Soviet Union. The Prime Minister commented
that there should be a brief on points to make in reply (your predecessor's
minute of 14th April refers). My predecessor undertook to pursue this with
the Ministry of Defence but it was subsequently agreed that because of the
pressing requirements of the Falklands operation this could be deferred.

- 2. Although the Soviet booklet has not created much continuing interest, the Ministry of Defence have now completed preparation, in consultation with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, of a commentary on the Soviet booklet and I enclose a copy.
- 3. I understand that the Russians have now announced a 'second, enlarged, edition' of the booklet containing additional material on the NATO pamphlet "NATO and the Warsaw Pact: Force Comparisons" as well as on United States military doctrine and arms control issues. The Ministry of Defence have undertaken to let us have any comments on this revised version when they have been able to obtain a copy.

R.P. Hatfield

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Soviet Union

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#### 10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

MR HATFIELD
CABINET OFFICE

The Prime Minister has seen your minute of 26 August (A09343) covering the brief on points to make in reply to the Soviet booklet "Whence the Threat to Peace". She is grateful for the preparation of this brief, and has noted that it will be a useful source of material for speeches and Answers to Parliamentary Questions.

F.K.R.B.

31 August 1982

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# WHENCE THE THREAT TO PEACE

#### Background

- 1. "Whence the Threat to Peace", an 80 page glossy booklet published by the Soviet Defence Ministry in mid-January 1982 in Russian and six other languages, was intended as a direct riposte to a similar (100 page) Pentagon Study "Soviet Military Power" issued in September 1981. Like the latter, it is primarily a public relations exercise but makes much of the fact that, unlike its US counterpart which deals only with the growth of Soviet military might, it covers the balance of forces, both conventional and nuclear, between the two superpowers "so that the true conclusions can be drawn on the basis of comparative data". For this purpose it draws on the International Institute for Strategic Studies and official US Sources "alongside data provided by competent Soviet quarters".
- 2. The booklet's aim is to demolish "the myth of a Soviet military threat". Its message is of a huge and expanding US war machine in the hands of a reckless administration bent on ending the present state of approximate parity so as to achieve strategic superiority over the Soviet Union. In support it exploits recent statements by members of the US administration on the use of theatre nuclear weapons in Europe. It was only, it claims, because the US was responsible for originating all modern weapons systems that the Soviet Union was forced to follow suit.

# General Comments

- 3. Although it is claimed that the US booklet contains selective, tendentious and distorted information and that is is necessary for the sake of objectivity to show the military potential of the other side, ie the US, the treatment of the subject is not for the most part comparative. By far the greatest space (50 pages out of 78) is directed to a detailed description of the increasing capability of the "United States War Machine" and the force comparison is not sufficiently linked up with the other parts to provide the objective treatment promised in the introduction. Moreover the booklet's reliance on published Western statistics means that it adds nothing new to the information about the Soviet military which is already available in the West. Where comparative figures are used they are deployed selectively to support the thesis of the
- 4. In any comparison of force levels there is scope for genuine differences of interpretation because of the complication of definition, coverage, operational capability to say nothing of qualitative differences. However much of the argument is disingenuous and its apparent plausibility owes much to the judicious selection or omission of material to provide a comparison which favours the Soviet case. This is apparent in the detailed textual comment which follows.

# Section I - They Call This Objective

- 5. Who initiated the Arms Race? This section is based on the assertion (page 6) that the Soviet Union "initiated no new types of weapons throughout post-war history. In building its armed forces, it only reacted to dangers created by the West". This is supported by selective illustrations in a table on the opposite page. Certainly there are many areas where the West initiated new systems and still retains the lead but there are others where the Soviet Union either pioneered new weapons developments or has subsequently caught up with or overtaken the West. This whole argument, while not wholly untrue is misleadingly incomplete.\*
- 6. The development of cruise missiles on both submarines and surface ships was, and to some extent still is, led by the Soviet Union; possibly they might point to early experiments by the United States or Germany but as with many inventions responsibility is seldom clear cut. Undisputed Soviet "firsts" are Sputnik (1957), "killer satellites" (ASATs), nuclear ship-to-ship missiles, intermediate/medium range ballistic missiles (SS-4 in 1957 compared with the US THOR and JUPITER deployed in Europe in 1960) including the first large mobile IRBM (SS20), titanium alloy hulled submarines (ALFA), some aspects of non-acoustic anti-submarine warrare, eight bladed helicopter (HALO) and advanced tank armour. The Soviet lead in the deployment of intercontinental ballistic missiles was less decisive but they were first in the field with the SS-6/SS-7 (1960/61): cf the US ATLAS/TITAN (1961). There were therefore good grounds for US concern about the danger of a "missile gap" (page 5). Antiballistic missile (ABM) systems (1967/68) are a borderline case: they were developed in parallel in each country though there is no denying US technical superiority. It is also possible that the Soviet Union has been working on particle-heam weapons concepts (since the 1950s) longer than the US. It is probably ahead in high energy laser programmes and puts several times the R and D effort of the US into these fields.
- 7. It is also significant that Soviet ICBMs have a hard target ie a "silo-busting" capability which makes them "first strike" weapons in contrast with the present generation of US strategic missiles whose capability in this respect is more limited. This evidence is directly at variance with statements in the booklet that Soviet military doctrine is based on the principle of retaliatory actions (p.12) whereas the US envisages a pre-emptive strike against the USSR (pages 12 and 58).

<sup>\*</sup> It does of course leave completely out of account the circumstances which led to competitive weapons development. It was the Soviet Union's refusal, contrary to the wishes of most of the inhabitants of Eastern Europe to withdraw its troops from their territory that caused the US to reconsider the demobilisation of its armies and reverse plans to withdraw its forces from Western Europe at the end of World War II. It had no option in the face of this implicit threat to Western Security, but to ensure it did not fall behind in weapons technology. It is also disingenuous to blame the US for developing nuclear weapons when it did so as the ally of the Soviet Union and used them only to bring the war to an end and avoid the even longer casualties that would have been the likely outcome of a more protracted war with Japan.

The Soviet and US Defence Budgets (pages 8-10). Although the klet claims that the US estimate of Soviet expenditure in "Soviet Military Power" is deliberately exaggerated it merely restates the claim, based on the single line entry for "Defence" in the annual state budget, that defence expenditures have been "practically the same over the recent years" (p.9). In the light of known improvements in Soviet military capabilities this claim is clearly false: large sections of defence spending are concealed in other parts of the state budget and in non-budgetary industrial and scientific funds. The Soviet Union's reluctance to publish detailed figures is reflected in its continued refusal to take part in the work of a group of consultants set up by the United Nations Secretary General to study technical issues relating to the measurement of military expenditures and a system of international reporting. Where the booklet refers to rates of growth of US defence expenditure these are expressed in nominal terms (ie current prices uncorrected for inflation) instead of constant prices, giving the unrealistically high rate of 19% for 1981 (p.9) instead of 10.9% (total obligation authority) or 4.1% (outlays). Moreover the booklet fails to mention that US defence spending declined substantially between 1970 and 1976. Since then outlays have risen in real terms by 1.9% in 1977 and a total of 8.2% in 1978-80 compared with the figure of 13% used in the booklet. In contrast, Soviet military expenditure has risen constantly throughout the 1970s amounting to a real increase of over a third during the decade.

- 9. Diagram of Tank Production Facilities (p.10). The booklet purports to discredit a diagram in "Soviet Military Power" (p.11) which superimposes the area of "Nizhniy Tagil Tank Plant" on Washington DC by superimposing in turn the floorspace of the "Detroit Tank Complex" over the whole US illustration. This is an impressive sleight of hand which serves, by focussing on selective evidence (in which the facilities are not all related to tank production), to obscure the real message of the original illustration. The fact is that the Soviet Union, which already produces many more tanks than the West, continues to expand its already very large tank producing facilities, thereby contibuting to a build up of military power well beyond the level judged necessary by Western standards for purely defensive purposes.
- 10. Soviet Forces in Eastern Europe (p.10). The statement that "the Soviet Union has military contingents in the territory of only some of its East European allies and in neighboring Mongolia and Afghanistan" is a curiously reluctant way of acknowledging that Soviet forces are deployed in all Warsaw Pact countries except Romania and Bulgaria. It also ignores the presence of a combat unit in Cuba as well as military facilities and in some cases a large number of advisers in various third world countries such as Ethiopia, Angola, South Yemen and Vietnam.
- 11. Arms Sales (p.11). See paragraph 21 below.
- 12. Export of Revolution (p.11). The attempt to rebut US changes of external adventurism is an exercise in semantics. Documents are quoted renouncing "any attempt to establish any form of domination or hegemony over other countries". This is difficult to reconcile with Article 28 of the Soviet constitution which commits the Soviet Union to support wars of "national liberation" or with its invasion of Afghanistan and support for Cuban intervention in Angola and Ethiopia.

13. Soviet Military Doctrine (p.11). The denial of the offensive ure of Soviet military doctrine (referred to on page 54 of "Soviet Military Power") is deliberately misleading. It also confuses the cuestion of intentions and doctrine. Thus there is no reason to believe that the Soviet leaders are deliberately planning to attack NATO or that they would regard a nuclear war as anything other than disastrous. However there is no doubt that their military writings show that they have put a great deal of effort into considering how to cope with the eventuality of war if it should come and to emerge 'victorious' in the sense of being in better shape than the enemy. They emphasise the concepts of speed, surprise, pre-emption, the decisive nature of nuclear weapons and the primacy of the offensive so that any war would be fought on the enemy's territory. The fact that some Western writers have taken this emphasis on offensive operations as evidence of aggressive designs together with the current Soviet efforts to woo Western peace movements has led Soviet spokesmen to play-down or deny the military concepts to which their armed forces subscribe. 14. Far from being non-existent, the Soviet publications concerning military doctrine are numerous. Two examples are: "Soviet military doctrine is offensive in character. However, the offensive nature of our doctrine has nothing in common with the aggressiveness and predatory tendencies of the military doctrine of the USA and its allies which reflect the criminal aims of the ruling classes of these countries. The Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community do not intend to attack anyone at all; but if they are attacked they will wage the war imposed upon them by their enemies in the most offensive fashion in order to bring about the rapid defeat of these enemies. Soviet military doctrine assigns the decisive role in

The Officers Handbook, Chapter 3, Soviet Military Doctrine Edited by Major-General S N Kozlov, Moscow 1971.

modern warfare to nuclear missiles.

"To attain the greatest effectiveness, it is recommended that the nuclear strikes be launched at the start of the fire preparation unexpectedly for the enemy. Pre-emption in launching a nuclear strike is considered to be the decisive condition for the attainment of superiority over him and the seizure and retention of the initiative."

The Offensive by Col A A Sidorenko, Chapter IV. The Employment of Nuclear Weapons. Moscow 1970.

15. United States Strategic Concepts (p.12). The alleged US concepts: unrestricted use of strategic offensive forces in a pre-emptive strike and the notion that a nuclear war is winnable are essential and long standing features of Soviet rather than US strategic doctrine. Recent modifications in US doctrine were made in response to significant improvements in Soviet strategic nuclear capability in order to enhance deterrence. The deployment of SS-18, with the assessed capability (Soviet Military Power page 56) that

e h warhead of the 10 re-entry vehicle variants has a better than 50 per cent chance of destroying a MINUTEMAN silo (p.29) gives the USSR the edge in first strike capability. (Recent planned improvements in the US neclear capability have been explained by Mr Weinberger as a way of discouraging the Soviets from thinking they could ever resort to nuclear weapons, now that their forces may be strong enough to strike repeatedly, by demonstrating that US strategic forces could survive Soviet strikes over an extended period.)

#### Section II - The US War Machine

- 16. The total strength of the United States armed forces is listed as "close to 3 million servicemen (pages 13 and 14) when in fact the US have only 2.1 million on active duties; the Soviet figure appears to include reservists. The Soviets also claim that there are "more than 7,000" tactical nuclear warheads in Western Europe (p.20). We can only account for about 6,000; the publicly announced withdrawal of 1,000 NATO warheads in 1980 has been overlooked.
- 17. Major military bases (map on pages 26-27). It is difficult to check the number of "Major military bases" but it is questionable whether the term 'major' is appropriate in every case.
- 18. Minuteman silos (p.29). See para 15 above.
- 19. New US Strategic Systems (pages 29-31). Much is said of the Ohio class submarine and Trident missile, but nowhere does the booklet mention the comparable Soviet development TYPHOON and SS-NX-20. Similarly the B1 bomber is discussed without reference to the RAM-P. The Soviets also claim that the US space shuttle is a space attack system but fail to mention their own anti-satellite (ASAT).
- 20. Chemical Weapons (p.47). No mention is made of Soviet stocks of CW agents estimated at about 300,000 tons compared with a US total of about a tenth of this figure. The Soviet Union is much better prepared than the US to wage chemical warfare. The US did not maintain its retaliatory stockpile during the '70s and it has deteriorated in consequence no agents have been produced since 1969. The modernisation programme was initiated to restore its credibility as a deterrent against enemy first use. The programme to provide binary weapons (p.48) is still at an early stage.
- 21. The USA, the Biggest Supplier of Arms and Military Equipment. (p.52). This section is a reply to the corresponding one in "Soviet Military Power" where the emphasis is on Soviet exploitation of third world tensions to gain influence. The Soviet booklet attempts to shift the ground from exports to the third world to "the US share in world sales of arms and military equipment" claimed to be 45 per cent. The USSR and the USA are by far the largest exporters of arms to the thrid world the precise figure (roughly of the order of \$5 billion each in recent years) depends very much on the period, source and definition used. In some years the USSR has almost certainly been in the lead. In any case the US figures include a large element of infrastructure and training costs (accounting for well over half the total according to a recently published US Government report). There is no question that in terms of numbers of tanks, guns, combat aircraft etc Soviet deliverirs to the third world have considerably exceeded those by the US.

US War Strategy - A Strategy of Aggression (p.58). See also ments in paragraph 15 above. This is of course a gross misrepresentation of US nuclear strategy, the objects of which are described as follows in the Secretary of Defense's Annual Report to Congress for 1983:-"1. to deter nuclear attack on the United States or its allies; 2. to help deter major conventional attack against US forces and our allies, especially in NATO; 3. to impose termination of a major war - on terms favourable to the US and its allies - even if nuclear weapons have been used - and in particular to deter escalation in the level of hostilities; and 4. to negate possible blackmail against the US or our allies." Pershing II missiles (p.60). The plan to introduce Pershing II is a response to the Soviet SS-20 - already deployed in large members. Section III - The East-West Military Balance 24. The Balance of Medium Range Nuclear Weapons in Europe (p.65) This is the most misleading section in the booklet. This repeats earlier Soviet claims, which are being repeated at the Geneva INF negotiations, that there is an approximate balance of about 1,000 such weapons on each side (the precise figures used have varied slightly from time to time). The booklet states that on the Western side there are 986 delivery vehicles with a range of more than 1,000 km (of which various types are specified) compared with 975 Soviet units "of this type" (unspecified). However it is known from earlier published Soviet statements that whereas US "forward based systems" are included (Pershings, F4s, A6s and A7s, and FB 111As based in the US) the balance is only achieved by the omission of comparable Soviet systems - Soviet tactical nuclear capable aircraft, particularly FLOGGER and FENCER, and tactical missiles such as SCALEBOARD (SS-12) which have a greater range than PERSHING I. In the numbers quoted for submarine launched ballistic missiles (p.68) the Soviet authors conveniently overlook the six Soviet GOLF II nuclear ballistic missile launching submarines with their 18 missiles based in the Baltic. The impression that items are deliberately manipulated to achieve a balance artificially is reinforced by the fact that the Soviet Union has been making this claim since the end of 1979 although between then and 1981 they deployed a further 160 SS-20s and 25 BACKFIRE bombers while NATO did not deploy any equivalent new systems. The inclusion of all comparable Soviet systems would transform the balance to a Soviet advantage over NATO of more than 2,000. In the case of longer range systems alone there is a ratio of 4 to 1 in the Soviet Union's favour in respect of both delivery vehicles and warheads. A copy of Table 7 from the Statement on the Defence Estimates 1982 Part I, which sets out the balance of both strategic and land based European Theatre nuclear forces is attached at Annex.

# a. Divisional Comparison (p.69)

- i. The totals of 78 divisions for the Warsaw Pact and 89 divisions for NATO have been taken from the IISS Military Balance, 1981/82 (p.124). These exclude divisions which depend on immediate reinforcement or on the mobilisation of reserves to bring them up to strength. Figures compiled by NATO on a different basis (in place in Europe) show the WP figure as 173 compared with 84 for NATO.
- ii. WP divisions normally consist of fewer personnel than many NATO divisions though we do not agree that the maximum strength never exceeds 11,000. However they contain more tanks and artillery so as to match the combat power of ther NATO counterparts.
- b. Tank Comparison (p.69). The assertion that NATO has 24,000 tanks compared to the Warsaw Pact's 25,000 is based on the application of different counting rules to each side. For NATO, tanks in storage in depots in Europe are included whereas for the WP only tanks in Eastern Europe are counted and those in western and southern European USSR are omitted. IISS figures show 17,053 for NATO compared with 26,300 (plus 19,200) for the Warsaw Pact. The NATO "Force Comparison" booklet shows a total of 13,000 NATO and 42,500 WP tanks.
- c. General Purpose Forces (Table, page 70). This is a selective extract from the IISS document. Three sets of figures showing NATO superiority have been included, but totals for reserves (all services) giving NATO 4,646,000 compared to the WP 7,118,000, a ratio of 1: 1.53 have been omitted. The NATO "Force Comparison" booklet, using a different definition gives totals of 2.6 million for NATO and 4.0 million for the Warsaw Pact.
- d. MBFR Figures (p.70). The statement is misleading. The figures actually tabled by each side in Vienna at at 1 January 1980 were 943,000 for the West and 997,500 for the East. In fact Western intelligence assessed the strength of Eastern forces as at 1 January 1980 at 1,180,825 rather than 997,500 a discrepancy of 183,325 which remains to be resolved.
- 27. Comparison of NATO and WP Navies (p.70). The table lists WP navy strengths in a notably vague manner. They appear to be reasonably accurate except for the USSR entries under "Battle-ships (etc)" and "Boats and Minesweepers". For the former 155 would be more realistic. The figure of 106 could perhaps have been achieved by discounting all gun-armed destroyers as well as all other ships in reserve covered by this heading. The 735 "Boats and Minesweepers" presumably include the powerful NANUCHKA, MATKA and OSA classes with their SSMs hardly "Boats". To achieve a total of 735, some classes would have to be omitted, perhaps the 100 or so KGB STENKAS and the River Monitors. Bare numbers for order of battle can be so devised as to hide more than they reveal.

section IV Two Trends in World Politics 28. The United States gives priority to achieving military superiority. (p.72). Whereas the Soviet Union maintains that there is a state of approximate parity between the two superpowers the US fears that new Soviet missiles will soon make all the US land based missiles vulnerable to a Soviet first strike thus creating a new imbalance in favour of the USSR. 29. The Soviet Union has never any treaties or agreements (p.73). The USSR has a long record of broken treaties. Some examples are: the invasion of Poland in 1939 (in contravention of the Peace Treaty of 1921 and the Non-Aggression Pact of 1932); failure to observe the Potsdam Protocol of 1 Aug 1945 on the post-war administration of Germany and arrangements (1948-9) on access to Berlin; continued occupation of Iranian Azerbaidjan in 1945 (in breach of treaties signed in 1921, 1927 and 1942); refusal to return the Habomai Islands and Shikotan to Japan in 1945 (in breach of the Allied Surrender terms); breaking the Comprehensive Test Ban Moratorium in 1959; and disregard of the Helsinki Final Act of 1973 (eg "Reunification of Families"; "Marriages between Citizens of Different States" and by the drastic reduction in mid-1982 for an indefinite period in the number of telephone lines to Western Europe and North America). 30. The United States has not ratified the 1979 SALT-2 Treaty (p.73). After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan President Carter judged that the chances of securing Congressional ratification were nil. 31. Nuclear test agreements (p.73). The main reason why little progress has been made is the Soviet unwillingness to accept effective verification measures involving on-site inspections. In a closed society there is no free Press or parliment to bring the facts to light. 32. Limitation of nuclear weapons in Europe (p.74). When the booklet was issued the Soviet Union had already deployed 190 SS 20 long range missiles (each with 3 independently targetable re-entry vehicles) within range of Western Europe. It now has about 220. NATO then had and now has none. The Soviet Union would clearly like to freeze the present imbalance. 33. No first use of nuclear weapons (p.74). Since the USSR has clear conventional superiority the renunciation by NATO of the right to use nuclear weapons to check an overwhelming Soviet conventional offensive would remove an important link in the chain of deterrence. What is more to the point is no first use of any weapons rather than no nuclear first use! Ever since it came into existence the Soviet state has opposed interference in the affairs of sovereign states (p.75). An example perhaps of the Soviet sense of humour! The more obvious instances since the end of the 2nd World War are the occupation of Eastern Europe and involvement in East Germany (1953), Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1968), Afghanistan (1979), Poland (1980-81 political and military pressure). The use of proxies and the means of global power projection in the third world are well illustrated in "Soviet Military Power" Chapter V (pages 83-93).

35. Use of US military force (p.75). It would be out of place to attempt to justify every case of US armed intervention but the USSR with its own record of the use of force and intervention in other countries it is singularly ill qualified to condemn the US. The long term aim of the present Soviet leadership is to bring about a controlled shift in the balance of forces in the world in favour of the Soviet Union and it invented the Brezhnev doctrine to justify perpetuating Soviet control where it exists.

#### Section V. Conclusion

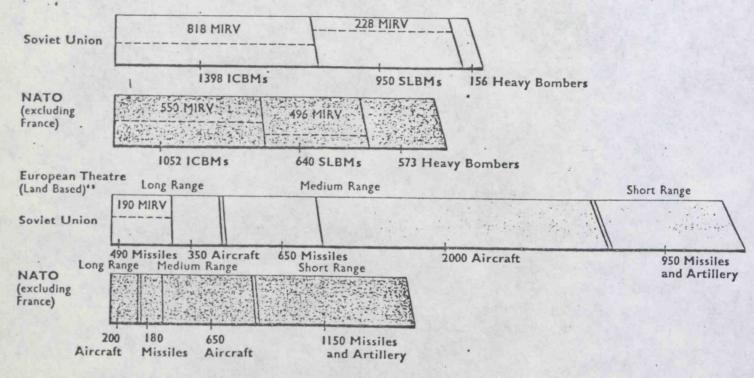
36. For more than three decades the United States has been building up its war machine and initiating successive arms race spirals. (p.77). Anyone with any knowledge of history will be aware that what what happened three decades ago was the imposition of the Stalinist system on Eastern Europe - the principal cause of the Cold War.

THE BALANCE 21



The Balance of Nuclear Forces, End-19811-2

Strategic Systems'



Strategic Systems	Soviet Union ICBMs SSII, 13, 17, 18, 19 SLBMs SS-N-5 in Hotel Submarines, SS-N-6, SS-N-8, SS-N-17, SS-N-18, SS-NX-20 Heavy Bombers Bear, Bison	NATO (all NATO systems operated solely by the US except where shown)  ICBMs Titan 2, Minuteman 2, Minuteman 3  SLBMs Polaris (US, UK), Poseidon, Trident  Heavy Bombers B-52	Notes  1. French systems are not Included in this diagram. They comprise 64 SLBM, 36 Mirage IV bombers, 18 53 missiles and shorter range Mirage IIIA aircraft and Pluton missiles.  2. The diagram does not include defensive systems such as ABM or air defence missiles and aircraft.
European Theatre Systems	Soviet Union  Long Range Missiles SS4, SS5, SS20 Aircraft Badger, Blinder, Backfire  Medium Range Missiles Scaleboard/SS22, Scud Aircraft Fitter, Flogger, Fishbed. Fencer  Short Range Missiles/ Artillery Frog/SS21, 203mm howitzers and 240mm mortars	NATO (all NATO systems operated solely by the US except where shown)  Long Range Aircraft Vulcan (UK), FIII Medium Range Missiles Pershing I (US, FRG) Aircraft F4, F104 (Bel, FRG, Gr, It, NI, Tu), Jaguar (UK), Buccaneer (UK)  Short Range Missiles/ Lance (Bel, FRG, It, NI, Artillery UK, US), Honest John (Gr, Tu), 155mm (Bel, FRG, Gr, UK, US) and 8 Inch (Bel, FRG, Gr, It, NI, Tu, UK, US) howitzers	3. The diagram of strategic forces covers strategic delivery systems of the types defined in SALT.  4. The European theatre figures do not include some 250 aircraft of the Soviet Naval Air Forces or some 20 aircraft of NATO Air Forces which have an anti-ship capability; nor do they include sea-based nuclear capable systems on both sides which are normally deployed in the European theatre and which have a land attack capability, eg 18 SS-N-5 on Soviet Golf class submarines in the Baltic and 20 A6 and 48 A7 aircraft on US carriers in the Mediterranean.  5. Long-range and mediumrange European theatre systems equate to intermediate-range nuclear forces.