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CONVENTIONAL MILITARY COMPARISONS

The powers that be in governmental, academic and communications fields are fond of telling us that nuclea war is "unthinkable," that there is a "balance of terror" between the major superpowers, and that nuclear weapons will never be launched because both sides know they would only "destroy each other." If for the sake or argument we assume this is true, the obvious follow-up question then is: Which country is stronger in non-nuclear weapons?

There is, unfortunately, only one answer to that question: the Soviet Union. The superiority of Soviet conventional military power is spelled out in a recent report by the prestigious BrookingS Institution in Washington, D.C., called "Sizing Up the Soviet Army."

It shows that Russian military forces have the capability and the mission to carry out a "relentless attack, blitzkrieg style, designed to ensure the total defeat of the enemy.... The achievement of such unlimited goals in the case of a conflict in the European area would entail nothing short of a giant blitzkrieg across NATO Center leading to the rapid occupation of West Germany, the Low Countries, and France."

The Brookings report concludes that the 31 combat-ready full-strength Russian divisions stationed in Eastern Europe "clearly reflect willful preparation for massive, rapid offensive operations at the theater level in Europe." They can roll across Western Europe at a rate of 70 miles a day. This would bring Soviet forces to the English Channel within a week.

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The Brookings report gives depressing comparisons between Soviet and U.S. forces, and recites the immense amount of money spent on modernizing the Soviet Army. During 1972-74, the Russians outproduced the United States by average annual ratios of 6½ to 1 in tanks, 5 to 1 in armored personnel carriers, and 7 to 1 in artillery pieces. By 1974 the United States had 2,600 medium tanks, while the Soviets had "a staggering 30,700.[11]

The report concludes that Soviet military doctrine is geared to the strategy of surprise attack, based on "massive shock power and speed: the former, to crush the enemy's initial defense; the latter, to prevent recovery so that the enemy can be beaten in detail.... The Soviet Union attaches great importance to achieving both strategic and tactical surprise in future combat."

This report is corroborated by a recent White Paper published by the West German government which concludes that "in military strategic thinking in the Warsaw Pact, initiative and surprise are of overriding importance .... The Warsaw Pact is able to mount a surprise attack from its existing positions practically without any preparations. ... This would permit the [Warsaw] Pact to profit from the advantages of [being an] aggressor who determines the timing of his attack and its main axis of advance."

The evidence is inescapable that, if we take nuclear weapons out of our calculations on the theory that they will never be used, then Soviet military superiority over the United States is overwhelming. We had better start catching up before it is too late.

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