

April 6, 1989

THE COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES CONCEPT: GIVING THE U.S. A BATTLEFIELD EDGE

INTRODUCTION

NATO's commander General John R. Galvin estimates that, if the Warsaw Pact invaded Western Europe today, United States and allied forces within two weeks would have to use nuclear weapons or suffer defeat. This is the horrifying dilemma confronting U.S. military commanders. A new planning concept developed by the Pentagon, however, called "Competitive Strategies," could strengthen NATO's conventional defense greatly over the next decade and consequently reduce the risk of nuclear war.

Competitive Strategies is a Pentagon policy-planning strategy for determining which forces the U.S. and its allies should buy and how they should be deployed and used in combat. The basic premise of Competitive Strategies is straightforward: structure U.S. and NATO forces so that Western strengths compete against Soviet weaknesses. In practice this often means fielding weapons that exploit Western technological superiority in ways that cannot be countered easily or cheaply by Moscow. Example: radar evading "stealth" technology can make U.S. planes and missiles virtually invisible to Soviet air defense radar. Countering U.S. "stealth" aircraft with more and new kinds of air defense systems could cost Moscow tens of billions of rubles.

Sophisticated Weaponry. A Task Force of the Competitive Strategies Council, a Pentagon advisory group established by former Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci, applied the Competitive Strategies method to the conventional (non-nuclear) defense of Europe and tested its recommendations through computer war games. It discovered that, by using Competitive Strategies guidelines, NATO could deploy forces by the mid-1990s that would be far more capable than they are now of withstanding

a Warsaw Pact assault. The new NATO force would include sophisticated electronic surveillance and communication systems and accurate long-range missiles for striking deep behind enemy lines at military command posts and even tanks.

Pentagon Opposition. George Bush endorsed Competitive Strategies during his presidential campaign. Still, the idea has critics within and outside the Pentagon. They allege that the Competitive Strategies Task Force did not pay sufficient attention to potential high costs or possible Soviet responses. The strongest critics within the Pentagon have been the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who question Competitive Strategies on these grounds and also because they fear that Pentagon civilian planners will use the concept to challenge the military services' decisions about which weapons to buy.¹

Despite this criticism, Competitive Strategies is a sound idea, which could improve U.S. and NATO defense. As a new method, however, it needs refinement. What is very important, moreover, is that a place be found for it in the Pentagon bureaucracy. Bush and Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney should proceed with Competitive Strategies and improve the program. They should:

◆ ◆ **Revive the Competitive Strategies Council within the Pentagon.** The Council has been in limbo since Defense Secretary Carlucci decided to put Competitive Strategies on hold during the final weeks of the Reagan Administration. Cheney should resurrect the Council and define clearly its role in defense policy.

◆ ◆ **Give the Competitive Strategies Council a limited but independent role in the Pentagon's Planning, Programming and Budgeting System (PPBS), the bureaucratic procedure by which the Defense Department decides which weapons to buy.** The Council should provide advice on weapon procurement directly to the Pentagon's top decision-making body, the Defense Resources Board (DRB). However, Competitive Strategies should supplement the existing planning process of the military services, not substitute for it.

◆ ◆ **Review the work of the Competitive Strategies Task Force on Europe.** This review should ask whether the Soviets could counter Task Force recommendations with new military tactics and new weapons of their own. The review also should analyze in detail the costs and potential savings of Competitive Strategies.

◆ ◆ **Continue to field strong armored forces and battlefield nuclear weapons, since even the advanced weapons advocated in Competitive Strategies cannot guarantee NATO an airtight defense.** Because of these other priorities in the defense budget, some of the expensive Competitive

¹ See John M. Broder, "Joint Chiefs Held Trying to Scuttle Plan Backed by Bush," *Los Angeles Times*, December 10, 1989, p. 28.

Strategies programs will not be able to move as quickly as the Task Force on Europe may have envisioned.

◆ ◆ **Establish a NATO-wide Competitive Strategies Council within the framework of the NATO Conventional Armaments Planning System (CAPS).** CAPS is a NATO program that helps coordinate allied weapons development and procurement decisions. A NATO-wide Competitive Strategies effort, perhaps anchored within the CAPS framework, would improve the military return on NATO's defense investment by reducing duplication in national weapon programs and encouraging each ally to focus its military efforts on what it does best.

◆ ◆ **Use Competitive Strategies to design arms control negotiating positions.** Competitive Strategies identifies weapons that can improve U.S. and NATO military performance. One of these, the land-based conventionally armed cruise missile, was traded away in the 1987 intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, which banned ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between roughly 300 and 3,400 miles. If Competitive Strategies had been part of the NATO planning process, the military requirement for a ground-launched conventional cruise missile would have been evident, and this mistake might not have been made.

◆ ◆ **Formulate a NATO-wide strategy for using capital and technology transfers to the Soviet bloc in ways that advance Western interests and do not jeopardize the West's critical edge in military technology.** Advanced technology is the West's primary competitive advantage over the Soviet bloc. The West needs a well-considered strategy for restricting the transfer of militarily significant technology to the Soviet Union and its allies in ways that do not jeopardize Western security. This strategy could include specific demands for political and economic liberalization in exchange for economic assistance from the West.

WHAT IS COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES?

The concept of Competitive Strategies is not new. About two and a half thousand years ago, Chinese general and now legendary military philosopher Sun Tzu advised: "Water shapes its course according to the nature of the ground over which it flows; the soldier works out his victory in relation to the foe whom he is facing."² Through Competitive Strategies, Pentagon planners have attempted to apply Sun Tzu's maxim in a comprehensive and disciplined way to U.S. defense policy.

2 Sun Tzu, *The Art of War* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1983), p. 29.

A need for more competitive thinking among American strategists was recognized in the late 1960s by Andrew Marshall, who since 1972 has directed the Pentagon's Office of Net Assessment, responsible for evaluating the U.S.-Soviet military balance. Marshall's idea has been that the U.S. could gain an edge in the long-term East-West military competition by capitalizing more effectively on such natural competitive advantages as advanced technology and efficient and productive economic performance.³

Pressing the U.S. Advantage. Other competitive advantages enjoyed by the West include powerful navies and well-trained troops capable of taking the initiative in battle. By contrast, Soviet competitive advantages over the U.S. are short lines of transportation and communication to its allies in Eastern Europe and numerical superiority in such key elements of offensive land warfare as tanks and artillery.

According to the theory of Competitive Strategies, investment in military forces should be designed to push the East-West military competition into areas in which the U.S. has the advantage. Marshall cites investment in the U.S. strategic bomber fleet, including such planes as the B-52, B-1B, and radar-evading B-2 "stealth" bomber, as a good example of a successful Competitive Strategy. He argues that, by continually adding new planes and cruise missiles to the U.S. arsenal over the past three decades, the U.S. has forced Moscow to invest heavily in such purely defensive weapons as anti-aircraft missiles. Over the years this investment has been expensive for the Soviet Union, and at the same time, it is less threatening to the U.S. than Soviet investment in tanks, ballistic missiles, or other offensive weapons.

Pentagon Task Forces. Former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger was impressed with Marshall's ideas about competitive thinking and in May 1987 established a Competitive Strategies Council and Steering Group within the Pentagon, headed by Deputy Secretary of Defense William Taft IV. Two months later a Competitive Strategies Task Force headed by Deputy Under Secretary of Defense Dennis Kloske was created to recommend how the U.S. and NATO could defend Western Europe better with conventional weapons.

In September 1988, the Task Force presented its classified findings to Secretary Carlucci, and the outlines of the report were made public.⁴ A second Task Force has been considering new ways in which the U.S. could use conventional weapons to threaten Soviet territory in the event of war. It has completed most of its work, but its conclusions have not yet been released.

3 Author's discussion with Andrew Marshall. For a summary of Marshall's views, see U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Procurement and Military Nuclear Systems, testimony of Andrew W. Marshall, March 2, 1989.

4 See John G. Roos and Benjamin F. Schemmer, "Revolution in NATO's Conventional Defense Looms from 'Competitive Strategies' Initiative," *Armed Forces Journal International*, October 1988, and John D. Morrocco, "Pentagon Officials to Push Ahead on Competitive Strategies Doctrine," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, October 3, 1989. Additional information on European Task Force Report was provided to the author by Task Force officials.

COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES AND THE DEFENSE OF WESTERN EUROPE

Competitive Strategies came to public attention with the release of Dennis Kloske's European Task Force findings, which proved controversial within and outside the Pentagon. The Task Force concluded that NATO could reverse Moscow's military advantage in Europe by deploying weapons based on advanced technologies that the underdeveloped Soviet economy could produce only at enormous cost, if at all. These include sophisticated electronic surveillance systems to locate such critical targets as tanks and command posts deep in enemy territory and accurate new long-range weapons to attack them.

Massive Soviet Numbers. The Task Force began its work by identifying Soviet strengths and weaknesses in Europe and exploring ways for NATO to offset the strengths and capitalize on the weaknesses. Soviet military superiority in Europe is based on massive numerical advantages in offensive weapons: even if Mikhail Gorbachev carries out the force cuts he announced at the United Nations on December 7, 1988, the Soviet Union and its allies will retain advantages over NATO of roughly 2 to 1 in tanks; 2.5 to 1 in artillery; and 3 to 2 in fighter aircraft.⁵ Further, the Soviet Union continues to produce modern tanks at a rate of roughly 3,400 per year — four times U.S. planned production for fiscal 1990, and enough to replace all the tanks "cut" by Gorbachev in about a year and a half.⁶

The Soviet force posture in Europe, however, also has inherent weaknesses. The Task Force found that Moscow lags significantly behind the West in such advanced military technologies as sensors, microcircuitry, and miniaturization. These technologies are critical components of the new generation of advanced weaponry now beginning to reach the battlefield. The Task Force also found that, once NATO begins to field these advanced weapons, new Soviet weaknesses will be created. Example: Soviet command posts and tanks will become more vulnerable to attack even far behind the battlefield. Survivable command posts are critical to the Soviet ability to coordinate its attacks, and tanks are the heart of Moscow's offensive strategy. With these targets more vulnerable to attack, NATO's chances for successful defense would increase dramatically.

New NATO Systems. The advanced weapons that the Task Force proposes for this mission now are beginning to enter service with U.S. and allied military forces. According to the Task Force, by the mid-1990s enough of

5 For an excellent assessment of how these advantages have grown over the past two decades, see Anthony H. Cordesman, "Alliance Requirements and the Need for Conventional Force Improvements," in Uwe Nerlich and James A. Thomson, *Conventional Arms Control and the Security of Europe* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988), pp. 88-89. Ratios in text derived from official NATO figures in "Enhancing Alliance Collective Security," *A Report of NATO's Defense Planning Committee*, December 1988.

6 See General John R. Galvin, "The NATO Alliance: A Framework for Security," *Washington Quarterly*, Winter 1989, pp. 85-94.

these systems can be deployed for NATO to make a qualitative leap in its conventional defense capabilities. These new systems include:

New Radars and Communications Systems

With advanced radar and communication systems, NATO commanders will be able to locate targets deep behind enemy lines and communicate this information fast enough to order rapid attacks against them by precision long-range weapons. The nerve center of this system will be the Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS), an airborne radar now being tested by the Army and Air Force, which would spot and track tanks and other moving targets at long range and transmit this information to field commanders. Also urged by Competitive Strategies advocates are sophisticated electronic warfare systems to jam and confuse enemy radars and communication systems. An example is the Integrated Electronic Warfare System under development for the Air Force's radar-evading "stealth" Advanced Tactical Fighter (ATF), a fighter aircraft expected to enter service in the mid-1990s.

Super-Accurate Long-Range Non-Nuclear Missiles

Using information transmitted by JSTARS and other surveillance systems, these non-nuclear weapons will be able to strike deep behind enemy lines, destroying much of an adversary's fighting force even before it reaches the battlefield. These systems also will attack Warsaw Pact air defenses to clear the skies for NATO aircraft and will strike key communications posts to disrupt the Soviet chain of command.

Two weapons that will help fulfill these missions are the Army's Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS), a rocket artillery battery with a range of up to almost 20 miles, and the Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS), which also will be launched from MLRS batteries and will have a range of almost 100 miles. Both will be highly accurate and able to attack such stationary targets as airfields and mobile targets such as tanks.

Weapons Entering Service. The Air Force and Navy also have weapons that have been emphasized by the Competitive Strategies Task Force on Europe. The Task Force reportedly recommended expanding procurement of specialized missiles like the *Tacit Rainbow*, which is about to enter service. This missile flies over enemy forces while its sensor homes in on the electronic signals emitted by air defense radars and command posts. The missile follows these signals to their source, destroying the target. Also figuring in Competitive Strategies is a long-range air-launched cruise missile armed with a conventional warhead. The Air Force is considering building this missile, which could be launched at distances up to 1,000 miles to attack rail yards, bridges, or other key targets in the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe. The Navy could support Competitive Strategies from the sea with attacks by greater numbers of conventionally armed sea-launched cruise missiles, such as the *Tomahawk*, now deployed on surface ships and submarines.

European and joint U.S.-European weapons also figure in Competitive Strategy plans. One example is the Modular Standoff Weapons System (MSOW), an air-launched conventional cruise missile being developed by U.S., British, West German, Italian, and Spanish companies. Like many of the deep-strike weapons, MSOW is expected to incorporate "stealth" technology, making it nearly invisible to Soviet air defense radar.⁷ Competitive Strategies calls for the widespread use of "stealth" on missiles and on manned aircraft to enable NATO weapons to survive formidable Warsaw Pact air defenses.

Advanced Warheads

The next generation of warheads, or munitions, will give NATO's deep strike weapons specialized capabilities to attack targets difficult to destroy. Such targets include "hardened" command posts and storage sites buried underground, airfields that cover a wide area, and tanks, mobile artillery, and other mobile targets that currently are difficult to track and destroy with long-range missiles.

Already under development are autonomously guided warheads known as "brilliant," or self-guided munitions. Typical is the "Sense and Destroy Armor Munition" (SADARM). A single guided artillery shell would release a swarm of SADARMs over a target like a Soviet tank formation. Each SADARM would drop by parachute, searching the ground with its sensors for a tank, which it would attack by firing a small but lethal projectile. An artillery shell armed with SADARM should be able to destroy about fifteen tanks for every one destroyed by a conventional artillery shell.⁸

"Smart" and "Dumb" Weapons. Competitive Strategies advocates also support a Pentagon program to develop what are known as "fuel-air" explosives, conventional bombs that use an explosive aerosol mixture so powerful that they could accomplish the same missions as small nuclear warheads.

The Competitive Strategies Task Force on Europe sought the best mix of advanced expensive munitions such as SADARM and cheaper but less accurate "dumb" weapons such as standard artillery shells and mines. It recommended in general that the Pentagon scale up its plans for purchasing advanced munitions. In selected cases, it also recommended buying more of some standard weapons, particularly mines.

⁷ Barbara Amouyal, "Stealthy MSOW Features May Put Program in the Black," *Defense News*, October 24, 1988, p. 4.

⁸ Institute for Defense Analyses estimate.

QUESTIONS ABOUT COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES

1) Will Competitive Strategies be effective militarily?

Not all military analysts who have looked closely at the battlefield impact of advanced technology weapons agree that they will have as rapid or decisive an effect on the military balance as the Competitive Strategies Task Force believes. Deploying advanced conventional weaponry, for example, would spur Soviet countermeasures, many of which would be cheap and effective. The sensors on such weapons as SADARM can be deceived by electronic means, decoys, or smoke. They also can be thwarted if their intended targets remain close to cover under trees or next to buildings. Command and control systems like JSTARS can be jammed, or the aircraft carrying them can be engaged directly.⁹ In fact, Soviet military planners already are preparing to introduce tactics that could counter some of the weapons that are part of what is referred to in Moscow as the coming "revolution in military affairs."¹⁰

The outcome of this "revolution" is uncertain. The Soviet Union has proved its ability to bring new technology quickly from the laboratory to the battlefield. Example: In the mid-1980s the Soviet Union deployed tanks equipped with "reactive" armor, which stops incoming anti-tank missiles with a small explosion that deflects their warheads. This surprise Soviet deployment rendered obsolete virtually all of the NATO's high-tech, hand-held, anti-tank weapons.¹¹

2) Will Competitive Strategies cost too much?

Initial reports cited a cost of between \$15 billion to \$60 billion over six years to deploy the military systems used in the Competitive Strategies war games. Later Pentagon estimates raised the cost to between \$20 billion and \$25 billion per year above currently anticipated Pentagon budgets, and perhaps higher.¹² Even if these costs were spread out among NATO allies, they still could consume between 5 percent and 10 percent of annual Alliance-wide defense spending, a high share of which would have to be borne by the U.S.

According to one member of the Pentagon's Task Force on Europe, the key to Competitive Strategies' success is fielding advanced weapons quickly and in high numbers before Moscow can respond. Barring a political shift that would permit major increases in U.S. and allied defense budgets,

9 The author thanks Stephen Biddle of the Institute for Defense Analyses for his insights into some of the military problems associated with Competitive Strategies. Biddle points out that some of these problems will be overcome and the balance between offense and defense will shift over time.

10 See, for example, Philip A Petersen and Notra Trulock II, "A 'New' Soviet Military Doctrine: Origins and Implications," *Strategic Review*, Summer 1988.

11 See Robert R. Ropelewski, "Soviet Gains in Armor/Antiarmor Shape U.S. Army Master Plan," *Armed Forces Journal International*, February 1989.

12 For earlier estimate, see Roos and Schemmer, *op. cit.*, p. 114. For later estimate, see Barbara Amouyal, "New Cost, Validity Expected to Dampen Fever for Competitive Strategies," *Defense News*, January 16, 1989, p. 8.

however, the money for this expensive rapid deployment of advanced weapons will have to be taken from existing weapon programs. If this is not done carefully, it could create new vulnerabilities as it addresses others. If tank production were sacrificed, for example, NATO might not have an adequate line of defense if Competitive Strategies weapons did not work as anticipated. Competitive Strategies advocates claim that their comprehensive planning approach will avoid cutting into military strength by scaling back only those weapons that are unnecessary or not cost-effective. So far, however, they have provided few details.

3) Will the military services accept Competitive Strategies?

Competitive Strategies has been controversial inside the Pentagon. Predictably, the most vociferous opposition comes from the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Traditionally, the Chiefs and the armed services bureaucracies have opposed innovative programs that threaten established funding priorities and budgetary procedures. Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Air Force General Robert T. Herres, has insisted that recommendations of the Competitive Strategies Council be channeled through the Pentagon's official planning and budgeting process, which is heavily influenced by the bureaucracies of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps.¹³ Doing this in effect would give the Joint Chiefs of Staff a veto over Competitive Strategies proposals. Pentagon civilian planners involved in Competitive Strategies argue for more independence from the military services.

4) Will Gorbachev doom Competitive Strategies?

Changes in the Soviet Union and in East-West relations cloud the future of Competitive Strategies. Competitive Strategies rests on the assumption that the Soviet economy is not advanced enough to produce the next generation of high-technology weapons at reasonable cost. Should Gorbachev's economic reforms succeed, this assumption could prove incorrect. Or the West might provide Moscow with the capital and technology that the Soviet leadership needs to modernize its military capabilities. Europe and Japan are heading down this road, providing Moscow with huge no-strings-attached loans, known as untied loans, and increased access to advanced technology through popular joint ventures with Western firms.¹⁴

Further, Gorbachev's "new thinking" in military and foreign affairs already has paid him high political dividends in the West, whatever its ultimate military significance.¹⁵ Even such conservative European leaders as Britain's

¹³ See Broder, *op. cit.* and U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Procurement and Military Nuclear Systems, hearings on Competitive Strategies, testimony of General Robert T. Herres.

¹⁴ See Roger W. Robinson and Leon Aron, "Western Economic Security," in Charles L. Heatherly and Burton Yale Pines, eds., *Mandate for Leadership III: Policy Strategies for the 1990s* (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 1989), pp. 520-528.

¹⁵ For an analysis of the affect of "new thinking" on Soviet military writings see Stephen M. Meyer, "The Sources and Prospects of Gorbachev's New Political Thinking on Security," *International Security*, Fall 1988, p. 124.

Margaret Thatcher question whether Moscow continues to present a serious threat to Western security.¹⁶

If Gorbachev carries through on his promises of force cuts and follows up with a conventional arms control agreement, it will become increasingly difficult to maintain political support for Western defense spending, particularly for the expensive conventional weapons recommended by the Competitive Strategies Task Force.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Competitive Strategies approach to defense planning is basically sound. Yet the questions raised deserve serious examination. Bush and Cheney should recognize and publicly endorse the principles of Competitive Strategies. But they should order further refinement of the concept and then its execution to ensure that Competitive Strategies gives the West a cost-effective edge over the Soviets on the battlefield.

Bush and Cheney should:

◆ ◆ **Revive the Competitive Strategies Council within the Department of Defense.**

If the Competitive Strategies Council is not reconstituted in the Cheney Pentagon, valuable work already completed will be lost and an opportunity squandered to improve Pentagon planning. Competitive Strategies is too valuable an initiative to be permitted to expire with the change in Administrations.

◆ ◆ **Give the Pentagon's Competitive Strategies Council a limited but independent role in the Pentagon's Planning, Programming and Budgeting (PPBS) process.**

The objective of Competitive Strategies is a dispassionate analysis of the U.S.-Soviet military competition, unclouded by military service or other bureaucratic interests. For this, the Competitive Strategies Council needs an independent voice within the Pentagon. Competitive Strategies recommendations thus should be given directly to the Defense Resources Board (DRB), the Pentagon's top civilian-controlled, decision-making body, instead of channeling them through the official planning process of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as suggested by General Herres. The DRB could use Competitive Strategies reports to identify military requirements that the services may have missed or neglected for bureaucratic reasons. Example: Competitive Strategies has identified a need for more mines that can be dropped from planes, a program with potential military effectiveness, but which is not favored by the Air Force.

¹⁶ See Howell Raines, "Thatcher's Visit: Glasnost in Action?" *New York Times*, April 3, 1989, p.6.

◆ ◆ Direct the Pentagon's Competitive Strategies Task Force on Europe to address questions about cost and the effects of potential Soviet counter-measures.

The report of the Competitive Strategies Task Force on Europe is just the first attempt to apply Competitive Strategies to U.S. force planning. Its results, therefore, should not be considered conclusive. The Task Force should continue working; its next phase should focus on:

1) The costs and potential savings of deploying advanced conventional weapons. Pentagon officials have cited wildly inconsistent costs for deploying the advanced weapons recommended by the Competitive Strategies Task Force and only vague information on how the program might save money by cutting some existing programs from the budget. The Task Force must resolve cost questions and make this information publicly available before detailed decisions can be made on which weapons to buy and in what quantities.

2) The long-term impact of potential Soviet countermeasures. The Soviet Union is sure to take measures in response to Competitive Strategies, including changing tactics and employing decoys and other deceptive measures to blunt U.S. advanced conventional weapons. They also will build their own advanced weapons, even at high cost. The Task Force has evaluated the impact on U.S. and NATO weapon requirements of some potential countermeasures, but a more complete evaluation is necessary. This should be undertaken as a long-term, ongoing assignment of the Task Force on Europe.

◆ ◆ Avoid neglecting tank and battlefield nuclear weapon deployments in a rush to equip U.S. and NATO forces with advanced conventional weapons.

The weapons recommended by the Competitive Strategies Task Force on Europe can help NATO improve its defensive capabilities. To what degree will depend largely on the battlefield performance of the new technologies and the effectiveness of Soviet countermeasures. Given these unknowns, even Competitive Strategies can not guarantee NATO an airtight conventional defense. NATO therefore still will need to invest in armored forces and battlefield nuclear weapons to protect the West if advanced technology weapons do not perform well as expected. The need for NATO to hedge its bets through continued investments in the basic tools of warfare means that it probably will not be possible to deploy all Competitive Strategies weapons as quickly as the Task Force on Europe may have envisioned.

◆ ◆ Establish a NATO-wide Competitive Strategies Council.

Last summer's Pentagon war simulations left no doubt that Competitive Strategies works only if adopted by all or most of the NATO allies. To help NATO move toward this, a NATO Competitive Strategies Council should be established, perhaps within the framework of NATO's Conventional Armaments Planning System (CAPS). CAPS is an experimental NATO planning system organized last year to help coordinate NATO weapons

development and procurement. A NATO Competitive Strategies effort will help the Alliance improve the military return on its defense investment by reducing duplication in national weapon programs and encouraging each ally to focus its military efforts on what it can do best. Competitive Strategies also could be used to encourage the European allies to accept a greater share of NATO's defense burden. Competitive Strategies could be used to decide which military missions are best for each ally, in light of its geography and military strengths. This might imply a U.S. focus mainly on air and maritime power, and the Europeans accepting more responsibility for providing ground forces on the West German central front. The Europeans also should be asked to share equally the costs of developing and deploying advanced conventional weapons and command systems.

◆ ◆ Use Competitive Strategies to design better arms control negotiating strategies.

Competitive Strategies identifies weapon programs that improve U.S. and NATO military capabilities. These weapons, understandably, then should not be bargained away in arms control negotiations except in exchange for serious Soviet concessions that improve U.S. and allied security. One Competitive Strategies weapon, the land-based conventionally armed cruise missile, was negotiated away in the 1988 INF Treaty, which was intended primarily to ban intermediate-range nuclear forces. The U.S. should use Competitive Strategies to protect research and weapon programs that give the U.S. and its allies a competitive edge over the Soviet bloc. One example is the conventionally armed sea-launched cruise missile, which would be used under a Competitive Strategies doctrine to strike accurately such land targets as ports and airfields at great distances from U.S. naval vessels. The U.S., therefore, should be cautious in agreeing to limits on these systems as part of a possible U.S.-Soviet Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START).

◆ ◆ Formulate a NATO-wide strategy for using capital and technology transfers to the Soviet bloc in ways that advance Western interests and do not jeopardize the West's edge in military technology.

Technology is one of the West's most critical competitive advantages over the Soviet Union. The West weakens its own defense by sharing militarily applicable technology with Moscow or making loans that the Soviets can use to buy this technology for the West. Therefore, the U.S. should resist efforts by the European allies to weaken restrictions on high-technology trade with the Soviet bloc. These restrictions are maintained by the Coordinating Committee on Multilateral Export Controls (COCOM), the Western organization that monitors trade with potentially hostile countries. At the NATO summit next month, Bush should press U.S. allies to adopt more restrictive policies on untied loans to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Loans to these countries should be tied to specific non-military projects. In return for this assistance, the West should require economic liberalization and political reforms in the Soviet bloc.

CONCLUSION

Competitive Strategies is a new Pentagon policy-planning strategy that offers great potential for improving U.S. defenses. Competitive Strategies finds ways for the U.S. to take full advantage of inherent American military strengths while fully exploiting Soviet weaknesses. In practice this often means fielding advanced weapons that cannot be countered easily or cheaply by Moscow. Yet Competitive Strategies is a relatively new approach to defense planning, and some serious questions have been raised about its costs and long-term military effectiveness.

Reinvigorating Competitive Strategies. Finding answers to these questions and further developing this promising new planning approach will require high-level Pentagon support for a strong Competitive Strategies program. George Bush and Defense Secretary Richard Cheney should instruct the Pentagon to give the program this support. They also should reinvigorate the Competitive Strategies initiative by making the Pentagon's Competitive Strategies Council a permanent body and giving it an independent role in the Defense budget process. The Council's Task Force on Europe should continue to refine its approach to conventional defense, focusing more closely on issues of cost and long-term military effectiveness. U.S. allies should be brought into Competitive Strategies planning. The lessons of Competitive Strategies also should be applied to arms control and strategic trade so that policy in these areas does not undercut the U.S. advantage over Moscow in military technology.

Cheney and others involved in Competitive Strategies should realize, however, that it carries risks and that even the most sophisticated new conventional weapons cannot guarantee NATO an airtight conventional defense. The U.S. and NATO cannot neglect needed investments in armored forces and modernized nuclear arsenals in a rush to deploy advanced conventional weapons.

Principle of Planning. The most important element of Competitive Strategies is not a shopping list of weapons, but the principle that the U.S. and its allies must learn to plan more effectively and adapt more quickly in the fast-paced military competition with the Soviet Union. Their inability to do so has long been a critical weakness that Moscow has exploited in pursuit of its own competitive strategy.

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Despite this criticism, Competitive Strategies is a sound idea, which could improve U.S. and NATO defense. As a new method, however, it needs refinement. What is very important, moreover, is that a place be found for it in the Pentagon bureaucracy. Bush and Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney should proceed with Competitive Strategies and improve the program. They should:

◆ ◆ **Revive the Competitive Strategies Council within the Pentagon.** The Council has been in limbo since Defense Secretary Carlucci decided to put Competitive Strategies on hold during the final weeks of the Reagan Administration. Cheney should resurrect the Council and define clearly its role in defense policy.

◆ ◆ **Give the Competitive Strategies Council a limited but independent role in the Pentagon's Planning, Programming and Budgeting System (PPBS),** the bureaucratic procedure by which the Defense Department decides which weapons to buy. The Council should provide advice on weapon procurement directly to the Pentagon's top decision-making body, the Defense Resources Board (DRB). However, Competitive Strategies should supplement the existing planning process of the military services, not substitute for it.

◆ ◆ **Review the work of the Competitive Strategies Task Force on Europe.** This review should ask whether the Soviets could counter Task Force recommendations with new military tactics and new weapons of their own. The review also should analyze in detail the costs and potential savings of Competitive Strategies.

◆ ◆ **Continue to field strong armored forces and battlefield nuclear weapons, since even the advanced weapons advocated in Competitive Strategies cannot guarantee NATO an airtight defense.** Because of these other priorities in the defense budget, some of the expensive Competitive

¹ See John M. Broder, "Joint Chiefs Held Trying to Scuttle Plan Backed by Bush," *Los Angeles Times*, December 10, 1989, p. 28.

Strategies programs will not be able to move as quickly as the Task Force on Europe may have envisioned.

◆ ◆ **Establish a NATO-wide Competitive Strategies Council within the framework of the NATO Conventional Armaments Planning System (CAPS).** CAPS is a NATO program that helps coordinate allied weapons development and procurement decisions. A NATO-wide Competitive Strategies effort, perhaps anchored within the CAPS framework, would improve the military return on NATO's defense investment by reducing duplication in national weapon programs and encouraging each ally to focus its military efforts on what it does best.

◆ ◆ **Use Competitive Strategies to design arms control negotiating positions.** Competitive Strategies identifies weapons that can improve U.S. and NATO military performance. One of these, the land-based conventionally armed cruise missile, was traded away in the 1987 intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, which banned ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between roughly 300 and 3,400 miles. If Competitive Strategies had been part of the NATO planning process, the military requirement for a ground-launched conventional cruise missile would have been evident, and this mistake might not have been made.

◆ ◆ **Formulate a NATO-wide strategy for using capital and technology transfers to the Soviet bloc in ways that advance Western interests and do not jeopardize the West's critical edge in military technology.** Advanced technology is the West's primary competitive advantage over the Soviet bloc. The West needs a well-considered strategy for restricting the transfer of militarily significant technology to the Soviet Union and its allies in ways that do not jeopardize Western security. This strategy could include specific demands for political and economic liberalization in exchange for economic assistance from the West.

WHAT IS COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES?

The concept of Competitive Strategies is not new. About two and a half thousand years ago, Chinese general and now legendary military philosopher Sun Tzu advised: "Water shapes its course according to the nature of the ground over which it flows; the soldier works out his victory in relation to the foe whom he is facing."² Through Competitive Strategies, Pentagon planners have attempted to apply Sun Tzu's maxim in a comprehensive and disciplined way to U.S. defense policy.

2 Sun Tzu, *The Art of War* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1983), p. 29.

A need for more competitive thinking among American strategists was recognized in the late 1960s by Andrew Marshall, who since 1972 has directed the Pentagon's Office of Net Assessment, responsible for evaluating the U.S.-Soviet military balance. Marshall's idea has been that the U.S. could gain an edge in the long-term East-West military competition by capitalizing more effectively on such natural competitive advantages as advanced technology and efficient and productive economic performance.³

Pressing the U.S. Advantage. Other competitive advantages enjoyed by the West include powerful navies and well-trained troops capable of taking the initiative in battle. By contrast, Soviet competitive advantages over the U.S. are short lines of transportation and communication to its allies in Eastern Europe and numerical superiority in such key elements of offensive land warfare as tanks and artillery.

According to the theory of Competitive Strategies, investment in military forces should be designed to push the East-West military competition into areas in which the U.S. has the advantage. Marshall cites investment in the U.S. strategic bomber fleet, including such planes as the B-52, B-1B, and radar-evading B-2 "stealth" bomber, as a good example of a successful Competitive Strategy. He argues that, by continually adding new planes and cruise missiles to the U.S. arsenal over the past three decades, the U.S. has forced Moscow to invest heavily in such purely defensive weapons as anti-aircraft missiles. Over the years this investment has been expensive for the Soviet Union, and at the same time, it is less threatening to the U.S. than Soviet investment in tanks, ballistic missiles, or other offensive weapons.

Pentagon Task Forces. Former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger was impressed with Marshall's ideas about competitive thinking and in May 1987 established a Competitive Strategies Council and Steering Group within the Pentagon, headed by Deputy Secretary of Defense William Taft IV. Two months later a Competitive Strategies Task Force headed by Deputy Under Secretary of Defense Dennis Kloske was created to recommend how the U.S. and NATO could defend Western Europe better with conventional weapons.

In September 1988, the Task Force presented its classified findings to Secretary Carlucci, and the outlines of the report were made public.⁴ A second Task Force has been considering new ways in which the U.S. could use conventional weapons to threaten Soviet territory in the event of war. It has completed most of its work, but its conclusions have not yet been released.

3 Author's discussion with Andrew Marshall. For a summary of Marshall's views, see U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Procurement and Military Nuclear Systems, testimony of Andrew W. Marshall, March 2, 1989.

4 See John G. Roos and Benjamin F. Schemmer, "Revolution in NATO's Conventional Defense Looms from 'Competitive Strategies' Initiative," *Armed Forces Journal International*, October 1988, and John D. Morrocco, "Pentagon Officials to Push Ahead on Competitive Strategies Doctrine," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, October 3, 1989. Additional information on European Task Force Report was provided to the author by Task Force officials.

COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES AND THE DEFENSE OF WESTERN EUROPE

Competitive Strategies came to public attention with the release of Dennis Kloss's European Task Force findings, which proved controversial within and outside the Pentagon. The Task Force concluded that NATO could reverse Moscow's military advantage in Europe by deploying weapons based on advanced technologies that the underdeveloped Soviet economy could produce only at enormous cost, if at all. These include sophisticated electronic surveillance systems to locate such critical targets as tanks and command posts deep in enemy territory and accurate new long-range weapons to attack them.

Massive Soviet Numbers. The Task Force began its work by identifying Soviet strengths and weaknesses in Europe and exploring ways for NATO to offset the strengths and capitalize on the weaknesses. Soviet military superiority in Europe is based on massive numerical advantages in offensive weapons: even if Mikhail Gorbachev carries out the force cuts he announced at the United Nations on December 7, 1988, the Soviet Union and its allies will retain advantages over NATO of roughly 2 to 1 in tanks; 2.5 to 1 in artillery; and 3 to 2 in fighter aircraft.⁵ Further, the Soviet Union continues to produce modern tanks at a rate of roughly 3,400 per year — four times U.S. planned production for fiscal 1990, and enough to replace all the tanks "cut" by Gorbachev in about a year and a half.⁶

The Soviet force posture in Europe, however, also has inherent weaknesses. The Task Force found that Moscow lags significantly behind the West in such advanced military technologies as sensors, microcircuitry, and miniaturization. These technologies are critical components of the new generation of advanced weaponry now beginning to reach the battlefield. The Task Force also found that, once NATO begins to field these advanced weapons, new Soviet weaknesses will be created. Example: Soviet command posts and tanks will become more vulnerable to attack even far behind the battlefield. Survivable command posts are critical to the Soviet ability to coordinate its attacks, and tanks are the heart of Moscow's offensive strategy. With these targets more vulnerable to attack, NATO's chances for successful defense would increase dramatically.

New NATO Systems. The advanced weapons that the Task Force proposes for this mission now are beginning to enter service with U.S. and allied military forces. According to the Task Force, by the mid-1990s enough of

5 For an excellent assessment of how these advantages have grown over the past two decades, see Anthony H. Cordesman, "Alliance Requirements and the Need for Conventional Force Improvements," in Uwe Nerlich and James A. Thomson, *Conventional Arms Control and the Security of Europe* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988), pp. 88-89. Ratios in text derived from official NATO figures in "Enhancing Alliance Collective Security," *A Report of NATO's Defense Planning Committee*, December 1988.

6 See General John R. Galvin, "The NATO Alliance: A Framework for Security," *Washington Quarterly*, Winter 1989, pp. 85-94.

these systems can be deployed for NATO to make a qualitative leap in its conventional defense capabilities. These new systems include:

New Radars and Communications Systems

With advanced radar and communication systems, NATO commanders will be able to locate targets deep behind enemy lines and communicate this information fast enough to order rapid attacks against them by precision long-range weapons. The nerve center of this system will be the Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS), an airborne radar now being tested by the Army and Air Force, which would spot and track tanks and other moving targets at long range and transmit this information to field commanders. Also urged by Competitive Strategies advocates are sophisticated electronic warfare systems to jam and confuse enemy radars and communication systems. An example is the Integrated Electronic Warfare System under development for the Air Force's radar-evading "stealth" Advanced Tactical Fighter (ATF), a fighter aircraft expected to enter service in the mid-1990s.

Super-Accurate Long-Range Non-Nuclear Missiles

Using information transmitted by JSTARS and other surveillance systems, these non-nuclear weapons will be able to strike deep behind enemy lines, destroying much of an adversary's fighting force even before it reaches the battlefield. These systems also will attack Warsaw Pact air defenses to clear the skies for NATO aircraft and will strike key communications posts to disrupt the Soviet chain of command.

Two weapons that will help fulfill these missions are the Army's Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS), a rocket artillery battery with a range of up to almost 20 miles, and the Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS), which also will be launched from MLRS batteries and will have a range of almost 100 miles. Both will be highly accurate and able to attack such stationary targets as airfields and mobile targets such as tanks.

Weapons Entering Service. The Air Force and Navy also have weapons that have been emphasized by the Competitive Strategies Task Force on Europe. The Task Force reportedly recommended expanding procurement of specialized missiles like the *Tacit Rainbow*, which is about to enter service. This missile flies over enemy forces while its sensor homes in on the electronic signals emitted by air defense radars and command posts. The missile follows these signals to their source, destroying the target. Also figuring in Competitive Strategies is a long-range air-launched cruise missile armed with a conventional warhead. The Air Force is considering building this missile, which could be launched at distances up to 1,000 miles to attack rail yards, bridges, or other key targets in the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe. The Navy could support Competitive Strategies from the sea with attacks by greater numbers of conventionally armed sea-launched cruise missiles, such as the *Tomahawk*, now deployed on surface ships and submarines.

European and joint U.S.-European weapons also figure in Competitive Strategy plans. One example is the Modular Standoff Weapons System (MSOW), an air-launched conventional cruise missile being developed by U.S., British, West German, Italian, and Spanish companies. Like many of the deep-strike weapons, MSOW is expected to incorporate "stealth" technology, making it nearly invisible to Soviet air defense radar.⁷ Competitive Strategies calls for the widespread use of "stealth" on missiles and on manned aircraft to enable NATO weapons to survive formidable Warsaw Pact air defenses.

Advanced Warheads

The next generation of warheads, or munitions, will give NATO's deep strike weapons specialized capabilities to attack targets difficult to destroy. Such targets include "hardened" command posts and storage sites buried underground, airfields that cover a wide area, and tanks, mobile artillery, and other mobile targets that currently are difficult to track and destroy with long-range missiles.

Already under development are autonomously guided warheads known as "brilliant," or self-guided munitions. Typical is the "Sense and Destroy Armor Munition" (SADARM). A single guided artillery shell would release a swarm of SADARMS over a target like a Soviet tank formation. Each SADARM would drop by parachute, searching the ground with its sensors for a tank, which it would attack by firing a small but lethal projectile. An artillery shell armed with SADARM should be able to destroy about fifteen tanks for every one destroyed by a conventional artillery shell.⁸

"Smart" and "Dumb" Weapons. Competitive Strategies advocates also support a Pentagon program to develop what are known as "fuel-air" explosives, conventional bombs that use an explosive aerosol mixture so powerful that they could accomplish the same missions as small nuclear warheads.

The Competitive Strategies Task Force on Europe sought the best mix of advanced expensive munitions such as SADARM and cheaper but less accurate "dumb" weapons such as standard artillery shells and mines. It recommended in general that the Pentagon scale up its plans for purchasing advanced munitions. In selected cases, it also recommended buying more of some standard weapons, particularly mines.

⁷ Barbara Amouyal, "Stealthy MSOW Features May Put Program in the Black," *Defense News*, October 24, 1988, p. 4.

⁸ Institute for Defense Analyses estimate.

QUESTIONS ABOUT COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES

1) Will Competitive Strategies be effective militarily?

Not all military analysts who have looked closely at the battlefield impact of advanced technology weapons agree that they will have as rapid or decisive an effect on the military balance as the Competitive Strategies Task Force believes. Deploying advanced conventional weaponry, for example, would spur Soviet countermeasures, many of which would be cheap and effective. The sensors on such weapons as SADARM can be deceived by electronic means, decoys, or smoke. They also can be thwarted if their intended targets remain close to cover under trees or next to buildings. Command and control systems like JSTARS can be jammed, or the aircraft carrying them can be engaged directly.⁹ In fact, Soviet military planners already are preparing to introduce tactics that could counter some of the weapons that are part of what is referred to in Moscow as the coming "revolution in military affairs."¹⁰

The outcome of this "revolution" is uncertain. The Soviet Union has proved its ability to bring new technology quickly from the laboratory to the battlefield. Example: In the mid-1980s the Soviet Union deployed tanks equipped with "reactive" armor, which stops incoming anti-tank missiles with a small explosion that deflects their warheads. This surprise Soviet deployment rendered obsolete virtually all of the NATO's high-tech, hand-held, anti-tank weapons.¹¹

2) Will Competitive Strategies cost too much?

Initial reports cited a cost of between \$15 billion to \$60 billion over six years to deploy the military systems used in the Competitive Strategies war games. Later Pentagon estimates raised the cost to between \$20 billion and \$25 billion per year above currently anticipated Pentagon budgets, and perhaps higher.¹² Even if these costs were spread out among NATO allies, they still could consume between 5 percent and 10 percent of annual Alliance-wide defense spending, a high share of which would have to be borne by the U.S.

According to one member of the Pentagon's Task Force on Europe, the key to Competitive Strategies' success is fielding advanced weapons quickly and in high numbers before Moscow can respond. Barring a political shift that would permit major increases in U.S. and allied defense budgets,

9 The author thanks Stephen Biddle of the Institute for Defense Analyses for his insights into some of the military problems associated with Competitive Strategies. Biddle points out that some of these problems will be overcome and the balance between offense and defense will shift over time.

10 See, for example, Philip A Petersen and Notra Trulock II, "A 'New' Soviet Military Doctrine: Origins and Implications," *Strategic Review*, Summer 1988.

11 See Robert R. Ropelewski, "Soviet Gains in Armor/Antiarmor Shape U.S. Army Master Plan," *Armed Forces Journal International*, February 1989.

12 For earlier estimate, see Roos and Schemmer, *op. cit.*, p. 114. For later estimate, see Barbara Amouyal, "New Cost, Validity Expected to Dampen Fever for Competitive Strategies," *Defense News*, January 16, 1989, p. 8.

however, the money for this expensive rapid deployment of advanced weapons will have to be taken from existing weapon programs. If this is not done carefully, it could create new vulnerabilities as it addresses others. If tank production were sacrificed, for example, NATO might not have an adequate line of defense if Competitive Strategies weapons did not work as anticipated. Competitive Strategies advocates claim that their comprehensive planning approach will avoid cutting into military strength by scaling back only those weapons that are unnecessary or not cost-effective. So far, however, they have provided few details.

3) Will the military services accept Competitive Strategies?

Competitive Strategies has been controversial inside the Pentagon. Predictably, the most vociferous opposition comes from the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Traditionally, the Chiefs and the armed services bureaucracies have opposed innovative programs that threaten established funding priorities and budgetary procedures. Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Air Force General Robert T. Herres, has insisted that recommendations of the Competitive Strategies Council be channeled through the Pentagon's official planning and budgeting process, which is heavily influenced by the bureaucracies of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps.¹³ Doing this in effect would give the Joint Chiefs of Staff a veto over Competitive Strategies proposals. Pentagon civilian planners involved in Competitive Strategies argue for more independence from the military services.

4) Will Gorbachev doom Competitive Strategies?

Changes in the Soviet Union and in East-West relations cloud the future of Competitive Strategies. Competitive Strategies rests on the assumption that the Soviet economy is not advanced enough to produce the next generation of high-technology weapons at reasonable cost. Should Gorbachev's economic reforms succeed, this assumption could prove incorrect. Or the West might provide Moscow with the capital and technology that the Soviet leadership needs to modernize its military capabilities. Europe and Japan are heading down this road, providing Moscow with huge no-strings-attached loans, known as untied loans, and increased access to advanced technology through popular joint ventures with Western firms.¹⁴

Further, Gorbachev's "new thinking" in military and foreign affairs already has paid him high political dividends in the West, whatever its ultimate military significance.¹⁵ Even such conservative European leaders as Britain's

13 See Broder, *op. cit.* and U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Procurement and Military Nuclear Systems, hearings on Competitive Strategies, testimony of General Robert T. Herres.

14 See Roger W. Robinson and Leon Aron, "Western Economic Security," in Charles L. Heatherly and Burton Yale Pines, eds., *Mandate for Leadership III: Policy Strategies for the 1990s* (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 1989), pp. 520-528.

15 For an analysis of the affect of "new thinking" on Soviet military writings see Stephen M. Meyer, "The Sources and Prospects of Gorbachev's New Political Thinking on Security," *International Security*, Fall 1988, p. 124.

Margaret Thatcher question whether Moscow continues to present a serious threat to Western security.¹⁶

If Gorbachev carries through on his promises of force cuts and follows up with a conventional arms control agreement, it will become increasingly difficult to maintain political support for Western defense spending, particularly for the expensive conventional weapons recommended by the Competitive Strategies Task Force.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Competitive Strategies approach to defense planning is basically sound. Yet the questions raised deserve serious examination. Bush and Cheney should recognize and publicly endorse the principles of Competitive Strategies. But they should order further refinement of the concept and then its execution to ensure that Competitive Strategies gives the West a cost-effective edge over the Soviets on the battlefield.

Bush and Cheney should:

◆ ◆ **Revive the Competitive Strategies Council within the Department of Defense.**

If the Competitive Strategies Council is not reconstituted in the Cheney Pentagon, valuable work already completed will be lost and an opportunity squandered to improve Pentagon planning. Competitive Strategies is too valuable an initiative to be permitted to expire with the change in Administrations.

◆ ◆ **Give the Pentagon's Competitive Strategies Council a limited but independent role in the Pentagon's Planning, Programming and Budgeting (PPBS) process.**

The objective of Competitive Strategies is a dispassionate analysis of the U.S.-Soviet military competition, unclouded by military service or other bureaucratic interests. For this, the Competitive Strategies Council needs an independent voice within the Pentagon. Competitive Strategies recommendations thus should be given directly to the Defense Resources Board (DRB), the Pentagon's top civilian-controlled, decision-making body, instead of channeling them through the official planning process of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as suggested by General Herres. The DRB could use Competitive Strategies reports to identify military requirements that the services may have missed or neglected for bureaucratic reasons. Example: Competitive Strategies has identified a need for more mines that can be dropped from planes, a program with potential military effectiveness, but which is not favored by the Air Force.

¹⁶ See Howell Raines, "Thatcher's Visit: Glasnost in Action?" *New York Times*, April 3, 1989, p.6.

◆ ◆ Direct the Pentagon's Competitive Strategies Task Force on Europe to address questions about cost and the effects of potential Soviet counter-measures.

The report of the Competitive Strategies Task Force on Europe is just the first attempt to apply Competitive Strategies to U.S. force planning. Its results, therefore, should not be considered conclusive. The Task Force should continue working; its next phase should focus on:

1) The costs and potential savings of deploying advanced conventional weapons. Pentagon officials have cited wildly inconsistent costs for deploying the advanced weapons recommended by the Competitive Strategies Task Force and only vague information on how the program might save money by cutting some existing programs from the budget. The Task Force must resolve cost questions and make this information publicly available before detailed decisions can be made on which weapons to buy and in what quantities.

2) The long-term impact of potential Soviet countermeasures. The Soviet Union is sure to take measures in response to Competitive Strategies, including changing tactics and employing decoys and other deceptive measures to blunt U.S. advanced conventional weapons. They also will build their own advanced weapons, even at high cost. The Task Force has evaluated the impact on U.S. and NATO weapon requirements of some potential countermeasures, but a more complete evaluation is necessary. This should be undertaken as a long-term, ongoing assignment of the Task Force on Europe.

◆ ◆ Avoid neglecting tank and battlefield nuclear weapon deployments in a rush to equip U.S. and NATO forces with advanced conventional weapons.

The weapons recommended by the Competitive Strategies Task Force on Europe can help NATO improve its defensive capabilities. To what degree will depend largely on the battlefield performance of the new technologies and the effectiveness of Soviet countermeasures. Given these unknowns, even Competitive Strategies can not guarantee NATO an airtight conventional defense. NATO therefore still will need to invest in armored forces and battlefield nuclear weapons to protect the West if advanced technology weapons do not perform well as expected. The need for NATO to hedge its bets through continued investments in the basic tools of warfare means that it probably will not be possible to deploy all Competitive Strategies weapons as quickly as the Task Force on Europe may have envisioned.

◆ ◆ Establish a NATO-wide Competitive Strategies Council.

Last summer's Pentagon war simulations left no doubt that Competitive Strategies works only if adopted by all or most of the NATO allies. To help NATO move toward this, a NATO Competitive Strategies Council should be established, perhaps within the framework of NATO's Conventional Armaments Planning System (CAPS). CAPS is an experimental NATO planning system organized last year to help coordinate NATO weapons

development and procurement. A NATO Competitive Strategies effort will help the Alliance improve the military return on its defense investment by reducing duplication in national weapon programs and encouraging each ally to focus its military efforts on what it can do best. Competitive Strategies also could be used to encourage the European allies to accept a greater share of NATO's defense burden. Competitive Strategies could be used to decide which military missions are best for each ally, in light of its geography and military strengths. This might imply a U.S. focus mainly on air and maritime power, and the Europeans accepting more responsibility for providing ground forces on the West German central front. The Europeans also should be asked to share equally the costs of developing and deploying advanced conventional weapons and command systems.

◆ ◆ Use Competitive Strategies to design better arms control negotiating strategies.

Competitive Strategies identifies weapon programs that improve U.S. and NATO military capabilities. These weapons, understandably, then should not be bargained away in arms control negotiations except in exchange for serious Soviet concessions that improve U.S. and allied security. One Competitive Strategies weapon, the land-based conventionally armed cruise missile, was negotiated away in the 1988 INF Treaty, which was intended primarily to ban intermediate-range nuclear forces. The U.S. should use Competitive Strategies to protect research and weapon programs that give the U.S. and its allies a competitive edge over the Soviet bloc. One example is the conventionally armed sea-launched cruise missile, which would be used under a Competitive Strategies doctrine to strike accurately such land targets as ports and airfields at great distances from U.S. naval vessels. The U.S., therefore, should be cautious in agreeing to limits on these systems as part of a possible U.S.-Soviet Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START).

◆ ◆ Formulate a NATO-wide strategy for using capital and technology transfers to the Soviet bloc in ways that advance Western interests and do not jeopardize the West's edge in military technology.

Technology is one of the West's most critical competitive advantages over the Soviet Union. The West weakens its own defense by sharing militarily applicable technology with Moscow or making loans that the Soviets can use to buy this technology for the West. Therefore, the U.S. should resist efforts by the European allies to weaken restrictions on high-technology trade with the Soviet bloc. These restrictions are maintained by the Coordinating Committee on Multilateral Export Controls (COCOM), the Western organization that monitors trade with potentially hostile countries. At the NATO summit next month, Bush should press U.S. allies to adopt more restrictive policies on untied loans to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Loans to these countries should be tied to specific non-military projects. In return for this assistance, the West should require economic liberalization and political reforms in the Soviet bloc.

CONCLUSION

Competitive Strategies is a new Pentagon policy-planning strategy that offers great potential for improving U.S. defenses. Competitive Strategies finds ways for the U.S. to take full advantage of inherent American military strengths while fully exploiting Soviet weaknesses. In practice this often means fielding advanced weapons that cannot be countered easily or cheaply by Moscow. Yet Competitive Strategies is a relatively new approach to defense planning, and some serious questions have been raised about its costs and long-term military effectiveness.

Reinvigorating Competitive Strategies. Finding answers to these questions and further developing this promising new planning approach will require high-level Pentagon support for a strong Competitive Strategies program. George Bush and Defense Secretary Richard Cheney should instruct the Pentagon to give the program this support. They also should reinvigorate the Competitive Strategies initiative by making the Pentagon's Competitive Strategies Council a permanent body and giving it an independent role in the Defense budget process. The Council's Task Force on Europe should continue to refine its approach to conventional defense, focusing more closely on issues of cost and long-term military effectiveness. U.S. allies should be brought into Competitive Strategies planning. The lessons of Competitive Strategies also should be applied to arms control and strategic trade so that policy in these areas does not undercut the U.S. advantage over Moscow in military technology.

Cheney and others involved in Competitive Strategies should realize, however, that it carries risks and that even the most sophisticated new conventional weapons cannot guarantee NATO an airtight conventional defense. The U.S. and NATO cannot neglect needed investments in armored forces and modernized nuclear arsenals in a rush to deploy advanced conventional weapons.

Principle of Planning. The most important element of Competitive Strategies is not a shopping list of weapons, but the principle that the U.S. and its allies must learn to plan more effectively and adapt more quickly in the fast-paced military competition with the Soviet Union. Their inability to do so has long been a critical weakness that Moscow has exploited in pursuit of its own competitive strategy.

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