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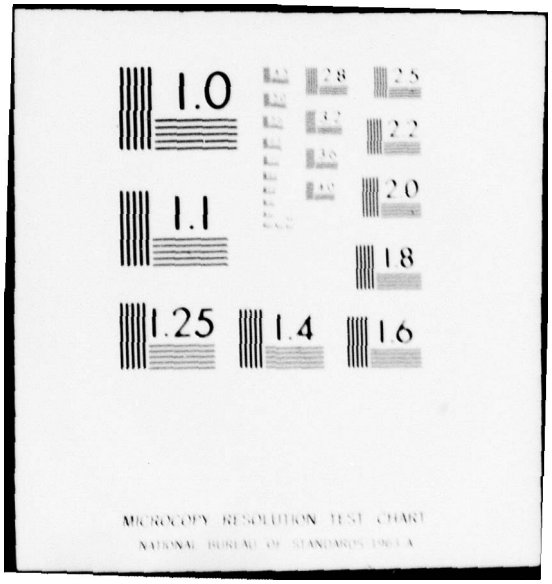
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SOVIET PROPOSALS FOR INTERNATIONAL REDUCTION OF MILITARY BUDGETS*

Chronology of Soviet Proposals

In the three-quarters of a century since the first effort in modern times, at the Hague Peace Conference in 1899, reduction of military budgets has been proposed numerous times, by many countries, in a variety of international forums. Discussed at the League of Nations between the World Wars, it has also received intermittent attention at the United Nations since World War II. The USSR has been particularly active in promoting this route to disarmament. Beginning in 1948 and over the next two decades, the Soviet Union made more than 20 proposals for reduction of military budgets, most often at the UN or its derivative disarmament groups (e.g., the Ten and Eleven Nation Disarmament Committees), but sometimes in bilateral negotiations with the United States.

Not all the proposals to limit military expenditure originated with the USSR. On May 21, 1954 the United Kingdom suggested to the newly established Subcommittee of the Disarmament Commission (consisting of Canada, France, USSR, U.K. and U.S.) that a freeze on military expenditure might be considered among the first steps of a disarmament program, adding that "as the disarmament programme proceeds it may well be found that budgetary control provides one of the most effective safeguards."[1] An Anglo-French Memorandum of June 11 proposed that a ceiling be set at the level of calendar 1953.[2] At the Geneva Conference of Heads of Government, French Premier Faure, on July 18, 1955, proposed limitations on military expenditure, the savings from which would be in part allocated for international development assistance.[3] Two French

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The paper was prepared for a special issue on "Disarmament and Development" of the journal *Mondes en Développement* (Paris).

[1]UN Disarmament Commission, *Official Records: Supplement for April, May, and June 1954*, p. 9.

[2]Department of State, *Documents on Disarmament, 1945-1959*, Washington, D.C., August 1960. Volume I, 1945-1956, pp. 423-424.

[3]*Ibid.*, Volume I, pp. 475-478.

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memoranda, one submitted by the French delegation at the Geneva meeting in amplification of Faure's statement and the other tabled later in the UN Disarmament Subcommittee, constitute perhaps the sole detailed official proposal for military expenditure limitation in the postwar period.[1]

The history of the USSR's activity in this area probably begins with a proposal to the (UN) Working Committee of the Commission for Conventional Armaments on July 26, 1948: "the general regulation and reduction of armaments and armed forces should provide for," among other things, "reduction of war budgets and State expenditure on production of armaments."[2] On June 11, 1954, in the Disarmament Commission Subcommittee, the Soviet Union called for a reduction of military expenditure within one year by no less than one-third of the 1953-1954 level, as part of an omnibus disarmament package.[3] A Soviet draft resolution of September 30, 1954, provided for a two-stage reduction from the calendar 1953 level.[4]

Except for a shift of the base year to 1955, a Soviet UN disarmament package introduced on March 19, 1955 repeated the June 1954 terms.[5] According to a Soviet initiative of May 10 of that year, "appropriations by States for armed forces and conventional armaments shall be reduced correspondingly" with phased reduction of forces and armaments.[6] The Disarmament Commission Subcommittee was also the forum a year later (March 27, 1956), when a Soviet Draft Agreement on the Reduction of Conventional Armaments and Armed Forces proposed "to reduce the military budgets of States by up to 15 percent as against their military budgets for the previous year."[7] In 1957, the subject was introduced by the Soviet Union at the UN on three occasions: March 18--reduction of

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[1] See Documents 122 and 128 in *ibid.*, Volume I, pp. 489-492, 498-501.

[2] *Ibid.*, Volume I, pp. 173-174.

[3] *Ibid.*, Volume I, pp. 425-426.

[4] *Ibid.*, Volume I, pp. 431-432.

[5] *Ibid.*, Volume I, pp. 450-452.

[6] *Ibid.*, Volume I, p. 462.

[7] For a U.S. acceptance in principle of this proposal, see *ibid.*, Volume II, p. 762.

This proposal, like others after it, also provided for using part of the savings for development aid. Almost from the very first, international appeals for the reduction of military expenditure have also urged allocation of some part of the savings for assistance to developing countries. Thus, in its "Peace Through Deeds" Resolution of

budgets in accordance with decreases in forces;[1] April 30--again a 15 percent reduction, along with reduction in forces and armaments;[2] and September 20--the same reduction provision as in April 6.[3]

In 1958, budget reduction received independent focus in a Soviet UN initiative. On October 10, the USSR introduced a draft resolution in the First Committee of the General Assembly "recommending" that France, the United States, the UK, and the USSR should undertake to reduce their military budgets by "not less than 10-15 percent" and to allocate a part of the savings for assistance to developing countries.[4]

Reduction of military expenditure was an incidental element of the schemes for General and Complete Disarmament (GCD) which were a major focus of disarmament discussions for some years beginning in the late 1950's.[5] A September 1961 Soviet memorandum to the General Assembly

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November 17, 1950, the Fifth General Assembly of the United Nations declared it indispensable, "for the realization of lasting peace and security," that "every nation agree," in addition to other arms control measures, "to reduce to a minimum the diversion for armaments of its human and economic resources and to strive towards the development of such resources for the general welfare, with due regard to the needs of the underdeveloped areas of the world" (*ibid.*, Volume I, p. 260). Explicit proposals for linking disarmament to development assistance are contained in several General Assembly resolutions of the 1950's, e.g., 724A (VIII) of 1953 and 1148 (XII) of 1957. Support of such a link may perhaps be read into a U.S. Senate Resolution of July 28, 1955 (*ibid.*, Volume I, p. 499):

> *Resolved*, that the President of the United States be requested to present to the United Nations this proposal to explore the possibilities of limiting the proportion of every nation's resources devoted to military purposes, both direct and indirect, so as to increase steadily the proportion devoted to improving the living levels of the people.

[1] *Ibid.*, Volume II, 1957-1959, pp. 753-754.

[2] *Ibid.*, Volume II, p. 782.

[3] *Ibid.*, Volume II, pp. 876-877.

[4] *Ibid.*, Volume II, pp. 1172-1173.

[5] E.g., a Soviet declaration on GCD of September 19, 1959: in the third stage, "the appropriation of funds for military purposes in any form, whether from State budgets or from public organizations, shall be discontinued." *Ibid.*, Volume II, p. 1472. See also the proposals of June 2 and September 23, 1960 (Department of State, *Documents on Disarmament, 1960*, Washington, D.C., July 1961, pp. 105-110, 242-247), and March 15, 1962 (U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), *Documents on Disarmament, 1962*, Volume I, Washington, D.C., November 1963, pp. 104, 106, 112, 118, 121).

suggested that while GCD was being negotiated, there should be established a ceiling on states' military budgets, "at a level not to exceed their military appropriations as of 1 January 1961."[1] With the conclusion of the Test Ban Treaty in sight, Khrushchev revived the freeze idea in a speech on July 19, 1963, and again in a Soviet press interview eight days later.[2] Further support (but not substantive detail) was provided by the Soviet representative to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee (ENDC) on August 19, 1963.[3]

A Soviet memorandum to the ENDC of January 28, 1964, *inter alia* recalled the 1958 proposal for a 10-15 percent cut,[4] and the subject was discussed at considerable length in the ENDC that spring, perhaps more so than on any previous occasion. The USSR renewed its 10-15 percent reduction proposal at the General Assembly on December 7, 1964.[5] The subject was raised again in the First Committee of the Assembly on December 2, 1965,[6] but there then ensued an eight-year hiatus in Soviet interest, broken only by Brezhnev's brief reference at the 24th Party Congress in March 1971, that the USSR was "prepared to negotiate on reductions of military expenditures, first of all by major states."[7]

After some eight years of Soviet inactivity on this subject, Foreign Minister Gromyko proposed at the 28th General Assembly in September 1973 that the five permanent members of the Security Council reduce their military budgets by 10 percent from the 1973 level during the following financial year; that 10 percent of the savings be allotted

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[1] *Documents on Disarmament 1961*, page 498.

[2] ACDA, *Documents on Disarmament 1963*, Washington, D.C., October 1964, pages 248 and 260.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 381-383.

[4] ACDA, *Documents on Disarmament 1964*, Washington, D.C., October 1965, p. 14.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 510.

[6] ACDA, *Documents on Disarmament, 1965*, Washington, D.C., December 1966, pp. 614-615.

[7] *Materialy XXIV s"ezda KPSS*, Politizdat, Moscow, 1974, p. 30.

in assistance to developing countries; and that other states, particularly those with a "major economic and military potential," should follow suit.[1]

Although generally welcomed by representatives of developing countries, the Soviet initiative was greeted with skepticism by the Western states and uncompromising hostility by the People's Republic of China. To rescue a difficult situation, the representative of Mexico suggested an expert study of the problem. On December 7, 1973, the General Assembly accepted both proposals as Resolutions 3093A and 3093B. Under 3093B, the Assembly declared itself "conscious that the United Nations has been unable to study this important question with the required depth and care," and requested the Secretary-General to appoint an expert group to prepare a report. In accordance with its mandate, the group prepared a report that covered not only the problems of reducing military budgets by the major spenders but also those of using the savings for development assistance.[2]

The USSR participated in that group and the group report was adopted unanimously by the members. However, subsequent efforts by the Assembly to build on that report, including the appointment of a second expert group in 1976 to study in greater depth the problems of measurement and reporting of military expenditure[3] did not receive Soviet support. The next section considers the major issues raised by Soviet proposals and the reasons for Soviet opposition to recent Assembly actions in this area.

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[1]The Soviet-sponsored resolution also proposed the creation of a special committee to supervise the distribution of the new aid funds.

[2]*Reduction of the Military Budgets of States Permanent Members of the Security Council by 10 Percent and Utilization of Part of the Funds Thus Saved to Provide Assistance to Developing Countries.* Report of the Secretary-General. Distributed to the 29th Session of the General Assembly as Document A/9770, 14 October 1974. Published by the UN in 1975 (A/9770/Rev. 1, Sales No. E.75.I.10).

[3]This group's report, distributed to the 31st General Assembly as Document A/31/222, 20 October 1976, was entitled, *Measurement and International Reporting of Military Expenditures: Report Prepared by the Group of Experts on the Reduction of Military Budgets.* It is to be published by the UN this year.

The Debate on the Soviet Proposals

In the postwar period the subject of military budget reduction twice received extensive airing, at the ENDC meetings in the spring of 1964 and at the General Assembly in 1973-1976. To a considerable extent, the discussion at the 1964 ENDC meetings foreshadowed the Assembly debates a decade later: the same themes were sounded, the same general arguments were advanced in support or opposition, and the lineup of groups of states was also much the same. For these reasons, we may begin with the earlier debate to characterize the Soviet proposals.

The representatives of the USSR, declaring the reduction of military budgets to be "of great importance for the solution of all other disarmament problems," urged the Committee first, to appeal to all states, "or at least those which possess considerable military power," to follow the "mutual-example" reduction of the United States and the USSR[1] and second, to prepare a draft agreement on the reduction of military budgets by 10 to 15 percent.[2] Citing various indications of interest in the West in reducing military expenditure, the Soviets hinted at an equivalent USSR response ("similar problems are also being studied, so we understand, by socialist countries parties to the Warsaw Treaty").[3]

Moreover, they argued,

> the implementation of such a measure as the reduction of military budgets is the least complicated in comparison with other measures for reducing the arms race...the reaching of agreement on this question would not necessitate any difficult and lengthy work to settle numerous military and technical problems, nor would it require States to reveal to one another the structure of their defense systems, which would

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[1] At the end of 1963, Washington and Moscow coordinated small cuts in their respective military budgets that were apparently intended for other reasons. This episode is discussed in an appendix to my *Military Expenditure Limitation for Arms Control*.

[2] *Documents on Disarmament, 1964*, pp. 49-52.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 230.

> be fraught with difficulties at a time when there is still no agreement on disarmament. Nothing of the kind would be required.
>
> If States agreed to reduce their military budgets by 10 to 15 per cent, each of them would be quite free to determine, in carrying out this agreement, which components of its military machine would be affected and to what extent it would develop them at a reduced rate. Thus each would be, as the saying goes, master in his own house, and an agreement to reduce military budgets would in no way restrict a country's freedom in determining the methods of ensuring its national security. When, for instance, after the Soviet Union set the example the United States and a number of other countries unilaterally reduced their military expenditures, they themselves decided which items in their military budgets this reduction would apply to, in order not to harm their national security interests.
>
> Furthermore, I should like to stress the indisputable fact that if States roughly equal from the military point of view were to agree to an equal percentage reduction of their military expenditures, this would in no way upset the existing balance of forces between them. In this respect there would be strict compliance with the principle of equality of security, any deviation from which would always be resented with particular sensitivity by any State.[1]

Only goodwill and a sincere belief in disarmament were necessary for implementation.[2]

To demonstrate the flexibility of his government's proposal, the Soviet representative assured the small states that "the amounts of the reductions need not necessarily be the same for both the large and the small States." It would be possible to allow for "the peculiarities of the position of any particular State."[3]

Turning then to a theme that was to receive its greatest play nine years later, the USSR's delegate remarked:

> At sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations, at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, and at meetings of the

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[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 230-231.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 87.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 233.

> Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, the representatives of a number of developing countries have repeatedly expressed the desire that part of the resources released as a result of reduction of military budgets should be used for rendering assistance to developing countries. As you know, the Soviet Government has also taken into consideration this argument of the nonaligned delegations, and has expressed its readiness to agree that, upon the achievement of an agreement to reduce military budgets by 10-15 per cent, a certain portion of the resources thus released should be devoted to rendering assistance to developing countries.[1]

The Soviet proposal was received with generally uncritical approval by the delegates from the developing states.[2] Western representatives were cool for reasons that repeatedly figured in the debate on such Soviet proposals. One of these reasons was skepticism on the value of budget reduction as a means to arms control and disarmament, compared with limitations on men and weapons. Thus, the U.S. representative at the ENDC in 1964 suggested that a physical force reduction, such as President Johnson's proposal for a verified freeze on the number and characteristics of strategic nuclear vehicles, would be a more significant way to reduce military budgets:

> Reductions of military budgets are the consequence, not the cause, of reduction in tensions. They can be the hoped-for result of the agreements which we are attempting to reach here; but we cannot expect the signing of a resolution or an agreement here, such as might be discussed in terms of the suggestion of our Soviet colleague, to make tensions go away. Let us keep firmly in mind the benefits which will accrue to mankind through the savings which actual disarmament will make possible. However, for real progress, let us promptly concentrate on meaningful measures which will deal with the basic problem of disarmament: the weapons themselves.[3]

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[1] *Ibid.*

[2] A fact noted by the Soviets with considerable satisfaction. *Ibid.*, p. 87.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 53. A similar preference for physical force limitation was expressed in the General Assembly debate on the 1973 Soviet proposal by the representative of the United Kingdom. United Nations, A/PV. 2180, November 27, 1973, pp. 67-68.

At the 28th General Assembly, the opposition of the Chinese raised the issue of the effects on the security of participants of equal percentage reductions in their military budgets. The Chinese position was that while superficially fair, the Soviet insistence on "equal responsibility" of all the permanent members of the Security Council "harbours ulterior motives":

> As everyone knows, there is a great disparity in the armament and military budgets of the five permanent members. The military expenditures of the two super-Powers are the highest, and they possess the greatest amount of weapons, particularly nuclear weapons...Yet they are still making desperate efforts to develop these weapons, thus posing a serious threat to the security of the people of the world. Confronted with the Soviet armed threat, even the United Kingdom, France and whole of western Europe feel inadequate in their defence capabilities. As for China, her defence capabilities are even less comparable with those of the two super-Powers. With such a great disparity, how can one talk about reduction of the military budgets by the same proportion? Does not the Soviet Union stress the need for the Soviet Union and the United States to adhere to the "principle of equal security" so that "neither side will be put in an inferior position"?... Evidently the true intent of the Soviet proposal is to cover up its own obstinate position of opposing genuine disarmament and to shift on to other countries the responsibility for what it calls rejecting disarmament.[1]

The argument evoked a sympathetic though less belligerent echo in the contributions to the debate by several Asian delegates--notably, Sri Lanka, Mauritius and Pakistan.[2]

However, among the noncommunist developed-state delegations, the most serious objections related to the questions of comparability of budgets and verification of compliance with any agreed reductions. At

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[1] A/PV. 2175, November 21, 1973, p. 31.

[2] A/PV. 2179, November 26, 1973, pp. 73-75; 2194, December 7, 1973, pp. 57, 68.

the 1964 ENDC meetings the U.S. representative dealt with the first problem as follows:

> Indeed, we might ask what exactly would be reduced under the Soviet proposal. The terms "military budgets" and "military expenditures" have been used interchangeably by the advocates of the proposal; so we do not know which is meant. Yet from nation to nation there are differences between military budgets and expenditures which may in some cases be so vast as to destroy any prospect of agreed balanced reductions, if one speaks of budgets alone, as does the text of the Soviet memorandum.[1]

Uncertainties on this score are compounded by the fact that the USSR releases no information about its military expenditure except the alleged total and by the widespread suspicion that this reported total excludes substantial outlays on military activities concealed in other parts of the Soviet financial apparatus.[2] This issue entered in the debate at the 28th Assembly too, where it was raised by the Chinese as well as by the UK representative.[3]

The second major objection by the Western powers related to the absence of provisions for verification in the Soviet budget-reduction initiatives. Generally, verification was not a significant feature of Soviet proposals on military budget reduction during this period. Some of them made no reference to verification at all (e.g., those of June 11, 1954, March 19, 1955, and October 10, 1958); others provided vaguely for some international system of control (e.g., those of July 26, 1948, September 30, 1954, and April 30, 1957). On a few occasions, more substance on verification are included. The May 10, 1955 proposal contained the interesting provision that "the Control Organ shall have

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[1] *Documents on Disarmament, 1964*, p. 155.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 153-156. For a fuller discussion of the issues involved, see Abraham S. Becker, *Soviet National Income 1958-1964. National Accounts of the USSR During the Seven-Year Plan Period*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1969, Chapter 7; Franklyn D. Holzman, *Financial Checks on Soviet Defense Expenditures*, Lexington, Mass., D. C. Heath, 1975, Chapters 2-4.

[3] A/PV. 2179, November 21, 1973, p. 37; 2180, November 27, 1973, p. 67; 2194, December 7, 1973, pp. 47-50.

unimpeded access to records relating to budgetary appropriations of States for military needs, including all decisions of their legislative and executive organs on the subject."[1] This wording was repeated in the March 27, 1956 proposal, which added the requirement that participant states should submit to the International Control Organ "within one month after is establishment official figures of their armed forces, conventional armaments and expenditures for military requirements."[2]

A number of the GCD proposals also included rather comprehensive verification language. The budget-related verification provision of the May 10, 1955 proposal was repeated in the June 2, 1960 GCD outline and in the July 21, 1961 Soviet Aide-Memoire on GCD.[3] By Articles 13 and 26 of the Soviet Draft Treaty on GCD (March 15, 1962) submitted to the ENDC, implementation of the phased reduction of military expenditure, proportionately to the reduction of forces and armaments, was to be verified by an International Disarmament Organization

> through its financial inspectors, to whom the States parties to the Treaty undertake to grant unhindered access to the records of central financial offices concerning the reduction of the budgetary allocations of States [regarding the specified physical disarmament measures], including the relevant decisions of their legislative and executive bodies on this subject.

The same access is granted for the third and final stage.[4] However, the USSR has refused to accept such intrusive verification other than in the framework of general and complete disarmament.

In view of the problem of heterogeneity of "budget" boundaries and content among the major powers as well as the sharp differences in the amount of relevant information they released, Western representatives have frequently urged preliminary technical studies. Reacting to the Soviet 1958 proposal, the French UN representative, Jules Moch, suggested calling

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[1] *Documents on Disarmament, 1945-1959*, Volume I, p. 466.

[2] *Ibid.*, Volume I, pp. 606-607.

[3] *Documents on Disarmament, 1960*; p. 109; *Documents on Disarmament, 1961*, p. 256.

[4] *Documents on Disarmament, 1962*, pp. 112, 118, 121.

> a conference of financial experts whom we should charge with studying the various military budgets of the principal Powers in order to compare them carefully, and perhaps to develop for the future either a uniform presentation, or at the very least a uniform content embracing all the forms of military activity of States. This would include scientific research for defence purposes. These same experts would also consider the very difficult problem of comparing actual expenditures with estimates and, let us hope, would find methods of control over the books of each State, thus guaranteeing that that State would fulfill its agreements. It seems to us that this technical research ought to precede any action towards reducing credits.[1]

The Soviet Union has continued to regard such suggestions with a jaundiced eye. At the 1964 ENDC meetings, the Soviet representative indicated a willingness

> to consider the question of control in the necessary context if we come to an agreement on a reduction of military budgets. Without such agreement, any talk about the form of control over the implementation of an agreement on the reduction of military budgets, and any talk about the scope of that control, would be pointless; it would be a sheer waste of time and would even be harmful.
>
> In fact, Mr. Burns [Canada] himself confirmed this by referring as an argument to the experience of the League of Nations, which spent several years "studying" technical problems connected with budgetary questions. What was the result of that "study"? Mr. Burns informed us that the result was the working out of methods for the submission of comparable data on military budgets. But what did the world gain from this? Nothing constructive, nothing positive; no agreement on the reduction of military expenditures was ever reached, the arms race continued, and finally the whole affair came to an end with the Second World War. Technical studies obscured

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[1] *Documents on Disarmament, 1945-1959*, Volume II, pp. 1193-1194.

> the substance of the matter, and to those who perished or suffered in that war the "success" of the League of Nations to which Mr. Burns referred is hardly a consolation.
>
> If the experience of the League of Nations teaches us anything, it teaches us what we must not do. It teaches us how vicious and dangerous to the cause of peace are any attempts to refer outstanding political questions "for study" to "technical" committees, commissions, subcommissions, technical groups of experts, and so on and so forth.[1]

It is no surprise, therefore, that at the ENDC meetings the USSR refused Swedish and Canadian suggestions to begin technical discussions on budgetary and economic data relevant to arms control.[2] The Soviets did support the Mexican-sponsored resolution at the 28th General Assembly which provided for a study group, but perhaps an important factor in Moscow's decision was that the Mexican-sponsored resolution was close to the Soviet proposal in language and spirit. As indicated, too, the USSR participated in the expert group. However, it seems likely that the Soviet government regretted its representative's unqualified approval of the report. In any case, subsequent General Assembly debates made clear the Soviet Union's opposition to further technical discussions.[3]

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[1] *Documents on Disarmament, 1964*, pp. 85-86.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 543.

[3] Documented in the Appendixes to my forthcoming *Military Expenditure Limitation for Arms Control*.

Conclusion

With extraordinary frequency, the Soviet Union has continued to propose moderate-size reduction of military budgets of the great powers. However, with no provision for comparing military budgets of different states or for verifying compliance with the reductions, the Soviet proposals have never been regarded by Western states as serious disarmament measures. "Who will take us seriously," asked Britain's Sir Donald Maitland at the 28th General Assembly, "if our suggested starting point is arbitrary and unverifiable deductions from an unknown quantity?"[1]

There are three criteria of utility and viability for any disarmament agreement--equity (with respect to the degree of sacrifice imposed on the participants), stability (the contribution made to regulating arms competitions and to defusing international crises), and verifiability. The satisfaction of these criteria requires information, varying in quantity and type depending on the nature of the agreement. Indeed, there are significant tradeoffs between the voluntary flow of information from participants and the stringency of the terms of a disarmament agreement that may be required to satisfy the criteria outlined above. Military expenditure limitation is no different in these respects than strategic arms limitation or other kinds of arms control arrangements. If anything, the information requirements of expenditure limitation are greater, inasmuch as the type of information required cannot, for the most part, be obtained by "national technical means."

Regrettably, the USSR has remained unmoved by this argument. Neither does it show any sign of interest in easing its virtual total ban on the release of military information. The near-term prospects for agreement by the major powers on significant military expenditure reductions are, consequently, not promising. In the meantime, a related though separate effort is proceeding in the United Nations to develop a system of standardized reporting of military expenditure. Evidently, it is not likely that the USSR will be interested in encouraging this effort either. However, the idea has broad international support at

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[1] A/PV. 2180, November 27, 1973, p. 67.

present and it may be hoped that its adoption and operation will not be long delayed. Given the continuation of such support, the creation of a standardized United Nations reporting system offers a framework in which gradual alteration of Soviet policy on the disclosure of its military expenditure could take place. If there is any basis for optimism with respect to improvement generally in relations among the major powers, perhaps there are also grounds for hope on this particular issue.