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**The Deterrent Value of US Army Doctrine:
The Active Defense and AirLand Battle in
Soviet Military Thought**

**A Monograph
by
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Infantry**



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ABSTRACT

THE DETERRENT VALUE OF US ARMY DOCTRINE: THE ACTIVE DEFENSE AND AIRLAND BATTLE IN SOVIET MILITARY THOUGHT. by MAJ William K. Sutey, USA, 60 pages.

This study seeks to isolate and probe the possible deterrent influence of conventional doctrine through a case study of the former Soviet Union's reaction to the US Army's doctrinal evolution from 1976 (Active Defense) to 1985 (AirLand Battle). US military doctrine is a function of government's policies regarding the protection of national interests, theories of war, and the best use of available and emerging military technologies and organization. In international relations, the quality of military doctrine has critical importance because it influences states' perceptions of and reactions to one another which may affect the likelihood of peace or war.

This monograph first considers the theoretical nature and relationships between conventional doctrine and conventional deterrence to arrive at a framework for the analysis of Soviet military reaction to Active Defense and AirLand Battle. Essential to any deterrent effect by doctrine it must be perceived and used by a potential adversary in a calculation of costs and risks associated with attacking. A doctrine is more or less deterrent to the extent it raises the costs and risks of an aggressor. The best deterrent doctrine not only defeats an aggressor's attack, but also provides for its subsequent punishment.

Following this theoretical review, the larger question of "how" the Soviet military thinks is examined in order to better inform the analysis of "what" they thought about US Army doctrine. Next, Active Defense and AirLand Battle doctrines are outlined and the Soviet reaction to each examined. Analysis according to the framework evaluates each doctrine's deterrent qualities.

This paper concludes that the deterrent value of Active Defense was quite low; it failed to convince the Soviets that their offensive strategy could be defeated. AirLand Battle, however, had significant deterrent value. Its synergistic combination of technology and operational concept (simultaneous attack through the depth of the enemy formations) provided for the defeat of Soviet offensive strategy. The Soviets recognized that AirLand Battle, if applied as designed, could defeat their offensive doctrine and make the probability of a successful attack uncertain. Deterrence probably obtained.

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I. Introduction

Doctrine is important. In its broadest and most fundamental sense doctrine of any type (military, educational, religious, legal, medical, political, etc.) provides a body of principles, or tenets, of values and behaviors held to be true which, when followed, should determine or contribute to achieving success or avoiding failure. Military doctrine, given the life and death nature of its consequences for nations as well as individuals, demands the most serious consideration in the affairs of state. It is a theoretical expression which describes the operating environment and prescribes the methods and circumstances of employment of a states' armed forces.¹ US military doctrine is a function of government's policies regarding the protection of national interests, theories of war, and the best use of available and emerging military technologies and organization. It ensures that the nation's military capability is maximized when employed in support of national objectives.

In the realm of international relations, the quality of military doctrine has critical importance because it influences states' perceptions of and reactions to one another which may affect the likelihood of peace or war.² National military doctrine regarding the use of nuclear weapons, such as "massive retaliation" and "mutual assured destruction", have long provided the deterrence to a general nuclear war. However, the contribution of conventional, non-nuclear, military doctrine to the deterrence of war has only recently received serious consideration.³ The relationship between conventional military doctrine, specifically US Army doctrine, and its deterrent value is the central interest of this study.

Because doctrine and deterrence are concerned with the causes of peace and war, there is some controversy over the assumptions,

methods, and, therefore, the conclusions of this literature.⁴ Doctrinal theory studies the translation of theoretical principles of war into practical guides to military action seeking to discover doctrine's sources, purposes, and its effects on the security environment. Deterrence theory studies how competing states decide to challenge each other militarily; and how they calculate the costs and probabilities of success relative to the political interests that need to be pursued or protected. Generally, deterrence theory concludes that the causes of peace or war are tied to military strategy. Conventional military doctrine, as an expression of military strategy, figures into any state's calculation of friendly or enemy capability and intent when making a decision to go to war.

Since the end of the war in Vietnam the US Army has given doctrinal issues continuous and sometimes passionate consideration.⁵ The Army has revised its basic warfighting doctrine, found in Field Manual 100-5 (Operations), three times since 1973. A fourth revision is currently under final consideration before publication. Each of these doctrinal changes or adjustments has sought to satisfy doctrine's fundamental purpose by maximizing the Army's effectiveness relative to the international threat and consistent with national security objectives. A key objective of US national security policy over the years has been the deterrence of war; army doctrine has clearly recognized its role in deterrence.⁶ Until recently the army has tied its deterrent value to its "readiness" to fight rather than "how" it intended to fight in its doctrine.⁷ Intuitively, readiness, or capability, and intent are components of any deterrent calculation, and taken together they should have a synergistically greater deterrent effect than if taken individually. However, the deterrent value of "how" we say we intend to fight may be suspect,

and therefore, theoretically weaken the Army's overall deterrence contribution.

Nuclear weapons have been the mainstay of US deterrence strategy since the start of the Cold War. The emphasis has shifted over the years from near total reliance on nuclear weapons, or "massive retaliation," to a more balanced mix of nuclear and conventional capability, usually referred to as "flexible response." Beginning in the 1960's the US began to appreciate the value of conventional forces as a part of a "seamless web" with nuclear weapons in deterring Soviet aggression in Europe.⁸

The assumptions that nuclear weapons could deter threats at a variety of levels from a variety of sources were undermined by logic and reality. Logically, not every provocation merits nuclear response and, in reality, there are nondeterrable threats. The recognition of this "disutility" of nuclear weapons has increased interest in the utility of conventional forces as the dominant component of deterrence⁹ and "has dramatically altered the 'seamless web' of deterrence [decoupling] nuclear and conventional forces. Nuclear weapons have a declining political-military utility once you move below the threshold of deterring a direct nuclear attack against the territory of the United States."¹⁰

This "decoupling" is, in reality, perhaps easier said than done, especially so in Europe against the former Soviet Union where the nuclear thread of the web has borne nearly the full weight of deterrence through most of NATO's history. Nevertheless, conventional forces have had a role to play in Europe over the years. Isolating and studying this role may suggest deterrent utility of conventional forces in the future.

This study seeks to isolate and probe the possible deterrent influence of conventional doctrine through a case study of the former Soviet Union's reaction to the US Army's doctrinal evolution from 1976 to 1985. Initially, this paper will review relevant conventional doctrine and deterrence theory to derive a framework for analysis. This theoretical framework will then be used to determine if and in what way the Soviets analyzed and reacted to US Army doctrinal changes in 1976 and 1982. From this analysis conclusions and implications will be drawn regarding the relevance and utility of theory and regarding the deterrent value of Army doctrine.

II. Theoretical Review

The purpose of this review of theoretical literature is to establish a framework which allows for the objective analysis of a historical case. A theoretical framework provides a researcher with a yardstick of expectation to measure new observations allowing one to draw conclusions about the theory as well as the observation. This section summarizes major theoretical works in conventional deterrence and doctrine, and synthesizes a common framework from the two. While the interest of this paper is a study of US Army doctrine, this summary must begin with a serious look at deterrence theory.

Deterrence theory is essentially concerned with explaining the causes of war and peace, and, in so doing, providing statesmen with a useful model for conflict management. Broadly considered, any condition of politics, economics, society, culture, or geography that reduces or inhibits the likelihood of war could be called a deterring influence.

Geoffrey Blainey's book, The Causes of War, recognizes a circular logic when the causes of war point also to the causes of peace.¹¹ To the extent that statesmen can create the conditions for peace they deter war. Blainey concludes that nations are most likely to use war as a political tool to solve their international problems when they believe they can achieve quick and decisive victory. His emphasis is on the "optimistic" expectation of winning quickly. Any condition which operates to reinforce this optimism contributes to the causes of war; any condition which operates to undermine this optimism contributes to maintaining peace or precluding war.¹² Blainey argues that the degree of optimism a state holds, and thus the likelihood of a decision to go to war, is not the function of some "mathematical calculus." Perceptions, rational or otherwise, can provide ample rationale for state's war or peace decisions. These optimistic perceptions find their fuel in nationalism, economic capacity, geography, the probability of a war expanding among other nations, and domestic political pressure and solidarity.¹³

Nonetheless, as perceptual as this optimism may be, it must be based upon some rational calculation--deterrence theory is based upon an assumption of rationality, even in international relations. A state must analyze an opponent's relative military, economic, geographic, and political strengths in order to reach some conclusion about the chances of victory. How statesmen act to manipulate this calculation contributes to the explanation of the causes of war and peace.

Deterrence theory seeks to explain how and why the actions of political decision makers fail to preclude, or may even contribute to, the conditions that cause wars.¹⁴ John Mearsheimer's book, Conventional Deterrence, provides the central theoretical foundations for this study. He

deduces his conventional deterrence theory using case study methods to examine the failure of deterrence in modern mechanized warfare during the early years of World War Two and the Arab-Israeli Conflicts. Limiting his study to the military conditions relevant to deterrence in modern war allows him to develop more relevant and useful theory about strategy and deterrence.¹⁵ Deterrence is simply defined as, "persuading an opponent not to initiate a specific action because the perceived benefits do not justify the estimated costs and risks."¹⁶ Essentially, Mearsheimer argues, deterrence is a function of the relationship between the political gains expected from using military force and its associated levels of military and non-military costs and risks. Or, as Blainey might phrase it, deterrence reflects the extent to which a state contemplating military action is optimistic about its potential for success at an acceptable cost.

In establishing parameters for his study of deterrence theory, Mearsheimer makes an important distinction, useful to this study, between deterrence based upon punishment and deterrence based upon denial.¹⁷ Deterrence founded upon punishment ordinarily relates to nuclear strategies. A state is deterred by the retaliatory or punishing capacity of nuclear weapons directed at military and civilian targets. Deterrence founded upon denial relates to conventional, limited or non-nuclear, strategy. A state is deterred by the conventional capacity of another state to successfully deny the aggressor its battlefield objectives. Mearsheimer's conventional deterrence theory concerns likely battlefield outcomes and those military considerations (technical issues relating to military strategy) which lead antagonists to conclude successful military action is not possible. Conventional deterrence in this sense then is a

function of a state's capability to deny an enemy's battlefield objectives using conventional forces.

Mearsheimer recognizes that deterrence is fundamentally a psychological theory. Success or failure of deterrence is measured by the product of the probable costs and risks calculations found in the mind of the potential attacker.¹⁸ Accordingly, Mearsheimer describes a three step analysis used by decision makers to assess the utility of military action. First, there must be a political value, an interest to pursue or protect, worthy of the costs and risks of military action. Second, decision makers assess the costs, military and non-military, expected as a result of the opponent's response. Finally, and most important, decision makers assess the probability of success. "The attacker primarily wants to know, not whether there will be a response, but rather how effective it is likely to be...will the defenders projected reply provide enough apprehension to deter an attack?"¹⁹ Costs and risks in conventional deterrence merits closer examination.

Cost in conventional deterrence is a function of lost lives, military and civilian, lost property and equipment, and the financial burdens of mobilizing, employing and sustaining armed forces.²⁰ Cost at the conventional level is not as great a concern as at the nuclear level. Clearly the difference is as simple as the potential annihilation of an entire society. Decision makers, however, are more willing to accept conventional costs. Military loss of life for one's country has wide acceptability. Conventional costs also accumulate comparatively slowly, or more gradually, reducing the strain to replace losses as well as softening the overall impact of loss or even rendering them imperceptible. This relationship between cost and time is crucial; the anticipated rate of

costs, faster or slower, as well as the level of costs, higher or lower, are key components of deterrence.

Probability of success, or risk, and costs are related. The likelihood of military success by itself does not ordinarily provide sufficient incentive for an attack.²¹ The probability of rapid success is critical because of the reduced costs associated with speed of military operations. Attackers facing prolonged conflict, even with the assurance of eventual success, will most likely not start military action due to the high, less acceptable costs associated with protracted war.

In building this theory, Mearsheimer focuses upon the military considerations in the costs/risks analysis relevant to both potential attackers and defenders. Military considerations relate to the technical and organizational issues of military strategy. Historically, Mearsheimer notes, related literature has focused on the deterrent impact of types of weapons and the balance of power reflected in force levels.²²

The types or classification of weapons argument asserts that war is a function of the weapons available: if offensive weapons dominate deterrence will fail; if defensive weapons dominate deterrence will succeed. This traditional explanation of deterrence suffers from the problematic nature of weapons classification—many weapons have offensive and defensive characteristics, such as tanks. Much more useful to a theory of deterrence is how weapons will be used and their probable effect on the outcome of battle.

This is also true for the traditional explanation that the balance of forces determines the potential for war. Comparing force levels, assuming that the balance can be calculated, leads to the conclusion that deterrence is a function of numerical parity. As with weapons, the crucial

relevance for force levels to deterrence is not necessarily quantity, but quality (effectiveness) and how they will be employed.

Mearsheimer's theory of deterrence synthesizes the weapons categories and balance of forces perspectives. Weapons (technology) and forces (organization) are the technical military considerations of cost and risk analysis. They are not, however, by themselves sufficient to explain conventional deterrence. Mearsheimer recognizes that the perceptions of how technology and organization will be used is the central issue of deterrence. "Conventional deterrence is directly related to military strategy, and more specifically, to the matter of how a nation's armed forces are employed to achieve specific battlefield objectives."²³ Decision makers fundamentally concern themselves with how forces will be used and the probable outcome of battle. They want to "foresee" the nature of war and assess a proposed strategy's potential for success. The key relationship in conventional deterrence revolves around the impact of states' military strategies upon their calculations of associated costs and risks when faced with military action.

In order to test the relationship between strategy and deterrence, Mearsheimer identifies three basic military strategies available to decision makers: attrition, blitzkrieg, and limited aims.²⁴ Each of these strategies represents a theoretical abstraction, quite uncommon in their pure form, but necessary for the limited purposes of demonstrating their deterrent implications in application.

In attrition strategy, an attacker seeks to destroy or defeat an opponent through a series of battles of annihilation.²⁵ Operations are characterized by continuous offensive pressure over a broad front and protracted period while strength fights against strength with heavy

reliance upon firepower, mass and materiel, to overwhelm the defender. The expected cost of an attrition strategy is very high due to its protracted nature. Attrition strategy assumes the attacker will suffer more than the defender enjoying the tactical advantages of defense. The attacker must still have the means to suffer high losses, exhaust the defender, and win. This suggests the requirement for asymmetrical quantities of forces heavily favoring the attacker. Success occurs with the exhaustion of the defender such that further resistance is impossible. In modern warfare high cost and uncertain outcome make attrition warfare the least desirable strategy. If an aggressor believes that attrition is the only way to achieve decisive victory then deterrence will probably succeed.

Blitzkrieg strategy relies on mobility and speed (as with modern combined arms forces) to destroy or defeat an opponent without resorting to a series of bloody battles of annihilation.²⁶ This is accomplished by penetrating the defenders initial positions and exploiting deeply into his rear areas to attack vulnerable lines and centers of communication. Blitzkrieg strategy is characterized by the concentration of large mobile combined arms forces at a selected point to gain local numerical superiority, attacking to achieve a penetration followed by rapid exploitation deep into the defenders rear areas while avoiding further contact which would slow the tempo of exploitation. Costs associated with blitzkrieg operations are ordinarily low given the quick and decisive nature of the expected result. Success occurs when the defenders forces are physically and psychologically paralyzed and, although physically intact, incapable of coordinated resistance. The success of this strategy depends upon geography suitable to mechanized warfare and the defenders technological and organizational incapability to cope with

blitzkrieg. If the defender recognizes, understands, and knows how to fight mobile antiarmor warfare, the potential success of blitzkrieg strategy becomes less certain. Blitzkrieg, Mearsheimer concludes, provides decision makers a preferable means to low cost, quick and decisive success. If an aggressor believes in the likelihood of a successful blitzkrieg attack, deterrence will likely fail.

Limited aims strategy seeks merely to acquire territory for the attacker. Defeat or destruction of the defender's armed forces is not necessary or even desired—success is not, in this respect, decisive. In fact, this strategy tries to avoid any significant contact with the defender's forces.²⁷ Limited aims strategy is characterized by the attacker achieving strategic surprise to catch the defender unprepared, overwhelming the defense before the defender's main forces can be brought to bear, and rapid transition from attack to defense to hold the territory gained and place the victim in a position to fight an attrition strategy to regain lost ground. The potential costs of limited aims strategies are low if surprise is achieved and the defender is unprepared. However, costs rise as the level of surprise declines or if the victim chooses not to accept limited defeat and executes an attrition counterattack. Ultimately, success depends upon surprise and the defender's readiness and unwillingness to counterattack. Modern states do not find limited aims strategy appealing. Nations today prefer quick, decisive victory, and if the defender decides upon an attrition counterattack, costs could reach unacceptable levels. Deterrence in limited aims strategy is a function of the attacker's perception of the defender's willingness to accept limited defeat.

To summarize this discussion of deterrence and military strategies: If the military conditions support, and a state is capable of blitzkrieg

strategy, deterrence is likely to fail. States incapable of blitzkrieg strategy will consider limited aims strategy. If limited victory would lead to attrition warfare, deterrence obtains. If limited victory would not lead to attrition warfare, deterrence would likely fail. If attrition warfare is the only military strategy available to a state, deterrence would obtain. This analysis leads to the fundamental conclusion that, "the threat of attrition warfare is the bedrock of conventional deterrence."²⁸

As Mearsheimer acknowledges, the strategies in his analysis are abstractions rarely found in pure form. In reality, states combine strategies weighting one or another depending upon their interests, capability, geography, and the likely threats to their security. Samuel Huntington provides an example of how this combination of strategies might theoretically work.²⁹ From the perspective of the defender, Huntington identifies three strategies relevant to Central Europe that contribute to a conventional force's deterrent affect. A strategy of light forward defense along a threatened border (attrition, limited aims) raises the uncertainty and potential cost of aggression, even if ultimately ineffective. A strong well organized defensive force capable of denying an attacker's battlefield objectives (attrition) forces the aggressor to risk defeat or pay an even greater cost for success. A strong well organized retaliatory capability (blitzkrieg) combined with defense forces (attrition) causes an aggressor to consider not only the cost of attacking but the costs required to protect itself from a potentially decisive counterattack. Huntington argues that the narrow nature of denial strategy is flawed, and that a strong conventional retaliatory capability (blitzkrieg) is crucial to conventional deterrence. Retaliation would occur at the same time as the aggressor's attack, force attrition upon the attacker, and strike toward a

result in which the attacker suffers a net loss status quo ante.³⁰

Huntington's conventional strategy concepts are evidently consistent with Mearsheimer's deterrence theory and illustrate the theoretical consequences of combining attrition, blitzkrieg, and limited aims strategies.

While Mearsheimer and Huntington seem to agree on the relevance and utility of using abstract military strategies to test deterrence theory, critics are skeptical of their assumptions and deductive methods and point to its deceptive simplicity as a means of conflict management.³¹ The chaotic realities of international security relations defy the utility of abstract deterrence theory. Deterrence, as a psychological theory, depends upon perception and cognition. The difficulty for deterrence theory is the difference, the incongruity, between its abstraction of objective reality and the actual perceptions of potential adversaries.

Perception provides the psychological underpinnings of deterrence; cognitive psychology rejects abstract deductive models based upon rational actors.³² Criticism of deterrence theory revolves around two key weaknesses. First, deterrence theory's conclusions are deduced from simplistic abstractions.³³ Realities are infinitely more complex and relationships are infinitely more tenuous than deterrence theory admits. Second, deterrence theory ignores the limits of rationality.³⁴ Internal and external perceptual limitations confound the ability of decision makers to accurately perceive or to influence the perception of others.

Cognitive psychology suggests that the sources of deterrent influence are internal to the potential aggressor.³⁵ The limits of rationality--misperception, wishful thinking, cultural bias, cognitive

predisposition, insensitivity to deterrent cues—lead decision makers to flawed calculations and decisions. A state's decision to use military force or not is overwhelmingly tied to its own internal political and strategic interests. Deterrence theory arguably "stands reality on its head" suggesting that deterrence fails because the victim is vulnerable, when deterrence is more likely to fail because the attacker perceives its own vulnerability.³⁶ The internal focus of a state suggests that deterrence is more a function of self-limitation, misperception of the costs and risks that actually exist, than the result of some manipulation by a potential enemy.³⁷

The arguments of cognitive psychology, although empirical, reflect a rather fatalistic view of the world. The limits of rationality and the state's natural, self-obsessing insensitivity to external realities suggest that any effort by a defender to convince a threat of its capability and resolve to militarily protect itself and its interests is wasted. Paradoxically, given the daunting challenges to effective communication, a defender's efforts to deter an aggressor could actually inspire the attack it seeks to avoid.

The argument that deterrence theory's weaknesses defy utility and may do harm immediately sounds like an overstatement. Actually, deterrence theory based on abstraction and deductive logic, and cognitive psychology are more complementary than they may sound.³⁸ Deterrence theory provides an abstract objective framework while psychology provides a cognitive framework to test the objective reality of the abstraction. Working together, these theoretical approaches to deterrence may improve the probability of deterrence succeeding in practice. Considering cognitive psychology's critique of deterrence theory

is thus an important compliment to its use as a framework for theoretical analysis or as a practical guide to behavior.

In summary: Conventional deterrence is a function of military strategy or how a nation intends to use its military capabilities (technical and organizational) to achieve battlefield success. Attrition warfare is the least desirable military strategy due to its high costs and uncertain probability of success. Deterrence obtains when a defender can impose an attrition strategy upon a potential attacker or if the potential attacker is incapable of other strategy options. Given the limits of rationality, as well as the internal and external barriers to effective international communication, the ability of one state to impose deterrence upon another is doubtful. Nonetheless, states are concerned with their security and will often choose military strategies that are within their military means and provide some possibility of securing their battlefield objectives. In reality military strategies may or may not have deterrent effects; but, also in reality, states attempt to deter each other in the expectation and hope that they do.

Doctrinal theory concerns itself with the translation of theoretical principles of war into practical guides to military action seeking to discover and describe doctrine's sources, purposes, and its affects on the security environment. This section begins with a brief outline of the general levels and types of doctrine, then analyzes three theoretical types of conventional doctrines.

As noted at the beginning of this study, military doctrine provides a body of principles, or tenets, of values and behaviors held to be true which, when followed, should determine or contribute to achieving battlefield success or avoiding failure. Doctrine seeks the maximization of

technical and organizational military capabilities in pursuit or protection of national interests. Military doctrine is military strategy generalized to account for the widest range of possible threats throughout the security environment.

In general practice, doctrine operates at two levels of two types.³⁹ At the national level strategic doctrine provides for the integration of all the elements of national power—military, economic, and political—in pursuit of security objectives. "[Doctrine's] role is to define the likely dangers and how to deal with them, to project feasible goals and how to attain them."⁴⁰ At a lower level service doctrine describes and prescribes the intended ways for the employment of available military means. Doctrine is of two general types: deterrent or warfighting. Deterrent doctrine, usually at the strategic level, seeks to avoid war in the nuclear context. Warfighting doctrine, at lower service levels, seeks to win war in the conventional context.⁴¹

The focus of this study is warfighting, or conventional, doctrine which has not attracted very much specific, directed theoretical consideration.⁴² Available literature tends to narrowly focus on institutional perspectives, practical application, describe or debate doctrine's content, or describe the process of doctrine's development and adoption.⁴³ One work, however, Barry Posen's The Sources of Military Doctrine, provides an exceptionally useful and relevant general theory.⁴⁴

Posen's explanatory theory examines the sources and integration of military doctrine with the political and economic means and ends of states working to create security for themselves.⁴⁵ Military doctrine's primary purpose, as a component of a nation's security strategy, is to prioritize among military means and prescribe how they are organized

and used to achieve military objectives. Posen focuses on the lower, service level of military doctrine relevant to the purposes of this study.

Military doctrine, or, as has been suggested previously, military strategy, is a function of the assessments of military professionals and politicians based upon capabilities (technology, organization, geography, and the potential enemy) and requirements relative to the desired military ends. He identifies three broad military ends and relates each to an equally broad military doctrine. States will choose an offensive doctrine to disarm an enemy, a defensive doctrine to deny an enemy military success, and a deterrent doctrine to punish an enemy.⁴⁶

Offensive doctrine aims to destroy or defeat an opponent's armed forces. States who employ offensive doctrine believe in the inherent superiority of offensive action and seek quick, inexpensive success. Large capable force structure and organization are required. Increases in the offensive capability of one state often threaten the security of others who then react by increasing their own, resulting in arms races. If several states share the perception that offensive doctrine provides the best security the probability of war increases.⁴⁷

Defensive doctrine aims to deny an opponent the military objectives it may seek. States employing this doctrine believe that defense has an advantage over offense and can successfully stop an aggressor. Defensive doctrine assumes war will be protracted allowing for small standing forces capable of buying the time necessary to mobilize. Defense is less expensive to build and execute; arms races are less intense and gradual. Defensive doctrine's inherent advantages raise the cost of offensive action to an opponent and lowers the probability of cheap, quick victory which, in turn, lowers the probability of war.

Deterrent doctrine aims to punish an opponent, "to raise his costs without reference to reducing one's own."⁴⁸ States employing deterrent doctrine accept the risk of ultimate defeat but count upon the ability to impose dramatic unacceptable costs upon an aggressor. Deterrent doctrine shares many of the qualities of defensive doctrine: defensive orientation, small standing forces, and resistance to arms races. However, the doctrine ordinarily achieves its military goal through a single capability or very narrow range of capabilities--states can punish, but are incapable of successful offensive or defensive action. Such forces can only raise the cost of aggression to a politically unacceptable level, which lowers the probability of war.

Posen concludes that by its offensive, defensive, or deterrent character, military doctrine affects states perceptions of and reactions to each other.⁴⁹ In this respect military doctrine affects the probability of war. International politics is inherently competitive. Offensive doctrine requires states to aggressively pursue a militarily competitive edge in technology, organization, and strategy. By working to become more competitive, or dominant, a state inspires potential adversaries to greater competitive effort of their own.⁵⁰ Under these conditions arms races and the likelihood of war increases. On the other hand, defensive and deterrent doctrines do not require the same competitive intensity, and, therefore, the effects should be opposite from offensive doctrine.⁵¹ Defensive and deterrent doctrines are ordinarily easy to distinguish from offensive doctrine allowing for clear perceptions among states regarding each other's capability and intent. Clarity of capability and intent, as well as an asymmetrical intensity of military competition decreases the likelihood of arms races and wars.

Both conventional deterrence and doctrine theory are fundamentally concerned with the causes of war and peace. Preventing war by deterring aggression or causing peace by providing adequately for security are two sides of the same coin. This brief summary attempts to specify this relationship and establish a few simple analytical criteria for the case study of US Army doctrine's contribution to deterrence vice the former Soviet Union.

Mearsheimer and Posen outline three doctrines and their deterrent implications. Mearsheimer's "blitzkrieg" and Posen's "offensive" doctrines seek to gain quick, decisive victory at low cost. They agree that states capable of offensive doctrines are not easily deterred from using military force against states incapable of stopping it. Mearsheimer's "attrition" and Posen's "defensive" doctrines seek to gain victory by protracted, costly battle with uncertain success for the aggressor. They agree that states capable of defensive doctrines are less likely to attack or be attacked—deterrence ordinarily obtains. Mearsheimer's special doctrine is "limited aims" which seeks to seize territory expecting that the victim will not counterattack. Although Mearsheimer argues that this is uncommon because modern nations prefer decisive military operations, recent wars in the Falkland Islands (1982), Iran-Iraq (1980-1987), and Iraq-Kuwait (1991) suggest otherwise. Posen's special doctrine is "deterrent" which seeks to severely punish an aggressor regardless of the cost to the defender. Although Posen thinks of this doctrine primarily in the nuclear retaliation context, Huntington's use of offensive doctrine as a punishing retaliation in the conventional context has intuitive appeal. This objective framework of doctrines and their deterrent implications notwithstanding, one must not forget the limits of rationality and barriers to communication

communication which confound the efforts of states to create their security and manage conflict in a chaotic international arena. Doctrine expresses the strategy that could have deterrent implications. The extent to which doctrine can break through the limits of rationality and barriers to communication its deterrent potential can be realized.

Consistent with this review of theory, this study will use the following framework in studying US Army doctrine's deterrent value vis-à-vis the former Soviet Union. Generally, this study will look for evidence that US Army doctrine undermined Soviet optimism regarding their chances for success in conventional battle. Any of the following will be evidence that this is true IF: 1) It can be shown that US Army doctrine overcame the limits of rationality and barriers to communication such that the Soviets perceived the doctrine and analyzed its capabilities in its own cost and risk calculations; AND, 2) US Army doctrine could successfully: a) defeat a Soviet offensive, b) impose attrition warfare upon the Soviet armed forces, OR, c) execute a combination defensive (attrition) and offensive (conventional punishment) doctrine.

III. Soviet Military Thought

This case study focuses on Soviet military thought during the final decade of what in Russian military history has been labeled as the "era of Marxism-Leninism" which ended under the leadership of M.S. Gorbachev in 1985.⁵² In order to understand what the former Soviet Union may have thought about US Army doctrine, one must first try to understand how the Soviet military thinks. The purpose of this section is to briefly lay out the most fundamental elements of the analytical framework used by the former Soviet Union.

Understanding Soviet military thought has several complications. Ample evidence argues that Soviets think fundamentally differently than the United States.⁵³ The challenge of breaking through the closed nature of Soviet society, especially its security establishment, present significant methodological problems. Soviet military thought must be deduced from the incomplete or cloudy evidence available in military publications and the observations of military structure and practice. This study, therefore, has had to rely upon secondary sources which, although consistent regarding the fundamentals of Soviet military thinking, are not always in agreement on the details of the process or its conclusions. Therefore, this review and the analyses that follow will rather superficially examine Soviet thought in relation to US Army doctrine during the period 1976 to 1985. This section lays the foundations of Soviet military thought and those elements of its analytical framework that were enduring during the period under study. How the Soviets thought remained generally stable; what the Soviets thought, however, was, as intended by their system, generally dynamic, though not dramatically so.

Soviet military thought is expressed in Soviet military doctrine. Military doctrine in the Soviet system is a much broader concept than that used by the United States. Military doctrine reflects the military philosophy of the Soviet Union springing from the military dimension of Marxist-Leninist ideology and how that philosophy is applied.⁵⁴ Based upon the "Clausewitzian-Leninist" view that politics drives all aspects of human existence and war is an extension of politics, the ideology of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), drives military thought and application.⁵⁵ Ideologically a Marxist-Leninist's view of the world reflects a never ending violent

struggle between classes, and depicts the forces of capitalism-imperialism arrayed against socialism. The CPSU determines military doctrine based upon what it perceives to be the "logic and conditions of a near state of war."⁵⁶ Ideological precepts provide the political goals of doctrine, while the strategic means and ways calculations of doctrine are the result of scientific "correlation of forces."⁵⁷ This calculation is not merely a balance of forces analysis. Rather it seeks to assess the political, economic and military capabilities of the Soviet state in relation to its enemies. Methodologically, military doctrine must answer five essential questions:

1. What enemy will the country have to deal with in a possible war?
2. What is the character of the war in which a state and its armed forces will have to take part, and what goals and missions might face them in this war? ...this includes (1) the element of surprise at the start, (2) anticipated length of war, (3) whether it will be nuclear or conventional, (4) whether the war will escalate, and (5) the "justness" of the war.
3. What armed forces will be necessary to fulfill the given missions and what direction to conduct military development? ...including (1) the kind of armed forces, (2) the size of the armed forces to be maintained, and (3) the question of superiority.
4. How are preparations for war to be carried out? ...Includes the question of whether Soviet military doctrine will be offensive or defensive.
5. What are to be the methods of conducting the war? ...The following factors must be determined: (1) whether the war will be fought with or without nuclear weapons, and (2) the declaration of no first use of nuclear weapons.⁵⁸

Soviet military thought is hierarchical in structure and authority; from the central political institutions of the CPSU down into the ranks of

the armed forces each level serves to control the next.⁵⁹ Military doctrine as the highest level of military policy has two components: political and military-scientific. The political component begins with the broad ideological perspectives and objectives of the CPSU and determines the means and ways to accomplish them.⁶⁰ The military-scientific component reflects the general principles of war, the nature of future war, technological developments, lessons of history, geography, training, military art, as well as administration, and applies them to all aspects of military activity. Military science is also concerned with providing the scientific input of the military profession to doctrine's formation.

Most important of these aspects of military science is military art--the theory and practice of actual combat, battles and engagements.⁶¹ Three separate but interdependent and interrelated levels are identified in the Soviet application of military art: military strategy, operational art and tactics. Within the body of doctrine, the theory of military art, as a part of military science, is a system of scientific knowledge which examines the strategic conditions and nature of war, and methods for its conduct.⁶² In application it seeks to define tasks and required resources, prepare for war, plan the use of forces, and studies the "capabilities of a probable enemy to conduct war and strategic operations."⁶³

Military doctrine is the authoritative policy of the CPSU political leadership and directs the armed forces to achieve political objectives. It prescribes the preferred method of waging war, and the psychological, economic, and political preparation, organization, and employment of the nation's resources and armed forces.⁶⁴ Understanding how the Soviets think helps us understand the tenets of their doctrine. The purpose of the military in Marxist-Leninist ideology is as the military tool of the Party

defending the socialist state. Given the perpetual nature of class struggle and capitalism's designs upon the destruction of socialism, the Soviet Union's doctrine reflects a "nation-in-arms."⁶⁵ A survey of military doctrine's basic tenets answer the guiding questions revealing the following:

Nuclear war...is a continuation of politics.

A nuclear war would be a coalition war...from which "socialism" would emerge victorious though damaged.

[There exists the] possibility of a conventional phase in a superpower conflict...However, escalation to tactical, theater, and intercontinental nuclear exchanges is highly likely.

Military doctrine is by definition offensive, since such an approach is the most effective means to bring about the rapid defeat of the enemy.

Should war occur, overriding Soviet military objectives will be to: (1) deliver preemptive counterforce strikes to limit damage to the USSR; (2) insure surviving "reserves" for a second strike; (3) inflict total defeat on the enemy; and (4) occupy critical enemy territory...

The basic political objective in any war is victory...

Nuclear war may be short...However, a protracted war is also possible, increasing the need for conventional forces to "secure" the victory.

Nuclear weapons may be used selectively in a "battle management" sense ... [or] to change the "correlation of forces"... however, they are not used for "limited" or "demonstration" purposes in the Western sense.

The objective of the CPSU's military equipment policy ...[is]...quantitative and qualitative technological superiority.⁶⁶

The ideological certainty of war against a powerful menacing capitalist system such as the United States and its Western allies drove the Soviet Union to strive for a vast military capability. A large and improving military establishment sought to increase the correlation of forces and reduce the likelihood of attack by the West. If, however, the

West started a war, the Soviet Union was prepared in every way. Superiority, not balance, was the goal. Offensive doctrine, not defensive, best served the political-military purposes of the Party. Decisive victory over the West was the final political and military objective for which the armed forces were organized, equipped, and trained.

In order to achieve its military-political objectives under the conditions determined by military doctrine, Soviet military strategy recognized that decisive victory was only possible with the destruction of NATO's military and political cohesion.⁶⁷ The problem for Soviet military strategy in the 1970's and early 1980's was how to achieve quick, decisive victory or avoid defeat in the initial period of war before NATO unleashed its nuclear potential. This could only be achieved by massive conventional invasion through deception, fast deep maneuver, destruction of NATO's main forces, and the seizure of large areas of territory in the very earliest phase of war.⁶⁸ Surprise was necessary to preempt the deployment of NATO forces, destroy the forward defenses, and penetrate deep into the enemy rear before the introduction of nuclear weapons. Keys to success were favorable political conditions and a degree of certainty that surprise could be achieved for rapid victory. Without the certainty of surprise and rapid advance, attack was unlikely: "Who forestalls--wins all."⁶⁹ This Soviet strategy for Western Europe provided the threat against which US Army doctrine was designed.

IV. Case Study

The strategic environment going into the design of US Army doctrine in the early 1970's reflected US general strategic weakness and Soviet willingness to take advantage. The Nixon Doctrine essentially

retreated from the warfighting strategic policy of "flexible response" to a pure deterrence policy called "realistic deterrence."⁷⁰ Realistic deterrence relied upon sufficient nuclear strength to deter nuclear war and a willingness to support Free World nations short of employing US troops. The Soviets had in 1967 begun a nuclear and conventional build-up in direct response to the adoption by NATO of US "flexible response" doctrine.⁷¹ They were increasingly convinced that limited conflict was likely to occur and would not necessarily lead to nuclear war. The US change to "realistic deterrence" was correctly perceived by the Soviets as a retreat from a warfighting doctrine, but they incorrectly believed that they had caused this with their build-up.⁷² Their response was to increase the pace of their build-up and begin an aggressive military foreign policy through proxy wars and their own invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.

At the end of the war in Vietnam it was painfully apparent to the US military leadership that fundamental reconstruction of the army was desperately required. The force was in disarray: the army in Europe neglected, the training base irrelevant, modernization frozen in time, and doctrinal revision a generation overdue.⁷³ In deciding what direction this reconstruction would take, the army determined that two types of future war were likely: mechanized modern warfare against the Soviets in Europe or one of their proxies in the Middle East; or, a low intensity, regular infantry conflict in the Third World. Although less likely, future war with the Soviets was the most dangerous so the decision was made to develop a doctrine that could defeat them and defend Central Europe.

The nature of future war envisioned by US doctrine writers was based upon the nature of the Soviet threat and the lessons of the 1973

Arab-Israeli War.⁷⁴ The Soviet army had significantly modernized and strengthened its conventional capability while the US was engaged in Vietnam. This improvement was apparent in the performance of Soviet weapons, especially anti-tank and air defense missiles, during the 1973 Yom Kippur War. Based upon observations of this war, the character of modern combat revealed a significantly more lethal and violent battlefield; the first engagement probably would be decisive. The tank's vulnerability on the high-tech battlefield demanded an emphasis on combined arms support to protect it and maximize its shock potential. Additionally, the Soviet's large, lethal combined arms formations in Europe, and the declining size of the US Army, would require a defender to initially fight outnumbered.

The new doctrine in FM 100-5 (Operations) (1976) evaluated these conditions and concluded that, "We cannot know when or where the US Army will again be ordered into battle...[but]...[t]oday the US Army must above all else, prepare to win the first battle of the next war."⁷⁵ General Donn A. Starry, writing in 1978 as Commander, US Army Training and Doctrine Command, outlined the essential logic and purpose of the doctrinal concepts found in the 1976 version of FM 100-5.⁷⁶ To win the first battle the new doctrine had to provide a method to defeat an enemy whose operational concept emphasized mass, momentum, and continuous combat. "Mass meant numbers and concentration. Momentum meant sustained deep advances ...[and]... Continuous combat meant echelonment of forces..."⁷⁷ When fighting outnumbered, Starry argued, the probability of victory is a function of a favorable correlation of forces at the critical time and place. In this case, defense against a Soviet attack could be successful with a 3:1 defender to attacker ratio.

The use of terrain was a critical combat multiplier necessary to, "exploit [the Soviet] propensity to mass without regard to the ground."⁷⁸ What Starry calls "the operational concept," derived from this analysis, required the ability to: "see deep to find the following echelon, move fast to concentrate forces, strike quickly to attack before the enemy can break the defense and finish the fight quickly before his second echelon closes; all this while using the defenders advantage--terrain--to multiply the strength of the defense."⁷⁹ What Starry calls, "the tactical concept," derived from this "operational concept," became known as the Active Defense.⁸⁰

In the Active Defense forces are positioned in three areas: a covering force, main battle area and rear.⁸¹ The covering force must find the enemy and cause him to start his attack and fight before he enters the main battle area. The decisive fight occurred in the main battle area where battalions would "service targets" in time and space to defeat the mass and momentum of the attack. Moving quickly is necessary to concentrate friendly combat power from unengaged flanks against the enemy's main effort once determined by the covering force. The battle would unfold as units maneuvered from unengaged positions successively deeper into the main battle area to attack the flanks or rear of the enemy's main attack. This "tactical concept" required forward defense and utilization of all forces; there was no large reserve for counterattacks.

The "operational concept" for the attack was to, "see deep, concentrate [to achieve a favorable correlation of forces], suppress enemy fires, and strike into the enemy rear areas,"⁸² Destroying the cohesion of the enemy defense by striking deep into the enemy rear was

the only way to avoid an attrition battle. The key orientation of the attack, therefore was on the enemy's second echelon defenses.

The 1976 version of FM 100-5 (Operations) was recognized by the Soviets as tactical doctrine and received attention in their tactical literature. Primary translated sources found for this study were largely descriptive accounts of the doctrine's content with propaganda exhortations regarding its inherent aggressiveness.⁸³ One noteworthy exception was an article by Lieutenant General N. Petrov and Colonel B. Andreyev in the January 1980, Foreign Military Observer.⁸⁴ Although also largely descriptive, this article considered US Army doctrine in the strategic context and recognized its essential defensive quality noting that the US doctrinal, "cornerstone is becoming the requirement that troops be ready not for 'flexible [response]' to enemy actions but for vigorous forestalling actions from the very outset of armed conflict."⁸⁵ This brief conclusion suggests a very clear understanding of the intent of US doctrine. Petrov and Andreyev also detail the rather fierce and inconclusive debate in US military literature over the doctrine's validity and its defensive and offensive weaknesses.

Forestalling, if successful, presented a tactical problem with dire consequences for the Soviets. Given the vital importance of momentum to Soviet military strategy, they were concerned with preventing NATO anti-tank defenses from slowing them down.⁸⁶ Soviet doctrinal studies had shown that defensive power had increase with the lethality, accuracy, and range of modern weapons which undermined the "credibility" of blitzkrieg offensive operations in the "face of a determined and prepared resistance."⁸⁷ Although this was a tactical problem with operational implications, the Soviet solutions were largely tactical: emphasis on

surprise to win the initial battle, improved combined arms integration including reorganization to push more combat and combat support forward, increased self-propelled artillery, avoidance of frontal assaults by seeking to bypass or envelop, and if necessary, use of tactical nuclear weapons.⁸⁸ Tactical adjustments preserved the viability of Soviet strategic and operational concepts.

In considering the conventional deterrence quality of the US Army's doctrine in the 1976 version of FM 100-5, it is apparent the Soviets perceived the change in US doctrine and used it in their operational and tactical calculations of cost and risk. Although intended to defeat Soviet offensive strategy and initially impose upon them an attrition style war, US Army doctrine does not seem to have undermined Soviet confidence in their capability to overcome either.⁸⁹ The debate over the tactical threat of NATO's anti-tank defenses reflects some concern about Soviet capability to support its strategic and operational offensive concepts. The tactical solutions, however, were obvious and the technical and organizational solutions were already part of Soviet ongoing aggressive modernization programs. Additionally, the Active Defense as a tactical doctrine provided for a comparatively shallow, linear defense--precisely what the Soviets hoped to face. It seems the Soviets took US Army doctrine from 1976 to 1982 at face value recognizing its essential tactical nature. Army doctrine did not pose significant enough a threat to unhinge greater Soviet strategic or operational level concepts, and, therefore, probably contributed very little to deterring Soviet aggression.

The 1976 version of FM 100-5 did not even enjoy the confidence of the US commanders tasked to implement it.⁹⁰ From 1976 through 1981 the debate over the sufficiency of the 1976 version of FM 100-5, and

changes in US security policy, contributed to the evolution of its 1982 revision.

The strategic environment changed little during the Carter presidency. Carter instituted a "countervailing strategy" in which nuclear deterrence sought to deny Soviet victory by the threat of nuclear punishment.⁹¹ The US struggled with several global security interests and commitments (Persian Gulf oil for example) all subject to Soviet influence, yet lacked the political will and military capability to protect them. The Soviets took advantage of Western infatuation with détente by continuing its conventional and nuclear build-up to the point of superiority. To Soviet leaders "countervailing strategy" was contradictory and illogical; they could not see the capability necessary to support such a doctrine. US strategy remained a pure deterrence rather than warfighting doctrine.

This all changed, however, just prior to the Reagan presidency corresponding with the consideration of doctrinal revisions for the 1982 version of FM 100-5. The Reagan Doctrine sought not only to contain Soviet expansion but also roll it back.⁹² A major US strategic and conventional arms build-up and deployment (including theater nuclear weapons in Europe and the Strategic Defense Initiative) aimed to regain superiority over the Soviets, allow the US to negotiate from strength, and "exhaust the Soviet system."⁹³ To the Soviets these were alarming developments. The US had shifted from a deterrence to warfighting doctrine with intense modernization to give it a credible capability. Perhaps most alarming, the US was beginning to think like the Soviets: nuclear superiority was an achievable goal and nuclear war could be fought and won.⁹⁴ The Soviet capacity to respond was limited by the rapid deaths and successions of three Chairmen of the CPSU from 1982

through M. S. Gorbachev's accession to power in 1985.⁹⁵ The Soviet Union's military build-up and freedom of action in world influence peaked during this brief period.

The 1982 version of FM 100-5, or AirLand Battle as it was labeled, evolved from 1977 to 1981 in response to the intense theoretical debate the 1976 version had inspired, technological change, and the increased interest in military readiness and capability by both the Carter and Reagan administrations. In many ways the 1982 version anticipated broad changes in security relationships based upon changing national security strategy, and the impact of technological advances on the battlefield.⁹⁶ The nature of future battle had not changed in terms of the expected challenge by the Soviet Union but had changed dramatically in terms of the technologies emerging and available to the US. The USSR was still the major and most dangerous adversary; the Soviet's operational concepts of mass, momentum and continuous attack had to be destroyed or defeated in order to win. The future battlefield would remain fluid, non-linear, lethal, violent, fast paced, clouded by electronic warfare degrading command and control, and contaminated by nuclear or chemical munitions.⁹⁷ To cope with these daunting conditions required a descriptive operational doctrine based upon principle rather than a prescriptive tactical doctrine based upon firepower.⁹⁸

Mindful of the weak linkages between political objectives and military means in recent history, the AirLand Battle concept recognized that, "the purpose of military operations cannot be simply to avert defeat-- but rather it must be to win."⁹⁹ Potential enemies must clearly perceive from military doctrine and demonstrated capabilities that war would not merely result in restoration of pre-conflict conditions but would reflect new

relationships decided by and favorable to the United States.¹⁰⁰ Victory is achieved through offensive action and AirLand Battle provides the operational framework to maximize the potential of all elements of combat power in decisive attack upon the enemy. This operational concept provides the core principles of AirLand Battle:

It stresses the importance of initiative, stating that, in all operations, commanders will attempt to throw the enemy off balance with a powerful blow from an unexpected direction and continue vigorous operations until the enemy is destroyed...Units must fight to gain and retain the initiative. Commanders must attack the enemy in depth with fire and maneuver. To do this they must synchronize all of the elements of combat power. Further, they must develop the mental and operational agility necessary to shift forces and fires to the point of enemy weakness more rapidly than he can respond.¹⁰¹

Deep attack is an essential element of warfare at the operational and tactical levels of combat. In order to overcome the Soviet operational concept, and thus defeat his strategy, US forces must extend the battlefield deep into the enemy rear areas to delay, disrupt, or destroy his second echelon combat forces. This required synchronization of the destructive power of all available air and land attack systems and combat multipliers to simultaneously engage the enemy throughout the depth of their formations. This created opportunities for US forces to seize the initiative early, attack aggressively, and complete the destruction of the enemy ending the battle. The array of technologies, especially electronic sensors and advanced conventional munitions (ACM's), available and emerging that allowed the commander to see and attack through the depth of a Soviet formation had exploded during this period. Deep attack was a both a doctrinal principle and a technological capability.¹⁰²

Soviet reaction to this significant change in the 1982 version of FM 100-5 reflected their equally significant concern with its implications for their operational concepts. Primary translated sources continued to be largely descriptive but pointed out that the US recognized the need for new doctrine,¹⁰³ and the strengthening effect of including the operational level of war¹⁰⁴. Predictably the new doctrine was attacked for openly planning a first strike offensive¹⁰⁵ into the territory of the East bloc with ACM's and maneuver.¹⁰⁶ The effect of ACM's and the principle of deep attack received considerable attention for their inherent aggressiveness¹⁰⁷ and their negative implications for Soviet planning and tactics¹⁰⁸.

Of particular note is a study by Kent Lee examining key Soviet military publications and the number of articles regarding defensive military actions from 1975 to 1989.¹⁰⁹ He noted a small peak in articles with defensive theses from 1981 to 1982, followed by a decline lasting until 1985. Lee suggests one explanation for the first increase was the change in US/NATO doctrine and technology and "concerns about the viability of traditional (offensive) Soviet theater strategy."¹¹⁰ Lee notes, however, that there was no evidence of a corresponding change in the conclusions of military science or doctrine; therefore, the military literature lapsed, after 1982, back to the dominant interest and role of the offensive in war.

As with the tactical challenges posed earlier by anti-tank defenses, the Soviets looked for solutions at the tactical level. The Soviet tactical doctrine manual of 1987 clearly recognized that the, "theory of organizing and conducting airland combat operations have a significant influence on the nature and means of combat and on the development of tactics in

general."¹¹¹ AirLand combat operations was a combined arms doctrine attacking in three dimensions to defeat the first and second echelons and seize the initiative. Tactical success depended upon: the destruction of ACM's and electronic warfare systems by concentration of effort, and the protection of the force by dispersion of resources.¹¹² This represented a significant shift in thinking for the Soviets.

Tactical solutions still sought to improve surprise and maneuver in support of their general operational and strategic concepts. The Soviets emulated AirLand Battle by reorganizing and adding the capabilities of their own air assault and airborne units in addition to the traditional massive fire support for deep attack.¹¹³ Also, normal requirements of Soviet objective depths were increased to amplify the effects of surprise by penetrating deeper into the unprepared rear areas of defending forces.¹¹⁴

At the operational level, the Soviets had been reorganizing their ground forces to provide Operational Maneuver Groups (OMG's), massive independent corps-size formations, as a means of sustaining the tempo and decisiveness of operations in the initial stage of war, overcoming a potentially nuclear battlefield, and reducing vulnerability to ACM's.¹¹⁵ The Soviets remained convinced through 1985, that operational and tactical maneuver in offensive operations, taking full advantage of deception and surprise, were key to battlefield success.

Efforts at the tactical and operational levels of war to cope with AirLand Battle doctrine and the capabilities of ACM's reflect the degree to which the concepts of Soviet military strategy have been undermined. Although the Soviets remained convinced that their doctrine was correct until 1985, some evidence of the military strategic analysis that

contributed to later changes emerged earlier. The Soviets viewed the synergistic effect of AirLand Battle doctrine and ACM technologies as a "qualitative edge" with strategic implications.¹¹⁶ The range, accuracy, lethality, and scope of ACM's, in Soviet analysis, had the same battlefield effect as nuclear weapons without the political or environmental consequences:

Especially in the context of the Air-Land Battle and [buildup of NATO forces capable of waging a protracted conventional war], numerous Soviet military spokesmen have equated the combat characteristics of ACM's with those of tactical, theater, and strategic nuclear weapons, focusing specifically on their tasks, target sets, and deep-strike ranges.... In short, the Soviet military views ACM's as strategic means capable of accomplishing strategic tasks even when nuclear weapons are not used.¹¹⁷

This "convergence of nuclear weapons and ACM's" has three consequences for Soviet military strategy.¹¹⁸ First, mass of forces now equates to large, easily interdicted targets—quantitative superiority is less useful. Second, ACM's present an opportunity to create penetrations with massed fires as opposed to massed formations; formations can do more with less, thus the quality of troops becomes critical. Finally, ACM's offer an opportunity to execute simultaneous and decisive attack throughout the depth of an enemy; sequential operations are not required, there would be no front or rear. This final point suggests the "convergence of defense and offense"—even while occupying a defensive position a defender is executing long range deep strikes upon the attacker—blurring the conceptual line between the two.¹¹⁹ This discussion points to the significant impact of AirLand Battle and ACM's, a doctrine with its complimentary capability, upon Soviet military thought.

AirLand Battle doctrine may have made a profound contribution to conventional deterrence. The higher level of Soviet attention to and

understanding of AirLand Battle (in some respects they appreciated its implications more clearly than the US) and its apparent use in their tactical, operational, and strategic assessments of the costs and risks of war would lead to this conclusion. AirLand Battle attacks the entire Soviet military strategy. Synchronized attack throughout the depth of Soviet formations disrupts and defeats their ability to mass, maintain momentum, and conduct continuous operations. Tactical and operational adjustments did not solve the essential strategy problem: the offensive doctrine of the Soviet Union, with or without the use of nuclear weapons, was very vulnerable to defeat. Their very operational concepts and tactics increased this vulnerability.

Moscow knows the military virtues which can be gained from asymmetrical military doctrines, especially if the doctrine of its opponents helps to reduce uncertainties about targeting and battle management. The subscription of both sides to a doctrine based on warfighting, counterforce strategy would, from the Soviet perspective, increase military uncertainty and reduce military predictability—circumstances not in keeping with Soviet military style. If outcomes cannot be marginally ensured, military power as a political instrument loses its effectiveness.¹²⁰

AirLand Battle could convincingly defeat the blitzkrieg strategy, impose attrition warfare on the Soviets, and threatened, though probably less credibly, a punishing counteroffensive which could result in their total defeat. AirLand Battle doctrine's contribution to conventional deterrence, in concert with a more militant national strategy toward containment and the advantages of exceptional technology, clearly raised the costs and reduced the probability of successful attack for the Soviet Union.

V. Conclusion and Implications

This very brief look at US Army doctrine's impact upon the military thought of the former Soviet Union confirms the basic tenets of Mearsheimer's conventional deterrence theory and Posen's theory of doctrine. Doctrine, as an expression of military strategy, has inherent deterrent value, but the degree of that value will vary with three key conditions: first, the nature of the nation to be deterred and its capacity to perceive and use doctrinal information in its decision process; second, how the doctrine raises the costs of attack; and, finally, how the doctrine lowers the probability of successful attack. In raising costs and risks, doctrine must provide a clear, seemingly insurmountable political or military dilemma to an opponent. The military dilemma must threaten the defeat of an opponent at every level of war. The best doctrine appears to be one capable of imposing both attrition and punishing blitzkrieg warfare upon an opponent: AirLand Battle. Punishing language may be necessary in doctrine to reduce misperception among some potential adversaries, but there always exists the paradox that our doctrine could, by its language, start the war that it hoped to avoid.

Two implications are worthy of note. First, the implication of converging offense and defense on the battlefield based upon ACM capabilities suggest that the theoretical line between the two doctrines will blur as well. While conceivable in the abstract, it seems practically unlikely. The type of doctrine a nation selects is a function of its desired military end, not just the methods available. Military art truly is dialectic—there is a tactical solution to ACM's on the horizon that does have strategic implications, to say nothing of the technical solutions constantly under study.

Finally, this theory of conventional deterrence is based upon a significant assumption about the rationality of potential combatants. Today's limits of rationality are stretched by fanatics of religious, ethnic, or nationalistic interest. In such a case, the utility of doctrine based upon imposing attrition or punishing with blitzkrieg is highly suspect. What elements of doctrine can deter the clearly irrational potential adversary? This merits meaningful study.

The challenge is to get doctrine as about right as possible given the world as we find it. A doctrine of principles based upon sound theory reflecting the nation's preferred method for war (if war is necessary) will have enduring application under the widest circumstances against the broadest range of potential adversaries and, most likely, cause security for the nation.

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¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., 23.

²¹Ibid., 24.

²²Ibid., 25-26.

²³Ibid., 28. Emphasis added.

²⁴Ibid., 29.

²⁵Ibid., 29-30, 33-35, 52-53.

²⁶Ibid., 35-38, 46-48, 52.

²⁷Ibid., 53-58.

²⁸Ibid., 64.

²⁹Samuel P. Huntington, "Conventional Deterrence and Conventional Retaliation in Europe," International Security, (Winter 1983/84): 32-34.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 43.

³¹Robert Jervis, "Deterrence and Perception", 3. Richard N. Lebow, "Conclusions," in Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and Janice Gross Stein, eds. Psychology and Deterrence, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 203.

³²Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and Janice Gross Stein, eds. Psychology and Deterrence, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), viii.

³³Lebow, 203.

³⁴Jervis, "Deterrence and Perception," 19-30.

³⁵Lebow, 213-217.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 216-217.

³⁷Jervis, "Deterrence and Perception, 14.

³⁸The proponents of each perspective would argue they are competing theories. I take an eclectic approach.

³⁹Viotti, 190.

⁴⁰Henry Kissinger, "Strategic Doctrine and American Defense," in Henry Kissinger, ed. Problems of National Strategy, (New York: Praeger, 1965), 9.

⁴¹Viotti, 191.

⁴²See for example these sources of general international politics, national security strategy, and deterrence: Arnold L. Horelick, "Perspectives on the Study of Comparative Military Doctrine." in Frank B. Horton, Anthony C. Rogerson, and Edward L. Warner III, eds. Comparative Defense Policy. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 194. Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma." World Politics. (January 1978): 167-214. Robert Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 64. Malcolm W. Hoag, "On Stability in Deterrent Races," in Robert Art and Kenneth Waltz, eds. The Use of Force. (Boston: Little Brown, 1971), 402-428. Kenneth Waltz, Theory of International Politics. (Reading,

Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1979), 116-123. George Quester, Offense and Defense in the International System. (New York: John Wiley, 1977), 11.

⁴³Given the evolutionary cycles US Army doctrine has gone through over the last twenty years there is a large and growing body of literature related to these topics and American doctrine. There is less interest in international literature, with the exception of the former Soviet Union. For examples see: Robert A. Doughty, The Evolution of US Army Tactical Doctrine, 1946-76, (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Combat Studies Institute, Leavenworth Papers, Number 1, August 1979); Paul H. Herbert, Deciding What Has to Be Done: General William E. DePuy and the 1976 Edition of FM 100-5, Operations. (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Combat Studies Institute, Leavenworth Papers, Number 16, July 1988); John L. Romjue, From Active Defense to AirLand Battle: The Development of Army Doctrine 1973 - 1982. (Fort Monroe, Virginia: United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, June 1984); William S. Lind, "FM 100-5, Operations: Some Doctrinal Questions for the United States Army." Military Review. (March 1977): 54-65; Donn A. Starry, "A Tactical Evolution--FM 100-5." Military Review. (August 1978): 2-11; James R. McDonough, "Building the New FM 100-5: Process and Product." Military Review. (October 1991): 2-12; Gordon R. Sullivan, "Doctrine: A Guide to the Future." Military Review. (February 1992): 2-9; Bruce W. Menning, "Soviet Military Doctrine: Change and Challenge." in Hans Gunter Brauch, ed. Military Doctrine and Arms Control. (Mosbach, FRG: AFES-PRESS, 1990); and, Harriet Fast Scott and William F. Scott. Soviet Military Doctrine: Continuity, Formulation, and Dissemination. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988).

⁴⁴Posen, 7.

⁴⁵*ibid.*, 13-14.

⁴⁶*ibid.*, 16-23.

⁴⁷*ibid.*, 20.

⁴⁸*ibid.*, 14.

⁴⁹*ibid.*, 220.

⁵⁰This reasoning is fundamental to arms races and deterrence. See for example: Waltz, 116-123; and Jervis, Perceptions, 76.

⁵¹Jervis, "Cooperation," 186-190.

⁵²Willard C. Frank, Jr. and Philip S. Gillette, eds. Soviet Military Doctrine from Lenin to Gorbachev, 1915-1991, (London: Greenwood Press, 1992), 61.

⁵³See for example John J. Dziak, Soviet Perceptions of Military Power: The Interaction of Theory and Practice (New York: Crane, Russak & Company, 1981), 1-3.

⁵⁴Donnelly, "Development of Soviet Military Doctrine," 39.

⁵⁵Dziak, 17-20.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Dziak, 20.

⁵⁸Harriet Fast Scott and William F. Scott, Soviet Military Doctrine: Continuity, Formulation, and Dissemination (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988), 75-76.

⁵⁹Dziak, 29-31.

⁶⁰Ibid., 21.

⁶¹Ibid., 30-33.

⁶²US Air Force, "The Soviet Version of Military Strategy, by N.V. Ogarkov," (Washington, DC: Air Force Intelligence Service, 1979?), 1.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Donnelly, "Development of Soviet Military Doctrine," 39.

⁶⁵Ibid., 40.

⁶⁶Dziak, 27-28.

⁶⁷Donnelly, "Development of Soviet Military Doctrine," 42.

⁶⁸Donnelly, C.N. "Ground Forces," in David R. Jones, ed. Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual, Volume 3, 1979. (Gulf Breeze, Florida: Academic International Press, 1979), 17.

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Jonathan S. Lockwood, The Soviet View of US Strategic Doctrine: Implications for Decision Making, (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1983), 123.

⁷¹Scott and Scott, Soviet Military Doctrine, 100-101.

⁷²Lockwood, 123-125.

⁷³Donn A. Starry, "A Tactical Evolution--FM 100-5." Military Review. (August 1978): 3.

⁷⁴Robert A. Doughty, The Evolution of US Army Tactical Doctrine, 1946-76. (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Combat Studies Institute, Leavenworth Papers, Number 1, August 1979), 41-42.

⁷⁵US Army, FM 100-5 (Operations), (Washington DC: Department of the Army, 1 July 1976): p. 1-1.

⁷⁶Starry, 4-5.

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Ibid., 7.

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰Doughty, 45.

⁸¹Starry, 8-9.

⁸²Ibid., 10.

⁸³See for example: A. Shurupov, "Some Problems in the Art of Warfare Abroad." Zarubezhnoye Voennoye Obozreniye (Foreign Military Observer). Moscow, March 7, 1980. (Translated by Joint Publication Research Service, USSR Report: Military Affairs, Number 76315, National Technical Information Service, Springfield, Virginia, August 27, 1980): 30-39. N. Tsapenko, "The Company Tactical Group in 'Active Defense'." Zarubezhnoye Voennoye Obozreniye (Foreign Military Observer). (Moscow, November 10, 1982. Translated by Joint Publication Research Service, USSR Report: Military Affairs, Number 84534, National Technical Information Service, Springfield, Virginia, October 13, 1983): 80-86; A. Tsvetkov, "Combat Operations in the Enemy Rear." Zarubezhnoye Voennoye Obozreniye (Foreign Military Observer). (Moscow, December 10, 1979. Translated by Joint Publication Research Service, USSR Report: Military Affairs, Number 76290, National Technical Information

Service, Springfield, Virginia, August 25, 1980): 3-11. The Soviet military publication Zarubezhnoye Voennoye Obozreniye (Foreign Military Observer) is suspected to be a product of Soviet Military Intelligence, which, due to its unclassified nature, may explain why it is not very useful in uncovering critical analysis or evaluation of US or Soviet doctrine.

84N. Petrov, and B. Andreyev. "Principles of Conducting Modern Warfare (According to the Views of Foreign Military Experts)." Zarubezhnoye Voennoye Obozreniye (Foreign Military Observer). (Moscow, August 25, 1980. Translated by Joint Publication Research Service, USSR Report: Military Affairs, Number 76290, National Technical Information Service, Springfield, Virginia, August 25, 1980): 48.

85Ibid. The use of the word "forestalling" is interesting. As noted above, C.N. Donnelly quoted a Soviet phrase suggesting, "Who forestalls--wins all." (See note 66).

86C. N. Donnelly, "Soviet Tactics for Overcoming NATO Antitank Defenses: Part I." Infantry Magazine. (July-August 1979): 22.

87Donnelly, C.N. "Ground Forces," in David R. Jones, ed. Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual, Volume 3, 1979. (Gulf Breeze, Florida: Academic International Press, 1979), 17.

88Ibid., 16-17; Richard A. Wolf, "Ground Forces," in David R. Jones, ed. Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual, Volume 4, 1980. (Gulf Breeze, Florida: Academic International Press, 1980), 76; and Richard A. Wolf, "Ground Forces," in David R. Jones, ed. Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual, Volume 5, 1981. (Gulf Breeze, Florida: Academic International Press, 1981), 71.

89This conclusion is based upon the evidence from Soviet sources in translation or the Western analysis of Soviet sources. Western writers engaged in a spirited debate over the sufficiency of US/NATO doctrine during this period and Soviet capabilities against it. Essentially, Western analysts were doing the calculations (primarily based on correlation of forces) for the Soviets and coming to very different conclusions. See for example: John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Soviets Can't Win Quickly in Central Europe," International Security. (Summer 1982): 36-39.

Mearsheimer concludes that the Soviets can't win quickly, and therefore, NATO's conventional deterrence will succeed. For the pessimistic view, see: Steven Canby, "The Alliance and Europe: Part IV, Military Doctrine and Technology," Adelphi Paper No. 109, (London: IISS, 1974/5): 10-11;

and, Eugene D. Betit, "Soviet Tactical Doctrine and Capabilities and NATO's Strategic Defense," Strategic Review, (Fall 1976): 96.

⁹⁰H. Wass de Czege & L.D. Holder, "The New FM 100-5." Military Review, (July 1982): 53.

⁹¹Lockwood, 152-155.

⁹²John Lewis Gaddis, The United States and the End of the Cold War: Implications, Reconsiderations, Provocations, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 121-125.

⁹³*Ibid.*, 125.

⁹⁴Ken Booth, "1931+50: It's Later Than We Think," in David R. Jones, ed. Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual, Volume 5, 1981. (Gulf Breeze, Florida: Academic International Press, 1981), 47.

⁹⁵Scott and Scott, Soviet Military Doctrine, 100-101.

⁹⁶Romjue, 33.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 67.

⁹⁸Wass de Czege and Holder, 55-56.

⁹⁹US Army, TRADOC Pam 525-5, "Military Operations: Operational Concepts for the AirLand Battle and Corps Operations--1986", (Fort Monroe: US Army Training and Doctrine Command, 25 March 1983), 2.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁰¹Wass de Czege and Holder, 55.

¹⁰²Romjue, 46-50.

¹⁰³Volobuyev, V. and N. Knikolayev. "AirLand Battle Concept Analyzed." Zarubezhnoye Voennoye Obozreniye (Foreign Military Observer). Moscow, July 10, 1984. Translated by Joint Publication Research Service, USSR Report: Military Affairs, Number UMA-85-003, National Technical Information Service, Springfield, Virginia, January 14, 1985: 7481.

¹⁰⁴Vasil'yev, G. "Questions of Operational Art in the U.S. Armed Forces." Zarubezhnoye Voennoye Obozreniye (Foreign Military Observer). Moscow, December 15, 1983. Translated by Joint Publication

Research Service, USSR Report: Military Affairs, Number UMA-84-022, National Technical Information Service, Springfield, Virginia, March 15, 1984: 27-33.

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106S. Sidorov, "Conducting Operations Using Conventional Weapons." Zarubezhnoye Voennoye Obozreniye (Foreign Military Observer). Moscow, January 10, 1986. Translated by Joint Publication Research Service, USSR Report: Military Affairs, Number UMA-86-030, (National Technical Information Service, Springfield, Virginia, June 12, 1986): 7-17.

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109Kent Lee, "Implementing Defensive Doctrine: The Role of Soviet Military Science," in Frank, Willard C. and Philip S. Gillette, eds. Soviet Military Doctrine from Lenin to Gorbachev, 1915-1991. (London: Greenwood Press, 1992), 276-277.

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