**Why Soviets Can’t Win Quickly in Central Europe**

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* **Balance of conventional forces:** 
  + Important, due to the strategic parity between NATO and Warsaw Pact.
  + What to do to counter perceived inferiority at the conventional level? Newyork times: neutron bomb.
  + NATO does not have the capability to win a conventional war, but NATO can deny the Soviets a quick victory and then turn the conflict into a lengthy war of attrition.
* **Aim:** Examine the Soviets prospects for effecting a blitzkrieg against NATO. 2 related issues:
  + Whether Soviets have the force structure, doctrine and the raw capability to implement this strategy?
  + When NATO’s defence capabilities and terrain considered, what are the prospects for Soviet success?

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* The balance of forces on the central front (figure from Robert Lucas Fischer, Defending the central front: The balance of forces, 1976): **Overall ratio of forces**
  + Pact has 57 divisions, NATO has 28. Pact has slightly more than 2:1 advantage.

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* + Number of divisions gives distorted view of the balance:
  + 2 other alternatives: Manpower and weaponry.
  + NATO: 414k: 564k:Pact, soviet advantage shrinks to 1.36:1
  + There is a category of “soldiers in fighting units”: soviets advantage is 1.2:1

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* + Weapons: pact advantage in tanks 2.5:1, in artillery 2.8:1,
    - not included qualitative differences within same category
    - problem pf comparing different categories (tank vs. rtillery)
    - DoD: system of weighing weapons: 3 principal chars take into account: mobility, survivability, firepower. Armoured division equivalents-ADE, pact has 1.2:1 advantage.

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* Reinforcement and mobilization:
  + Ratio of forces in any mobilization influenced by the time which side starts.
  + Simulteneaous: pact has adv 1.2:1 ADE, 1.36:1 MANPOWER
  + After pact mob: 2:1 pact adv.
  + Mobilization gap widens
* **Numbers and Strategy: the critical connection:** 
  + There are definite limits to the utility of measuring force levels.
  + Even a cursory study of military history would show that it is impossible to explain the outcome of many important military campaigns by simply comparing the numbers of forces each side.
  + Nevertheless, it is clear that if one side has an overwhelming advantage in forces, that glaring asymmetry is very likely to lead to a decisive victory.
  + In essence, large force will simply overwhelm the smaller onei ex: German-Poland, 1939
  + Soviets doesn’t have such an overwhelming advantage. Success depends not to nums here but to how they employ their forces. Success will be a function of strategy, not overwhelming nums. Success depend on the Sov cap to effect blitzkierg.

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* **Doctrine**
  + NATO forward defence: sov. Can mass the troops to the points of overwhelming force ratios to break the line. Pierce the front run through rear.

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* + 1945 offensive against Japanese army was blitzkierg, although attrition strategy could have better.

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* Soviet prospects for effecting a blitzkierg : 2 key question
  + Can sov achieve necessary force ratios on their main axes of advance?
  + If sov tear open front, can they exploit these opennings?
  + Impossible given the present balance of forces to achieve overwhelming force ratios. Pact 64 div, nato 32: soviets 6 axes

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* + It is usually assumed that to overwhelm the defense, an attacking force needs more than a 3:1 advantage in forces on the main axes of advance.
  + Hypothetical: Sov decides
    - 5:1, NATO 4 div/sector Pact 20 div gerek--->3 axis yapabilir.

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* + - 4:1, pact 16 div egerek , 4 axis
    - 6 axe karar veremez hacı, force ratio 2.5 :1 e düştü. Which hardly satisfactory in light of the widely recognized assumption that an attack requires more than a 3:! Advantage on each main axis to succeed.

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* **Force to space ratios:**
  + when examining the prospects of breakthrough at the main point of attack, focus only by balance of forces is not enough.
  + Consider also force to space ratios: num of div that the defendef requires to hold a specific sector of territory.
  + If a defender confortably defends 100km with 4 div, then even if the attacker has 24 div, that attacker will have to sacrifice a significant num of his 24 divisions before he finally wears the defender down to the point where he can effect a penetration.
  + Time consuming and costly
  + There is an important factor which complicates the attacker task in such a situation: the crossing the T phenomenon. There is not enough room for the attacker to place all of his 24 divisions at the point of attack. He will put in echelons.
  + In essence, the defender is in the enviable position of being able to deal with the attackers forces on a piecemeal basis.
  + 5 sov div to 2 us div. first sov has to put 3. Ratio drops to 3:2

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* Sov cap for blitzkierg warfare
  + Force structure
  + Doctrine
  + Skill
* There is an inverse relationship between the mass and the velocity of an attacking force. As the size of the attacking force increases, logistics and c2 decrease. Difficult to blitzkierg.

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* Training and initiative:
  + Blitzkierg reqs highly flexible c2 and officers,ncos. In blitzkierg success is ultimately a consequence of able commanders making rapid-fire decisions in the “fog of battle”.
  + Success will be largely the result of highly skilled officers and ncos making the decisions that will enable the armoured spearheads to outrun nato’s defense .
* Conclusion:
  + If our American fighting men ever conclude that high levels of this government have them deployed on a strategy that is inevitable failure, then nothing could destroy military morale of our country quicker, senator sam nunn, 1977