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EXECUTIVE BRIEF

**Implications of the Soviet Transfer of Military Equipment
From the ATTU Zone to East of the Urals**

- Since beginning their unilateral reductions in January 1989, the Soviets have transferred a large amount of CFE-accountable equipment from the Atlantic to the Urals (ATTU) zone to sites east of the Urals. Included have been thousands of tanks and artillery pieces and hundreds of armored combat vehicles and aircraft.
- The transfers enable the Soviet Union to avoid destroying billions of dollars' worth of equipment in excess of proposed CFE Treaty limits while preserving substantial force generation potential.
- Some of this materiel has been used to upgrade units east of the Urals. The rest is currently in storage, where it constitutes a substantial reserve of equipment that could be used to replace combat losses, flesh out skeleton units, or help equip new units.
- As currently configured, the reserve stocks could not be mobilized rapidly to support theater operations against NATO. But they could significantly shorten a force generation process that otherwise would require years of industrial surge.

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Equipment Moving Eastward

Since the beginning of 1989, thousands of tanks and artillery pieces and hundreds of armored combat vehicles (ACVs) and aircraft have been transferred from the ATTU zone to Soviet reserve depots east of the Urals, outside the region of application of a treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). In addition, tanks, artillery, and ACVs from the ATTU zone are being used to upgrade equipment in units in the Turkestan, Siberian, and Volga/Ural Military Districts, all east of the Urals.

Not all of the equipment being shipped eastward would be accountable under CFE. But up to 7,700 tanks, 13,400 artillery pieces, and several hundred armored combat vehicles and aircraft that would be subject to destruction under CFE had they remained in the ATTU zone have been added to depots and units east of the Urals. The tanks are relatively modern T-64 and T-72 models, but most of the other equipment is of older vintage.

Thousands of additional pieces of equipment accountable under CFE are "missing" from the ATTU zone and probably also have been transferred east of the Urals. Much of this equipment may be in covered storage.



Possible Soviet Motives

The equipment being transferred east of the Urals is worth billions of dollars. Avoiding needless destruction of that much equipment is probably important to the Soviet military and, therefore, to Gorbachev during this tricky period in his relations with the high command.

The Soviets save considerable effort and money in the short run -- disposing of that much military equipment would be neither easy nor cheap. More important, they save the cost and time of producing replacements if they should need such equipment in the future.

As currently configured, the equipment stored east of the Urals could not be rapidly mobilized . . .

Meanwhile, some of the equipment newly arrived from the ATTU zone is being used to upgrade existing but poorly equipped Soviet units east of the Urals. The rest constitutes a substantial reserve that could serve as a source of materiel to replenish combat losses, to equip units in the ATTU zone that do not have a full complement of treaty-limited equipment, or to help equip new units formed east of the Urals.

The Soviets have not indicated and we do not know what they intend to do with the equipment being shipped eastward. Moving it out of the ATTU zone now lets them defer their decision until after a CFE treaty has been signed and force requirements -- both inside and outside the ATTU zone -- have been determined.

**Treaty-Limited Equipment
That Has Appeared East of the Urals
Since 1 January 1989**

	Into Depots	Into Units	Totals
Tanks	up to 6,000	up to 1,700	up to 7,700
Artillery	up to 12,000	up to 1,400	up to 13,400

Note: several thousand additional treaty-limited items have been removed from locations in the ATTU zone and probably transferred to the east.

Military Significance

The military significance of these transfers will depend on the eventual disposition and intended utilization of the equipment. It should be noted, though, that the equipment will gradually become obsolescent -- hence less threatening -- unless it is modernized. We judge that unlikely in light of Soviet economic trends.

While most of the equipment remains in storage east of the Urals, it could not be rapidly mobilized for use in theater operations against NATO in a post-CFE environment.

Nevertheless, preserving this equipment helps the Soviets maintain a substantial force generation potential. Having these reserve stocks available could significantly shorten a force generation process that would otherwise require years of industrial surge.

Can We Prove It?

The combined effects of withdrawal, reorganization, restructuring, modernization, disbandment, and destruction and transfers of equipment have led to turmoil in the Soviet theater forces. Consequently, we can rarely document specific transfers of equipment.

In some cases we can demonstrate that equipment showing up east of the Urals has been transferred from the ATTU zone. Before the buildup, for example, there were no T-64 tanks outside the ATTU zone, so those now east of the Urals must have come from there.

It is harder to show that all the other equipment came from the ATTU zone. Nevertheless, the overall trend is clear: many thousands of tanks, artillery pieces, and ACVs have been disappearing from the ATTU zone, while roughly equivalent quantities of similar equipment have been showing up east of the Urals.