Now it is true that international migration is not an important factor for the Soviet Union, though it has been so at times for tsarist Russia. But there can hardly be any doubt that migration would help to solve some of China’s economic problems, and if directed towards the Soviet Union it might also help in the development of that country’s Far Eastern areas.81

In proceeding on the assumption that differing rates of population growth may be relevant to the relative power positions of the nations concerned, I should perhaps emphasize that I am not thereby attributing any very definite importance to military manpower as such. In the age of mutual assured destruction, mere numbers may be of limited value, if not obsolescent. Insofar as they are not, the Soviet bloc seems to have them for all relevant purposes. For much of the 1950’s and 1960’s the tendency seems to have been to reduce numbers in the Soviet armed forces.82 While this undoubtedly reflected Khrushchev’s personal views as well as extreme shortages of young manpower as the depleted World War II birth cohorts entered workforce and military age, it was surely of some significance that the decision was taken to prefer economic to military use of the available manpower reserves. And when the need seemed to arise, in the late 1960’s, the Soviet Union was able to quickly raise its forces (including manpower) on the Eastern border to such effect that the Chinese shortly thereafter felt constrained to seek new and powerful friends. In any case, projections indicate (rather surprisingly) that Soviet prime-age military manpower will go on increasing until 1984,83 by which time manpower as such may be even less important in the military context; whereas in

82. Cf. the table presented in Feshbach and Rapawy, pp. 520-521.
the case of the economy, Western experience would suggest that technological advance as such quite definitely does not reduce the demand for labor.

The military-strategic aspects of population growth are both highly technical and problematical. For both reasons I would prefer to couch the discussion in more general terms. In an age of mutual deterrence, margins of overkill may not be of inherent strategic importance; but because of their psychological impact, it is often argued, they may seem so, and therefore become so. Similarly, though it may be difficult to foresee in what way differential densities, magnitudes or rates of growth of population might affect the outcome of any armed conflict between, say, the USSR and China, it is clear that they are likely to be felt to be of importance, if the numbers involved are large.

Extremes in population growth may also cause or contribute to changes in relative economic potential if trends are maintained over a period of time. While rapid population growth is held to be an obstacle to economic development, it is evident, for example, that if, say, by 2025, East Germany is still languishing* at its 1946 level of 18 million while Poland has increased its population from 23 million to 50 million, there is likely to have been a shift in their relative economic weight in favor of the latter that is at least partly due to the manpower factor.

The size of a country's population is in any case an important element in determining relative prestige. And this is an element which makes itself clearly felt in demographic writing at all levels throughout the socialist bloc. Where other forms of national expression are inhibited, Olympic Gold Medals or census results may acquire an even greater significance. And though the Soviet Union and Soviet Russia have relatively greater outlets for nationalism, they too are susceptible to the prestige aspect of population growth.

Finally, in the case of the relationship between the Soviet Union and China (if not Japan), there is the question of whether population pressures building up in one country are not bound sooner or later to spill over into another, thereby unleashing political or military conflict. Here again we are dealing with what are ultimately still imponderables, though ones about which a great deal has been and no doubt will be written.

Having drawn these blurry guidelines, it remains to consider the Soviet Union's position in terms of them. It seems clear, to begin with, that population trends as between the Soviet Union and either Eastern Europe or the West are unlikely to exert much influence on the course of events in the immediate future. The demographic strength of the Moldavians is obviously not irrelevant to the future of Romanian-Soviet relations. Some Poles may feel an important moment has been reached if and when they overtake (numerically) the Ukrainians. As the number of home-born Poles grows in the Western Territories, the hopes of German reunsche grow perhaps ever slimmer.

*A ZPG advocate might say a more appropriate word than "languishing" would be "flourishing." Here as elsewhere in this essay, however, I would prefer to avoid discussion or criticism in terms of the possible effects of population growth of current East European dimensions on pollution, resource exhaustion, etc. I am doing so partly because these arguments remain for the present somewhat problematical; and partly because they are virtually never raised by socialist economic or political demography.