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File Folder [USSR:] MEMORANDA TO THE PRESIDENT FROM
ROBERT C. MCFARLANE (2)

FOIA

1997-066/13

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NLRR F97-D6d13 #23146

BY RUJ NAR DATE 11/4/10

THE SOVIET UNION AND WESTERN EUROPE

Image-building

Image and style play a major role in Soviet relations with Western Europe. In his public appearances Gorbachev has gone to considerable lengths to stress Moscow's commitment to peaceful coexistence and arms control. His remarks on relations with Western Europe have portrayed the Soviet Union--in contrast to the US--as a historical and geographic member of the community of Europe, and have encouraged pan-European approaches to East-West problems.

An equally important dimension of Moscow's image-building in Europe, however, emphasizes the USSR's strength and resolve. The Soviets like to take advantage of opportunities to remind the West of its vulnerabilities at the same time they tout their interest in preserving the status quo in Europe. This dual approach is illustrated by Soviet efforts gradually to erode Western rights in Berlin while keeping individual issues below the crisis threshold.

When a crisis did develop, however--the killing of Major Nicholson--Gorbachev demonstrated clearly that his interest in improving ties with Western Europe would not deter the tough side of the Soviet image. The Soviets stubbornly denied any responsibility in the affair, despite the risk of undermining efforts to promote their sincerity in resolving European security issues.

Cultivating The Left

The Soviets have placed a high priority on building support within the European left, particularly on security issues. In this regard, although the Soviet Union neither started nor controls the West European peace movement, it has skillfully exploited it by providing propaganda support and some organizational and financial support via Communist parties and covert activities. At present, the peace groups are in disarray in the wake of NATO's success in following through with INF deployments, and have grown increasingly wary of Soviet meddling in the movement. Moscow has attempted to revitalize the movement around the SDI issue, but has thus far been largely unsuccessful in arousing the peace activists.

Moscow's prospects for ties with other elements of the European left appear brighter. European socialists are for the most part sympathetic to the Soviet position on SDI, and Gorbachev's meeting with SPD leader Brandt suggests that Moscow may seek to nurture ties with other Western European socialist parties.

Moscow's most promising opportunity for improving influence with the left, however, is provided by the decline of Eurocommunist parties, which have criticized Soviet foreign policy in the past.

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The French Communist party has reverted to a pro-Soviet stance, and the split in the Spanish Communist party has rendered the Eurocommunist faction ineffective. In Italy, where Communists have recently suffered a poor showing at the polls, the traditional Eurocommunist party leadership may be willing to take some steps toward patching up their rift with Moscow in order to bolster their party's status. If Gorbachev is able to project a more benign image in foreign policy, and if he continues already visible efforts to promote better inter-party relations, the Soviets will improve their prospects for European Communist support on security issues and for assistance in mounting future disarmament campaigns.

Special Bilateral Relationships

In their efforts to divide the West the Soviets have historically sought to establish privileged dialogues with certain West European states. The French have long had a special relationship with the USSR, which Moscow nurtures in an effort to encourage Paris' independence from NATO. Gorbachev's first visit to the West as General Secretary was to Paris this October.

Moscow's special relationship with France underwent serious strain as a result of President Mitterrand's tough line toward the Soviets, but in past months Moscow has moved to improve contacts at various levels. The Soviets probably believe they can capitalize on French criticism of SDI and recent signs that Mitterrand will stress French independence in Western councils to bolster his declining popularity.

Various contacts between Moscow and Rome and reporting from Prime Minister Craxi's recent visit to Moscow strongly suggest that Gorbachev also views Italy as an important country for improved ties. Gorbachev's motives in targeting the Italians are unclear. Soviet remarks directed at Italy have repeatedly raised the problems that COCOM restrictions cause for the expansion of already sizable Soviet-Italian trade. The Soviets may believe that Italy's economic problems provide an opportunity to undercut Western unity on high-technology restrictions by tempting Rome with improved trade.

In the first months of Gorbachev's tenure there were signs that Moscow was reconsidering its hard-line policy toward the FRG, and that the new leadership realized its harsh propaganda and attempts to isolate West Germany were at best ineffective, and at worst counterproductive, in their impact on the Kohl government's domestic support. Now, however, it appears Gorbachev will be continuing Moscow's policy of isolating West Germany, even as it improves ties with other West European governments. As in the INF campaign, Bonn has been the chief target of Soviet criticism for its support of SDI. Moscow has used favorable West German statements on SDI research to paint the Kohl government as Washington's stooge. Indeed, Soviet anti-German statements since Gorbachev's accession have placed renewed emphasis on claims that Bonn far exceeds its West European neighbors in its willingness to knuckle under to the United States.

Nonetheless, it seems clear from SPD leader Brandt's recent visit to Moscow that Gorbachev is as interested as his predecessors in maintaining a privileged dialogue with the SPD. Moreover, recent SPD electoral successes may have persuaded the Soviets that Kohl is vulnerable. Although Moscow is likely to try to avoid overt attempts to manipulate German politics--which have backfired in the past--it may have decided to hold off any improvement in Soviet-West German relations until after the 1987 federal elections.

Economic Ties

Moscow has been successful in building substantial economic ties with Western Europe, touting its reliability as a trading partner (in alleged contrast to the US) and capitalizing on differences among the Allies in their enthusiasm for strict controls on technology. Since West European trade has helped to satisfy one of Moscow's key security objectives--the acquisition of high technology--the Soviets have attempted to insulate their commercial ties from even the most vehement conflicts over political or security issues. This is most apparent in their economic ties with West Germany. Although they have occasionally threatened to tie economic relations to Bonn's stand on security issues, they have proven unwilling to sacrifice the benefits of trade with the FRG--even during the height of the anti-INF campaign.

In the energy field, the USSR has substantially increased its hard-currency earnings from sales of oil and gas to Western Europe since the mid-1970s, when the West Europeans first turned to the USSR to diversify their energy sources (see chart). The Soviets and West Europeans have undertaken a number of large joint projects, of which the most notable is the Siberia-to-West Europe natural gas pipeline. Contracts on these projects often call for future delivery of gas and oil from the Soviets in return for advance sales of Western equipment or technology.

Arms Control and SDI

During NATO discussion of the neutron bomb issue and INF negotiations, the Soviets conducted a major campaign to exert pressure on the US to make concessions. With the start of INF deployments Moscow probably believes that it lost a major battle on disarmament, but is still far from losing the war. The Soviets probably believe they have reason to take comfort in how close they came to preventing deployments and the extent of the pressure which was brought to bear on NATO governments. Indeed, the final Dutch decision on INF deployment has yet to be made, and while the Soviets do not appear willing to make major concessions to prevent the deployment of 48 more cruise missiles, they no doubt will continue to apply propaganda and diplomatic pressure in an effort to achieve at least a symbolic victory in the Netherlands.

Although the Soviets undoubtedly see further opportunities to exploit European concerns over INF, they have shifted their efforts toward encouraging West European concerns over a space arms

race. Since spring of last year, the Soviets have conducted a major campaign to encourage public and governmental opposition to SDI by claiming that Washington's plans undermine the ABM Treaty and threaten all prospects for US-Soviet arms control. Moreover, Moscow has sought to fan suspicion in Western Europe that SDI is really aimed at defending the continental US, and that the US is seeking unilateral security at the expense of its allies.

A major theme of the Soviet campaign has been to decry the sincerity of the US commitment to the Geneva talks. By holding progress on INF and strategic weapons hostage to progress on space weapons, Moscow no doubt hopes to bring pressure on SDI from Washington's NATO Allies.

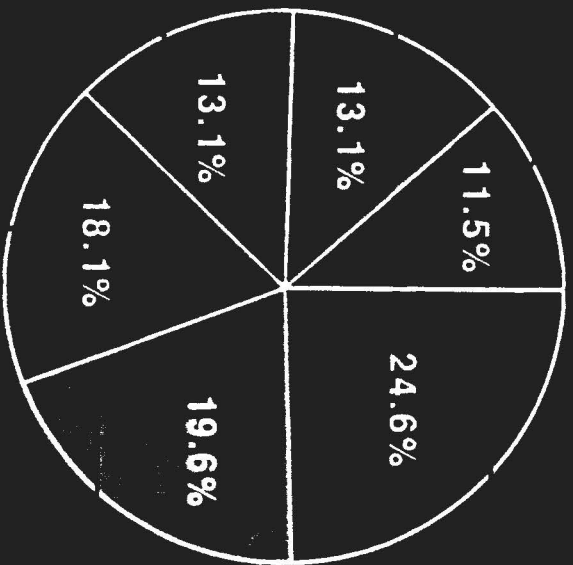
Apart from the Geneva talks, Moscow has sought to engage the West Europeans in a variety of arms control forums, with the underlying objectives of accentuating the differences between US and West European perspectives on strategic security issues and cultivating a European security dialogue that diminishes the US role. The Soviets returned to the MBFR negotiations in 1984 despite their walkout at START and the INF talks, and placed propaganda emphasis on their participation in the newly established Conference on Disarmament in Europe. They have tabled draft treaties at both forums in attempts to appear forthcoming. Their proposals offer little substantive progress and are clearly an effort to capitalize on the Allies' interest in less stringent accords than the United States would accept--thereby putting the onus for lack of progress on Washington. In this same vein, the Soviet Union calls for US pledges of no first use of nuclear weapons and periodically proposes nuclear-weapons-free zones.

Moscow will use its full range of tactics in the months ahead to try to exploit differences within NATO on arms control. It clearly would like to reinvigorate the West European peace movement, and has launched a "broad front" strategy, dropping the traditional Soviet demand that peace groups give unerring support to the Soviet policy line. The Soviets now are encouraging their supporters to form broad political coalitions, even if some elements criticize the USSR. Such efforts may foreshadow a major diplomatic and propaganda offensive against US arms control policies and targeted to coincide with the Dutch INF deployment decision, the US decision on continued observance of SALT II restrictions, and the President's meeting with Gorbachev--all scheduled for November.

Prepared by:


CIA

Soviet Energy Imports from Western Europe, 1984



	Million Rubles	Million US \$*
France	12	15
Netherlands	10	12
West Germany	9	11
Italy	7	8
Finland	7	8
Other	6	7

* Soviet Trade Statistics do not acknowledge any energy imports from Western Europe in 1984. However, the Oil and Gas Statistics (produced by OPEC/IEA) indicates quantities of oil imported by the USSR, they have been converted into value terms at \$30/ bbl. The total was converted into rubles at the rate of 1R = \$1.23. Data are not available for other forms of energy, although they probably would be negligible anyway.

* includes Austria, Belgium, Greece, Spain, and Sweden.

Soviet Energy Exports^a to Western Europe, 1984



	Million Rubles ^b	Million US \$ ^c
West Germany	4,059	4,993
Italy	2,917	3,588
France	2,267	2,788
Finland ^d	2,034	2,502
Netherlands	1,494	1,838
Other ^e	3,943	4,851

^a Includes oil, gas, coal, peat, electric power, and nuclear power

^b Source: Soviet Foreign Trade Statistical Handbook, 1984.

^c The dollar figures were calculated using a foreign exchange conversion at the rate of \$ 1.23 per ruble.

^d The Soviets do not receive hard currency from Finland in return for energy exports.

^e Includes Austria, Belgium, Greece, Denmark, Spain, Norway, Switzerland, Sweden, Portugal, UK, and Turkey

Soviet Energy Exports^a to Western Europe, 1984



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Italy	2,917	3,588
France	2,267	2,788
Finland ^d	2,034	2,502
Netherlands	1,494	1,838
Other ^e	3,943	4,851
Total	16,714	20,560

^a Includes oil, gas, coal, peat, electric power, and nuclear power.

^b Source: Soviet Foreign Trade Statistical Handbook, 1984.

^c The dollar figures were calculated using a foreign exchange conversion at the rate of \$1.23 per ruble.

^d The Soviets do not receive hard currency from Finland in return for energy exports.

^e Includes Austria, Belgium, Greece, Denmark, Spain, Norway, Switzerland, Sweden, Portugal, UK, and Turkey.

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The Sino-Soviet relationship is beset by suspicions and obstacles, but nevertheless has altered significantly in recent years. Trade has grown steadily; new consulates and border crossings are to be opened; a wide range of cultural, sports, and official exchanges has been instituted; the foreign ministers now routinely meet at the UNGA in New York and will begin to exchange formal visits. However, mutual trust has not been created and the two countries still confront each other across a long, heavily militarized border.

Background

The Sino-Soviet alliance forged in 1950 did not long survive Stalin. By the end of the decade, bitter disputes had erupted over Chinese risk-taking against the US (in the Taiwan strait), over ideology, and over Khrushchev's de-Stalinization program. By 1963, the USSR and China broke openly over the Soviets' agreeing to a test-ban treaty with the US. The major armed clashes between Soviet and Chinese units on the Ussuri border in 1969 contributed directly to China's responsiveness to US overtures during the 1970s.

Whatever nostalgia for the alliance of the '50s may remain, years of animosity have left Moscow abidingly suspicious of China. For the Soviet leadership, China ranks, after the United States, as the major strategic threat. As such, it is also, after the United States, the major Soviet political target. Moscow pursues detente tactics vis-a-vis Beijing in the same way that it does with the US, as part of a politically motivated adversary relationship.

--Military Issues. The China threat is particularly relevant to Soviet military leaders, who tend in any event to think in terms of worst-case scenarios. Some may even see China as the primary threat because it borders on the USSR and because its command and control appear much less stable than those of the US and NATO. Evidence to that end is the fact that the USSR directs roughly equal strategic intelligence efforts against both China and the US, despite the tremendous gap in the real threat each represents.

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BY RW NARA DATE 6-17-10

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--Ideology. Within the limits set by history and threat perception, Soviet China watchers nevertheless consider China a socialist country, albeit one that has seriously strayed from the proper path (that China is socialist was publicly conceded by Brezhnev and has been repeated by each subsequent General Secretary). Most of these observers believe that because of its socialism, China has a residual susceptibility to Soviet influence, and Soviet example and technology have special relevance for China. They are likely to interpret signs of factionalism in the Chinese leadership as evidence of the existence of pro-Soviet elements favoring a more orthodox form of socialism.

Soviet Approaches

--Tactics. In bilateral dealings with China, the Soviets have tended toward incremental tactics, hoping that small steps toward increased trade, cultural and other exchanges will encourage the putative pro-Soviet groups in China and be interpreted internationally as evidence that the barriers between the two countries are breaking down. Moscow calculates that an accumulation of these small steps will undermine Chinese hostility and that this will impact on the US, Japan, and other western countries inclined to support China.

--Strategy. This approach then is to lead eventually to a sidelining of the basic strategic issues Beijing cites as the "three obstacles" to normalized relations: the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Soviet support of the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, and the USSR military build-up in Mongolia and along the Sino-Soviet border.

--Third World Competition. Early in the dispute, Moscow sought to compete head-on with China in every arena, particularly in the third world. Aid programs, for example, were structured in part for their effect in countering Chinese aid offers. In recent years, both sides have been selecting their targets more carefully, without trying to compete everywhere. For the USSR this has meant focusing attention on key Asian countries such as North Korea, Vietnam, and Cambodia. But the fact that Moscow views its relations with these countries as an element in its management of the China problem complicates efforts to reduce tension or resolve disputes with China.

--Diplomacy. An added complication is the fact that Moscow prefers patience in diplomacy to premature concessions and is under no immediate pressure to settle with Beijing. It therefore addresses the "three obstacles" only peripherally.

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Soviet support of the UN-sponsored indirect negotiating process for Afghanistan and of Hanoi's pretensions to "negotiating flexibility" in regard to Cambodia have no doubt been called to Beijing's attention. As for the Sino-Soviet border itself, Moscow's flexibility is limited by military priorities. It has proposed discussion of confidence-building measures and of the border itself, along lines utilized in the European Helsinki talks, but given no hint of being prepared for any meaningful force reduction.

Coloring the entire Soviet approach is a deep-rooted suspicion of China's potential for alignment with Japan, South Korea, the US and/or NATO. Moscow has welcomed the recent restraint of both China and the US in not talking publicly about a strategic alignment, but still fears this may be an ultimate and secret aim. Even if China were to drop its insistence on one or another of the "obstacles", the Soviets might themselves reintroduce at least Afghanistan and possibly Cambodia, because of Chinese assistance to what Moscow sees as pro-Western resistance forces in those countries.

Calculated Progression

Despite the obstacles, there has been some progress in the relationship in recent years. Trade is scheduled to total nearly \$15 billion through 1990, a doubling of the current annual rate. (The five-year total is however roughly equal only to last year's PRC trade with Japan.) Negotiations are underway to open consulates in Shanghai and Leningrad and several new border crossings. China and the USSR now have institutionalized semi-annual consultations at the deputy foreign minister level; the foreign ministers meet routinely at the UN General Assembly and have agreed to exchange formal visits; and there is to be a continuing exchange of visits by Deputy Premiers. This year, for the first time in decades, a Soviet trade union delegation and a parliamentary group visited China. We expect this slow process of detente will continue for the foreseeable future, without ever quite reaching the point the two sides describe as "normalization of relations".

A fairly dramatic move, such as an agreement for confidence-building measures along the border or even resolution of a part of the border dispute itself can nevertheless not be ruled out. Following this year's resumption of trade union ties, possible low-level Chinese attendance at next February's Soviet party congress would be a step toward a "restoration" of party ties. Such gestures would be designed in part for their impact upon the US, each side trying to gain leverage there through a threat of improved relations.

Prepared by:
P.W. Colm
Department of State



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NLRR 108-135/1 #23148

RW NARA DATE 6/17/70

THE SOVIETS IN THE THIRD WORLD

Soviet interest in the developing world dates to the early years of the Bolshevik regime when Lenin and his adherents envisaged communist revolutions freeing the region from colonial domination. Preoccupation with domestic affairs in the 1920s and 1930s confined active Soviet promotion of revolutions to propaganda incitement and subversion, and it was not until the mid-1950s that Moscow began exploiting opportunities for influence in the developing areas systematically as state policy.

Those efforts have since paid off in a vastly expanded material and physical presence and in a network of political/military alliances. Even though the record is also marked by setbacks and outright failures, the Kremlin continues to view the third world as important in the long-term pursuit of its global ambitions. Soviet decisiveness in capitalizing on Portugal's withdrawal from its colonial empire and the overthrow of the Ethiopian monarchy in the 1970's graphically testify to this perception.

Priority and Methods

While Moscow has long been sensitive to developments in areas close to Soviet borders, Soviet efforts to cultivate clients in the third world have not been limited to any region; rather, the search for opportunities is global. Major Soviet programs have been as far flung as the Caribbean, the Middle East, and South Asia. Development of Soviet ties with regional states tends to follow a consistent pattern. The USSR works to:

- develop economic, commercial and cultural ties and translate the influence they afford into political support for Soviet programs, interests, and policies internationally;
- protect, consolidate and expand whatever assets they have or can develop in client states;
- obtain or expand access to military and naval facilities and/or deny such assets to the West, and
- assiduously cultivate elements sympathetic to the Soviet Union with a view to their eventual coming to power locally.

While ideology takes second place to political pragmatism here, it nevertheless colors the entire Soviet approach. Moscow consistently cultivates a broad spectrum of left-oriented groups -- not just local communists -- to develop a broad base of influence capable of weathering local transitions of power. The USSR has in the past extended generous military aid to "progressive" regimes in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, all of which openly persecuted local communist parties. And even while expanding ties with nonaligned states such as Jordan, Kuwait, Nigeria, Argentina, and Peru, none

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of which regularly supports Soviet diplomatic positions, the USSR simultaneously cultivates the leftist elements in those countries.

Surrogates also play a large role, not only as channels for shipment of arms and assistance, but also in providing ground forces in special situations. Intervention by such intermediaries offers the advantages of less risk of confrontation between the superpowers, greater acceptance by the local population, and less stigma of Soviet involvement. The Cubans have been key players in this context. The 20,000 to 30,000 Cuban troops that have been in Angola for 10 years have protected the Soviet political/military investment there. The injection of Cuban combat troops to bring a pro-Soviet regime to power in Angola, and later to save one in Ethiopia, was a bold new departure at that time. Its success may well have been a factor in the decision a few years later to invade Afghanistan.

Arms Largesse

Moscow's main entree into the third world has been through military aid. Because of its continuing high rates of military production and its large backlog of war materiel in reserve units, the USSR is uniquely able to offer large amounts of new or late-model used weaponry. Arms aid also creates a continuing dependence on Soviet equipment, spare parts, and advisers which may long outlast the original client-patron relations (e.g., Egypt). In some circumstances, arms agreements foster cooperation in political and diplomatic areas as well. Arms sales now account for as much as two-thirds of total Soviet exports to the non-communist third world and also bring in some \$7-\$8 billion a year in much-needed hard currency. (The third world arms market, however, has softened significantly for all sellers in the last three years. Soviet arms revenues have declined sharply since 1982, and indications are that they will slide still further unless the USSR lowers prices and liberalizes financial terms.)

Most Soviet arms have gone to the Middle East and North Africa and now include sophisticated weapons systems. The Soviets have delivered over \$4 billion in arms to Syria since the summer of 1982 to offset losses sustained by Damascus in its confrontation with Israel at that time. Other top customers are Libya (agreements of nearly \$15 billion since 1970, with deliveries of over \$2 billion in 1982-84); India (agreements of nearly \$12 billion since 1960, with deliveries of over \$2 billion in 1982-84); Angola (agreements of \$3 billion in 1982-84 and deliveries of nearly \$2 billion); Ethiopia (nearly \$2 billion since 1981, with over half delivered). The Soviets also provide an extensive advisory and technical presence in Africa and the Middle East, as well as more modest numbers to Latin America (Peru, Nicaragua), and are currently training more than 50,000 third world students in the USSR.

Economic Pragmatism

In contrast to military largesse, Soviet economic aid is on a far smaller scale. After the big, indiscriminate splurge of the late 1950's/early 1960's, it is now down to a considerably reduced level,

structured for maximum exposure with minimal input and designed to survive political shifts, yet to be competitive with western donors. Less than 1/10 of 1 percent of Soviet GNP goes into the effort.

Given its limited commitment of resources, the USSR prefers to concentrate on big, noticeable projects bedded in a long-term development format, and to tie the venture to purchase of Soviet equipment. Its programs have generated a sizeable expansion of Soviet-third world trade as well as expanded markets for Soviet capital goods. And the USSR gets a healthy hard-currency return for its technical services as well, such as for training technicians.

On balance, however, the Soviet record on economic aid has been poor. Even if they had the will, the Soviets do not have a broad range of quality goods to compete in this area with the developed countries of the west. They account for less than three percent of all international aid flowing to non-communist regimes. Local disillusionment with the Soviets as partners in economic development is likely to remain the major impediment to Moscow's future influence in the third world. This, combined with the Soviet reputation for heavy-handed interference in the affairs of many clients, has encouraged many LDC leaders to be wary of too close entanglement with Moscow.

Soviet Clients and Conterinsurgencies

Several of Moscow's third world clients now face insurgencies which force the Soviets to greater efforts to protect the investments already made. In Angola, the UNITA movement now controls roughly one-third of the country and poses a continuing threat to the Soviet-backed MPLA regime. Mengistu's regime in Ethiopia is challenged by insurgent groups in Eritrea, Tigre and the Ogaden. In Afghanistan, five years of Soviet military campaigns have failed to subdue the mujahidin. Opposition to the Sandinistas poses a growing problem for Nicaragua's regime. All these insurgencies have led to increasing demands on Moscow for more military/economic aid.

The variety, intensity, and persistence of these insurgencies suggest that the USSR has no ready solution to the problem. It will probably have to devote even more resources in the next few years to defending its clients against domestic challenges. And if these insurgencies show signs of succeeding, the Soviets will be faced with the choice of upping their already heavy commitments or seeing their clients overthrown.

The Soviet Alternative

The Soviet friendship treaties signed since 1971 with the non-communist world -- Iraq, South Yemen, Syria, Angola, Congo, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Afghanistan, and India -- codify Moscow's growing web of third world ties. (The Soviets also have a similar treaty with Vietnam. The treaties with Egypt and Somalia, agreed upon in 1971 and 1974 respectively, were subsequently abrogated.) While most of these agreements imply some Soviet commitment to the security of the signatory country, the ambiguous formulas do not bind the

Soviets to act in critical circumstances. For the USSR, however, the treaties have symbolic value as a formalization of their presence in the third world.

Nevertheless, the treaties do not necessarily translate into greater Soviet influence. Once a regime's fundamental security needs are satisfied and the USSR fails to provide the economic aid needed by the new regime, the attraction of the Soviet model tends to wear thin. Moscow has discovered that no gains in the third world can be counted permanent since they depend on being able to remain identified with a client's interests indefinitely, and on the client's remaining forever convinced of the advantage of Soviet patronage. Even a substantial physical presence has not guaranteed the USSR lasting gains--witness the history of Soviet-Egyptian relations.

One enduring example of third world reluctance to identify closely with the strategic goals of the USSR is the continuing aversion to the Soviet scheme for an Asian collective security arrangement. When Brezhnev first proposed it in the late 1960s, he had no takers outside the communist bloc. Moscow has met with a similar response in its recent version of the scheme, floated again during Indian Prime Minister Gandhi's visit to Moscow.

Prospects

The question arises whether the Soviets are prepared to content themselves with gains already achieved, acquiesce in reverses suffered, or expand their third-world role indefinitely. Certainly they have taken fewer initiatives to project Soviet power in the last several years, concentrating rather on consolidating existing gains. On the other hand, the types of opportunity plentiful in the mid-to-late 1970's have not been available either. Presumably the growing cost of maintaining key clients is also a factor in Soviet calculations. There is, however, no sign that the USSR is scaling back on commitments nor any evidence of a deliberate shift intended to reduce East-West tensions over regional problems. At most, Moscow is advising clients to preserve ties with possible Western aid donors while still pursuing and expanding those with the USSR.

There are also limits on Soviet prospects imposed by evolution within the third world itself. The area's ideological fascination with Marxism, socialism, or leftist theories has not over time translated easily into an identity of view with Moscow or sympathy with Soviet institutions. Indeed, greater third-world exposure to the realities of the USSR and socialism has definitely not worked to Moscow's advantage. The growth of self-confidence within the LDCs (the Islamic and oil/mineral rich states in particular) now manifests itself in a less deferential attitude toward not only the Soviet but all foreign models. And the blatant Afghanistan example of what "disinterested fraternal assistance" can mean is plain to all third-world states. In short, the kind of lasting "organic" relationships with the third world, made up of interwoven benefits

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and dependencies, shared cultural values, and open communications seem beyond the reach of the Soviet Union of this generation. But that, of course, will never stop the Soviets from trying.

Prepared by:
I. Kulski
Department of State

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file: Casimir
8483

DECLASSIFIED THE WHITE HOUSE
White House Guidelines, August 28, 1997 WASHINGTON
By COB NARA, Date 7/1/06

Received
OCT 29 11 11 20

October 28, 1985

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ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: ROBERT C. MCFARLANE *RCM*

SUBJECT: Study on U.S. - Soviet summits, 1972-1979

Issue

Whether to review the attached overview of U.S. - Soviet summits.

Facts

The State Department's Office of the Historian has prepared an in-depth study of U.S. - Soviet summit meetings from 1972-1979.

Discussion

As we approach your November meeting with Gorbachev I think it would be useful to review the attached summary of the State Department's summit study.

Recommendation

OK No

_____ _____ That you review the attached summary of summits since 1972.

Attachment

Tab A "Overview" section of State Department summit study.

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cc Vice President

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UNITED STATES-SOVIET SUMMITS, 1972-1979:
AN OVERVIEW

Between 1972 and 1979, United States and Soviet leaders held six summit meetings. President Nixon's three summits with Soviet General Secretary Leonid I. Brezhnev (Moscow, May 22-30, 1972; Washington, June 18-25, 1973; and Moscow, June 28-July 3, 1974) were of longer duration than the others and included extensive side trips, photo opportunities, and ceremonial aspects. A programmed informality characterized these meetings, with occasions for the two leaders to socialize in a relaxed setting.

President Ford's two summits with Brezhnev (Vladivostok, November 23-24, 1974; and Helsinki, July 30 and August 2, 1975) were arranged in response to specific circumstances--Ford's assumption of the presidency and the signing of the Helsinki Accords. Hence, they were shorter, less ceremonial, involved less socializing, and dealt with fewer issues than the previous three summits.

President Carter's summit with Brezhnev (Vienna, June 15-18, 1979) was more formal in tone than the other summits. There were opportunities for informal conversation between the two leaders at the introductory session, short luncheons and dinners, and an evening at the opera, but none in a casual setting. Most business was conducted in plenary session; Carter and Brezhnev met privately only once. The discussions were substantively wide-ranging, but Brezhnev's failing health limited the length of the sessions.

In all cases, U.S. officials anticipated constructive but limited achievements from the summits. Conscious efforts were made to insure there would be positive results from the meetings that would enhance the President's image as a world leader and build support for his policies. Extensive U.S.-Soviet negotiations preceded all six meetings, not only to set the agenda and negotiate a joint communique, but also to narrow and reconcile differences on substantive issues so that specific agreements could be announced at the summit.

Arms control was the dominant issue discussed at all the summits. Summit consideration supplemented and crystallized rather than replaced ongoing negotiations on this issue. Two SALT treaties and several other agreements and joint statements relating to arms control were completed at the meetings. A limited number of negotiating deadlocks on arms control were

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resolved at the summits. At the 1972 meeting, differences were resolved on several subsidiary issues; in June 1974 a threshold test ban treaty was concluded; and in November 1974 important Soviet concessions were obtained regarding SALT.

Geopolitical issues, particularly the Middle East, were also a central concern at the summits. Discussions served mainly to restate existing positions rather than break new ground. The Soviet Union raised the subject of the People's Republic of China at all of the meetings. This reflected Soviet concern over China's nuclear capability and over the resumption of Sino-American relations.

Summit discussions also focused on trade, cultural and scientific exchange, and other bilateral interests. Numerous agreements on these subjects were signed at the three summits held during the Nixon administration. Certain bilateral questions were raised at the Ford and Carter administration summits, but less emphasis was placed on them and no agreements were signed.

NIXON AND BREZHNEV AT MOSCOW, MAY 22-30, 1972

In 1970 the United States took initiatives which after substantial negotiations eventuated two years later in the first Moscow Summit of May 1972. Both countries had high expectations for this summit and these were largely fulfilled, at least in the short run.

The two principal achievements of the summit were the establishment of a personal relationship between President Richard Nixon and Soviet General Secretary Leonid I. Brezhnev and the signature of the ABM Treaty and the Interim Agreement on the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (SALT I). Some last-minute negotiation on these agreements took place at the summit. Also signed in Moscow were prenegotiated agreements on the Basic Principles of U.S.-Soviet Relations, Prevention of Incidents at Sea, Cooperation in Space, Medical Science and Public Health, Environmental Protection, and Science and Technology. Of these, the Agreement on Basic Principles was of great importance to the Soviets, who saw it as a U.S. recognition of their full equality as a superpower.

Discussions at the summit also affected significant developments in Europe and the Middle East, trade expansion, and a lend-lease settlement. In subsequent years some of the roughnesses in the negotiating process before, during, and

after this summit, particularly as they affected the SALT I agreements and the international grain trade, provided an opening for opponents of detente to criticize its viability.

NIXON AND BREZHNEV AT WASHINGTON,
CAMP DAVID, AND SAN CLEMENTE,
JUNE 18-25, 1973

The Brezhnev visit to the United States (June 18-25), undertaken more at Soviet initiative than American, took place amidst much fanfare but under the cloud of the Watergate hearings. Preparations were conducted primarily by a special interagency committee under the National Security Council's Senior Review Group, although some details were smoothed out by National Security Adviser Henry A. Kissinger during a May visit to the Soviet Union. Like Khrushchev's visit in 1959, Brezhnev's was marked by public demonstrations, mainly by Jewish groups critical of restrictive Soviet emigration policies. During the visit ten agreements were signed, the most important of which was an understanding on the prevention of nuclear war. In several private talks with Nixon at Camp David and San Clemente, Brezhnev also emphasized his anxiety over improving U.S.-Chinese ties, and he tried unsuccessfully to draw Nixon and Kissinger into an implied alliance against the Chinese. In their final meeting at San Clemente, Brezhnev also tried to bully Nixon into a secret deal to end the Middle Eastern conflict.

FORD AND BREZHNEV AT VLADIVOSTOK, NOVEMBER 23-24, 1974

The Vladivostok meeting between President Gerald R. Ford and Soviet leader Brezhnev took place only five months after the Moscow summit, primarily because Brezhnev was eager to establish contact with the new U.S. President. The summit was more ad hoc than the three previous ones and focused almost entirely on the strategic arms limitations talks (SALT). The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), Cyprus, and the Middle East were dealt with briefly but nothing of substance was achieved on any of these issues. Mutual and balanced force reduction (MBFR) was mentioned only in the prenegotiated joint communiqué. In part because of the groundwork laid by Secretary of State Kissinger during his October trip to Moscow and to Soviet hopes of establishing a constructive relationship with the new U.S. President, a breakthrough on SALT did take place at Vladivostok. The two

sides reached agreement in principle and the resulting SALT accord provided the basis for the SALT II treaty later signed by President Jimmy Carter and Brezhnev in Vienna in June 1979. It met the demands of the U.S. Congress and the Defense Department for equal aggregates and involved significant Soviet concessions, including abandonment of their previous demand that Forward Based Systems (FBS), such as U.S. weapons based in Western Europe, had to be included in the U.S. total. Ford and Kissinger returned home feeling triumphant and claiming that they had put a cap on the arms race. Their hopes were dashed, however, by the subsequent inability of the two sides to agree upon whether such weapons as the Soviet Backfire bomber and U.S. cruise missiles were to be included in the totals agreed upon at Vladivostok.

FORD AND BREZHNEV AT HELSINKI, JULY 30-AUGUST 2, 1975

The 1975 Helsinki summit between President Ford and Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev took place on July 30 and August 2, 1975, immediately prior to and following the ceremonies closing the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The United States gave top priority to two issues:

- Strengthening cooperation between the great powers
- Concluding a SALT II agreement

The results of the Ford-Brezhnev meeting were unsatisfactory. No substantive progress was made on SALT although the atmosphere which surrounded meetings of the two leaders was frank and cooperative. Public reaction to the meeting was strongly negative and contributed to the subsequent deterioration in U.S.-Soviet relations during the remainder of the Ford administration and weakened the President's political position.

CARTER AND BREZHNEV AT VIENNA, JUNE 15-18, 1979

The only U.S.-Soviet summit conference held during the Carter administration opened in Vienna on June 15, 1979, and continued through June 18, with five plenary meetings as well as a private meeting between President Carter and Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev. Discussions focused on the following subjects:

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1. Strategic Arms Limitation treaty (SALT II)
2. SALT III and other arms control issues
3. International issues
4. Bilateral and trade issues.

The major achievement at Vienna was the signing of the SALT II Treaty on strategic arms. Other issues were discussed and positions clarified, but little movement toward specific agreements resulted. Subsequently, the Soviet Union reacted negatively to the NATO two-track decision in mid-December 1979 to deploy intermediate-range ballistic missiles in Western Europe while simultaneously pursuing arms control talks with the Soviet Union. The invasion of Afghanistan by Soviet armed forces later that month removed all hopes for progress toward a rapprochement in U.S.-Soviet relations. President Carter asked the Senate to delay further consideration of the SALT II Treaty from further Senate consideration; it has still not been ratified.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: ROBERT C. MCFARLANE *rcm*
SUBJECT: Papers on the Soviet Union: The Soviet View of National Security

You have previously read five groups of papers on the Soviet Union. They dealt with the sources of Soviet behavior, the problems of Soviet society, the instruments of control, Gorbachev's domestic agenda, and the USSR's international position. The attached group discusses the Soviet view of national security.

The first paper (Tab A) deals with Soviet strategic thinking. It points out that Americans have a common tendency to attribute their own views and values to other peoples, and have often made the mistake of assuming that Soviet strategic thinking is like their own. The Soviets, they would reason, face the same overwhelming nuclear threat as the United States and, as rational people, presumably see that threat much as Americans do.

The Soviets, however, come from a vastly different historical tradition, in which the princes of tiny Muscovy built a powerful autocratic state through centuries of military expansion. While Americans see military power as an unpleasant but necessary means of preserving freedom, the Soviets view it as the way to maintain and expand their authority. The basic aims of Soviet military power are to ensure the survival of the political system and enhance its ability to project power abroad.

The Soviets appreciate full well the tremendous destruction that would accompany any nuclear exchange. At the same time they continue to believe in the possibility of victory in nuclear war, and through the 1970's believed that the trend of worldwide political and military forces was moving in their favor.

Recent developments, however, particularly SDI research and the new non-nuclear technologies for conventional defense, are worrisome factors for the Soviets. They have the potential to undermine the offensive pillars of Soviet strategy.

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Actual national security decision-making in the Soviet Union (paper at Tab B) is in the hands of a small circle of top leaders. The Politburo itself is the top forum in which all national security decisions are discussed and decided. It is, however, in one of the Politburo's committees, the Soviet Defense Council, that most of the detailed discussion of national security decisions is thought to take place.

The Defense Council is comprised of both civilian and military leaders who deal with political or military and technical policy. Gorbachev, like his predecessors, is its chairman. We do not know its exact composition, but likely members include the heads of the KGB, State Planning Committee, and Military-Industrial Commission and the Commander of Warsaw Pact forces. The Soviet General Staff acts as its secretariat, coordinating the flow of information to the Council.

The Defense Ministry, particularly the General Staff, seems to exercise predominant influence over the formulation of defense policy - to a degree unparalleled in the West. Military information is not shared with civilian agencies, and there is no nucleus of civilian specialists who can offer alternative views to those of military planners.

Rumors of civilian dissatisfaction with the military's near monopoly on technical expertise occasionally surface. This dissatisfaction is undoubtedly fed by the system's inability since the late Brezhnev years to come to grips with serious security-related questions like U.S. arms control proposals. Instead, an aging leadership has been locked in a transition power struggle which nearly paralyzed its ability to act decisively.

Gorbachev has moved quickly to remove members of the old guard to help reinvigorate the Soviet system. It remains to be seen, however, whether he wants to challenge seriously the traditional system of national security decision-making, with its heavy emphasis on the military and tightly controlled channels of information, or make available to the leadership a greater variety of informed civilian opinion.

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TAB

A

SOVIET STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC THINKING

Underlying all the destructive weapons and forces are ideas about strategy. From the mid-1960's well into the 1970's, many influential Americans believed--despite persuasive evidence to the contrary from Soviet military writings and agent sources such as Colonel Penkovsky--that soviet strategic thinking had to be very much like our own. In our familiar American tendency to attribute our own views and values to other peoples and their leaders, we tended to believe that, because we and the Soviets both faced the awesome problem of nuclear weapons, and we were both basically sensible peoples, we had to think about management of this problem in roughly the same way. Maybe the Soviets weren't quite as sophisticated as we with all our think tanks and academic journals, but they would more or less follow our lead in strategic thinking.

Today, while this mistaken "mirror imaging" of our views on the Soviets persists in some circles, we know a lot better. The manner and size of the Soviet strategic and other force buildups of the last twenty years showed that the Soviets thought differently than we about strategy and military power, including nuclear power. Study of the Soviet buildup, of Soviet military exercises and command structures, of their military writings (including very sensitive documents collected clandestinely) has taught us a great deal about Soviet strategy and military thinking. It underscores some important differences from our own.

This shouldn't have been surprising to us. After all, the Soviets are coming from a different place in geography, in history, and in political culture. Although now a global military superpower, at least in nuclear terms, Soviet Russia remains a continental superpower and, like Tsarist Russia, places a high store on dominating its continental periphery. The influence of history and political culture is often misunderstood as follows: Having been frequently invaded by Europeans and Asiatics over the centuries, Russians are seen as pathologically insecure; hence they feel the need for massive military power. There is some truth in this, but the essence is different. First of all, growing from a small principality in Muscovy, Russia has spent much more time invading and conquering than being invaded and conquered. The Russian state was built by the autocratic princes of Moscow, not by the merchants of the more westward-looking cities, such as Novgorod. For this reason, Kremlin rulers have from Medieval times to the present seen their security, indeed the legitimacy of their rule, to rest upon as much control over people, their own and those around them, as they could get. These attitudes toward political power have also shaped Russian and Soviet thinking about strategy and military power.

Americans tend to think of military power as an unpleasant but necessary means of preserving live-and-let-live conditions in a sometimes dangerous world. The Soviets think of military power as a means of preserving and expanding their authority. This makes their strategy both very defensive and very offensive at the same time.

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The structure, or architecture, of their strategy and their overall military forces displays this quality. The basic aims of Soviet military power in war, and also in peace, are to assure the survival of the political system at home and to enhance the projection of its power in the surrounding world. Hence the Soviets have been engaged in strategic, air, civil, and ABM defense from the beginning of the nuclear era. We had strategic defenses in the 1950's, but gave them up in the 1960's, in favor of the deterrent "balance of terror" concept based on nuclear offensive forces.

The second basic mission of Soviet military strength is to project power into the surrounding regions of Eurasia, especially Europe, but also in East Asia and southward toward the Middle East and Persian Gulf. Hence the enormous land combat forces, with their accompanying air and nuclear power, far more than they would need to retain control of East Europe or to deter attacks. By contrast, the US and NATO have seen our general purpose forces as a heavy trip wire to release the nuclear deterrent or as a means of dealing with very limited contingencies outside of Europe.

The Soviets see their long-range nuclear offensive forces as a deterrent, as we do. But to a much greater extent, they have also regarded these forces as long-range artillery support for backing up the other two primary missions of their forces: strategic defense of the homeland, through counterforce attacks on US nuclear forces and their command and control; and dominance of the Eurasian periphery, through attacks on nearby enemy forces and their bases.

In their thinking about nuclear weapons and nuclear war, the Soviets have never made the distinction between deterrence and warfighting capabilities that have been characteristic of US thinking. Nor have they discarded the notion of victory in nuclear war despite the assertion of Soviet leaders that nuclear war should not occur (which they believe) and cannot be won (which they do not believe).

Even when, in the 1950's and early 1960's, they had too little nuclear force to implement their view, the Soviets developed and held to the notion that real deterrent power had to be real warfighting power as well. This is because they believed that they had not only to deter attacks on them, but as far as they could, to encourage acceptance of their aims around the world short of a major war. This required nuclear warfighting strength. Moreover, they believed that nuclear war could actually occur, and, if it did, it would have to be fought for rational political and military aims, despite the awesome destructiveness of nuclear weapons. This is why they have developed a comprehensive array of counterforce nuclear weapons, such as the SS-18 against our silos and SS-20s against Eurasian military targets, and homeland defenses, including civil defense.

Soviet political and military leaders appreciate full well that any large nuclear war would be horribly destructive for their country and potentially lethal for their system. This has not, however, nullified their belief in the possibility of victory in nuclear war. For one thing, the ideology on which their system rests prevents that belief from being discarded. For them to really

believe that the handiwork of humans, such as nuclear weapons, could write the end to Soviet and even human history would mean that Marx and Lenin were wrong in a fundamental respect. More important, however, the Soviets have never believed that nuclear war, even a very large scale war, was likely to take the form of a mindless exchange of massive attacks on cities. Rather they have tended to believe that a major nuclear war would involve attacks of varying intensity and timing on a wide range of military targets, after which one side or the other would quit or collapse, but societies as such could survive, especially if they provided for active and civil defense.

Over the years they have built up offensive and defensive capabilities for this kind of nuclear war. Moreover, as their capabilities have grown, their concept of a major war between the superpowers has evolved as has their concept of victory. This evolution continues, and we are trying to track it in their military exercises and literature. What appears to be happening is a growing Soviet belief that their powerful nuclear forces, along with their general purpose forces, can enforce a different kind of victory by deterring US use of nuclear weapons at least on a large scale, while general purpose forces, supported if necessary by the required nuclear strikes, can conquer Europe and perhaps other regions nearby. The US would have to accept the result rather than be destroyed in a massive exchange. But the US would be reduced to a secondary power, while the USSR would emerge preeminent.

The key to this kind of thinking lies in the combination of all Soviet forces: strategic nuclear, general purpose and homeland defense. The Soviets do not separate them into distinct categories quite the way we do. In combination, they could allow victory in a large scale, general, but still not absolutely all-out nuclear conflict. The Soviets do not see this outcome as certain by any means; but it is a possibility that the design of their forces and strategies can make more probable if it ever comes to a war.

In the meantime, the Soviets believe that this overall force combination, along with increasing ability to project power at a distance, e.g., into the Third World, enhances the image of the USSR as a superpower and enhances their "persuasiveness" (i.e., ability to intimidate) vis-a-vis neighboring countries. Power projection into the Third World, which includes military deliveries, insurgency and counterinsurgency operations, as well as military bases and forces, has become a fourth pillar of the Soviet strategic architecture, along with strategic defense, Eurasian dominance, and long-range nuclear strike.

From another perspective one can say that Soviet strategy has been designed over the past forty years to defeat American strategy in war and also in peacetime power politics. Historically, the US has relied on long-range nuclear sanctions plus relatively weaker forward forces to protect its exposed allies near the USSR. The USSR has built forces to dominate over the regions where US allies are located while also negating the credibility of US long-range nuclear guarantees. Desiring to avoid any war or major test of

strength, the Soviets have hoped that this combination would gradually demoralize the US and its allies in peacetime, leading to the erosion of our security commitments, the collapse of our alliances and the replacement of the US by the USSR as the predominant world power.

In the late 1970's the Soviets developed a detectable confidence that trends in the "correlation of forces", by which they mean political as well as military forces, were moving in a direction favorable to this prognosis. In the 1980's, however, the US and its allies have been more determined to resist these trends, undermining Soviet confidence that this is the way things will go. On the contrary, they now see factors that could--not necessarily will--turn these trends around.

From a strictly military point of view, the most worrisome new factors, other than the increase of US defense efforts and renewed commitment to global security, lie in the combination of SDI and the new non-nuclear technologies for conventional defense the US is pursuing. All sources of information indicate how concerned the Soviets are about SDI. Interestingly, Soviet marshals write even more eloquently about their concern over the new conventional defense technologies. Together they challenge the primacy of the twin darlings of Soviet military power: the long-range ballistic missile and the tank. If the US and NATO actually develop and deploy such capabilities, they will undermine the offensive pillars of the Soviet strategic architecture. The USSR may be no less secure in the strictly military sense, as a result, but it will be less capable of casting an intimidating shadow over its neighbors. This is why Soviet propaganda, diplomacy, and arms control policy are trying to stop SDI and other US defense programs and, more generally, to encourage the US to return to the behavior and strategic doctrines we exhibited in the 1970's, which the Soviets found quite comfortable. Because Soviet superpower status rests so heavily on offensive military power combinations, the loss of this edge, so the Kremlin fears, will negate Soviet superpower status and ultimately undermine the legitimacy of Kremlin rule itself.

In the end, the challenge of the USSR to Western security and values stems more from the nature of its system than from the content of its strategies and military thought. If the rulers of the Soviet Union could somehow be brought to relent in their determination to control everybody they can reach, at home and abroad, their marshals and generals--who are intelligent and rational men--could readily come up with military strategies and force postures which would allow the USSR to be a secure and constructive participant in the world community. For that to happen, however, they have to be shown that the strategies they have followed patiently for thirty years will not work.

Prepared by:
Fritz Ermath,
CIA



Soviet National Security Decision-Making

Introduction

Decision-making in the USSR is the prerogative of a small circle of leaders, who act largely in private and who generally focus on discrete issues rather than on broad debates over priorities or strategies. Indeed, the absence in the USSR of independent players--such as the press and Congress--or public debate creates a situation more akin to that in a large American corporation.

Mikhail Gorbachev, as General Secretary and de facto head of the Politburo, is "primus inter pares" in the decision-making hierarchy. However, as compared with Stalin's day, when the Politburo served primarily as an enforcer of the dictator's will, power has become more deeply and evenly balanced within the leadership. Today, the Politburo in many ways represents a collective, oligarchic body.

-- Stalin dominated the Party and State bureaucracies in a ruthless fashion. His authority was unquestioned, and he intervened in a detailed way in all aspects of defense policy.

-- However, by the time Leonid Brezhnev assumed the mantle of the top Party position, the authority of the General Secretary had been considerably diluted. Brezhnev sought to solidify his power by "buying off" the imperial potentates heading the major institutions in Soviet society. This gave rise to a more collegial, consensus style of leadership. Under Brezhnev, the Politburo was transformed from a group of personal associates and sycophants to the dictator, to a supreme "executive committee" representing all the principal power groups--the Central Party apparatus, the military, the KGB, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the military-industrial complex.

-- This strategy of providing each of the claimants more of the resources and authority they desired worked well in Brezhnev's early years. However, as economic conditions became more stringent and resource constraints more pronounced, this strategy became more difficult to implement. Further, the dispersion of authority from the General Secretary to the bureaucratic chieftains led to a certain immobilism in Soviet society, particularly in decision making. Bold initiatives gave way to

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At the seeming apex of his power, Brezhnev's physical strength was waning. By 1977 his declining health led to periods of lackluster leadership, and it apparently affected his role as decision maker during the crises in Afghanistan and Poland. When Andropov was General Secretary, his illness and weakness appeared to contribute to the inept handling of the Soviet shutdown of the KAL.

incrementalism; caution and aversion to risk-taking came more and more to characterize the leadership's approach. The propensity of Soviet leaders to stress the maintenance of their personal positions promoted a "fear of the alternative" and produced a tendency to "muddle through."

- This conservatism led to an inability to deal imaginatively with a number of issues confronting the leadership, including reform of the domestic economic management structure and responses to your numerous arms control initiatives.

The Politburo. Organizationally, the Politburo is the top forum in which all national security questions are discussed and decided and serves as the highest policy-making organ in the USSR. Under Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko it resembled a board of directors or parliamentary-style cabinet in that the interests of all key Soviet institutions were represented. (Politburo members wear at least two hats, holding other important jobs in the central or regional party and government apparatuses.) The Politburo meets every Thursday to hear presentations and adopt decisions on the agenda topics selected by the Party's permanent staff, the Secretariat.

The General Secretary has a significant degree of leeway in presenting an issue and formulating a consensus. During Brezhnev's tenure, votes were seldom taken. Brezhnev's style seemed to be to wait for a consensus to develop, then declare that a decision had been reached. The net effect of these procedures was to concentrate enough authority in the presiding officer's hands to move most Politburo business fairly expeditiously, though not enough to allow the General Secretary to override the wishes of a Politburo majority on an important matter.

Defense Council. By far the most important of the permanent Politburo committees is the Soviet Defense Council. In practice, this is believed to be where most of the detailed discussions on national security questions--including key decisions on arms control--take place.

The Defense Council's present form was apparently devised to ensure access by the senior military leadership to high-level political/military policy deliberations; to provide a top command unit capable of timely and coordinated response on strategic decisions in a crisis; and to serve in peacetime as a standing body which can be quickly and easily transformed into an agency for national command and control in wartime.

The Defense Council is made up of both civilian and military leaders who deal with questions of political or military and technical policy. Each of the General Secretaries--Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko, and now Gorbachev--has been identified as its Chairman. Other possible Defense Council members include the heads of the KGB, the Chairman of the State Planning Committee (Gosplan), the head of the Military-Industrial Commission, and the Commander-in-Chief of the Warsaw Pact joint forces.

While the military thus does not dominate the Defense Council, the General Staff (in particular, its Main Operations Directorate) apparently acts as its executive secretariat, coordinating information for presentation to the Defense Council. Even if the Chief of the General Staff is not actually a member of the Defense Council, he is in effect its executive secretary.

Secretariat: The most important and direct supporting role in the Politburo decision-making system belongs to the Central Committee Secretariat, the body charged with the day-to-day administration of the party apparatus. This executive staff of the Party not only formulates recommendations on policy issues within the competence of its approximately 20 departments, but also coordinates and channels much of the input of other agencies, such as the Foreign Ministry and KGB. Headed by the "General Secretary," the nine other Secretaries oversee virtually every aspect of Soviet domestic and foreign policy (ironically, except defense policy). The Central Committee apparatus also serves as a primary source of the staff aides who assist in formulating policy statements, memoranda, information briefs, and the like.

During Times of Crisis

The Politburo can, of course, meet any time and any place with less than full membership when pressing issues or crises arise. For instance, during the 1973 Middle East crisis there were at least seven and probably eight Politburo-level meetings called during October 4-27. The Politburo also met several times in lengthy sessions between Brezhnev's summit meetings with foreign leaders. And when Brezhnev returned to Moscow from trips abroad, the Politburo often went into session at the airport or the next day to hear the General Secretary's report.

The Pivotal Role of the Military in Soviet National Security Policy Making

In the Soviet Union the Ministry of Defense, in particular the General Staff, seems to exercise a predominant influence over the formulation of defense policy. To a degree unprecedented in the West, the uniformed military controls the mechanisms through

which defense spending is supervised, strategy developed, force deployment patterns analyzed and developed, and operational planning implemented.

In a system that is so highly compartmentalized, defense plans and policies tend to be developed in relative isolation from other centers of power. Several factors contribute to this inordinate military influence:

- Monopoly on Information: Military information is tightly controlled in the USSR and coordination with civilian agencies is generally prohibited. Only the Defense Ministry maintains a data base on weapon characteristics, force deployment schemes and doctrinal intricacies. While specific agencies--weapons design bureaus, for example--will have access to certain highly restricted data, no other agency will have control over the full range of intelligence and operational information.
- Expertise: Only the uniformed military possesses the expertise to undertake complex examinations of weapons systems and to define "threat" scenarios. Unlike the United States, in the USSR there is no group of "civilian defense intellectuals" resident at leading academic centers or think tanks with the expertise to challenge assumptions produced by the General Staff. Further, there are no civilians in the Defense Ministry; strategy formulation and management of the armed forces is in the hands of the military. This contrasts with the situation in this country, where the concept of "civilian control" places considerable authority in the Office of the Secretary of Defense rather than in the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
- Power of the First Draft: The General Staff is composed of a large, highly professional officer corps with years of experience in the national security field. No other agency maintains a staff anywhere near as large or expert as the General Staff. This staff has control of the manner in which national security issues are selected and planned and alternatives developed. In effect, with the "choices" circumscribed by alternatives conceived by one institution, the "options" considered by the national command authorities in the USSR will be much narrower, much less comprehensive and more parochial than those presented to you. Finally, the absence of an interagency review process and a central coordinating mechanism, such as our NSC, gives undue influence to the views of the General Staff.

- Congruence of Views between Political and Military Leaders: The views of the General Staff likely find fertile ground in the minds of the USSR's top leadership. Unlike Western societies, where conflict between military and civilian viewpoints is common, these groups in the USSR share a common domestic and foreign policy perspective. Further, Soviet society has itself become increasingly militaristic, with the economy run essentially on a war-mobilization basis and enormous preferences accorded to the "military-industrial complex." As one observer stressed, "It's not a question of whether or not there is a military-industrial complex in the USSR; the Soviet Union is a military-industrial complex." That is not to say that debates over investment, for example, do not exist. What is different, however, is that rather than a "guns versus butter" trade-off, in the USSR the competing factions argue over "guns versus oil drilling rigs."
- One-Dimensional Power: The Soviet Union's superpower status is primarily a reflection of its military strength. Given the USSR's relative weakness in other areas, the unusual historical reliance on and fascination with military power should be no surprise. It is not the universal appeal of a Marxist ideology, not the attractiveness of the Soviet model of development, and definitely not the quality and scope of economic aid that permits Moscow to enjoy the status of a global power. The military tool seems to be the only thing that has worked among the Kremlin's foreign policy instruments. Further, in a society characterized by inefficiency and corruption, the military stands as one sector that has remained relatively unscathed by charges of malfeasance and nonproductivity (the KGB is another noteworthy example). As the poet Max Hayward noted, perhaps with some overstatement, "In the Soviet Union, nothing works--except the military, and it works damn well." The point is that as long as the ruling stratum perceives that advances domestically and in the international arena are the product of the military machine, the view of the uniformed military is likely to get more than a sympathetic hearing.

Significance of the Military Influence:

The pivotal role of the military has major implications for Soviet national security programs, particularly on arms control.

-- On Arms Control

Most of the detailed discussion on arms control probably takes place in the Defense Council which, as already noted,

is made up of probably half a dozen top party and government officials with national security responsibilities. While the civilian component is clearly larger, the General Staff's role as secretariat for the Council offers the military an institutional advantage in shaping arms control policy. The General Staff arranges Council meetings and keeps the roster of officials who attend. It also has de facto control of coordination for the actual negotiations and, in effect, acts as gatekeeper.

The Soviets systematically examine arms control issues on political, military, economic, and diplomatic grounds, but most of the interagency haggling on this score probably occurs within the Defense Council. Considerable expertise by now has been built up within a select group in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of course, but the military jealously guards its prerogatives here. You may have heard the anecdote from the SALT I negotiations regarding a highly technical, informal discussion between an American official and a group of Soviet military and civilian representatives. When the discussion touched on sensitive weapons characteristics, the Soviet General drew the American aside and stated that this was a subject with which the Soviet civilians present really didn't need to become involved!

This dominant role of the military also produces security analyses based on "worst-case" threat perceptions. Given the lack of alternative threat scenarios, those arguing for a reallocation of investment away from the defense sector have to make their case in the face of the military's most dire predictions. On arms control it ensures that the definition of an acceptable compromise will be one that would leave the Soviet Union in an indisputable position of advantage. President Ford drew attention to this key factor when he noted that in his discussions in Vladivostok with Brezhnev, no progress was made until they agreed to meet in a smaller session--and thereby excluded two Soviet Generals from the meeting.

National Security Decision-Making under Gorbachev: A Prognosis

Under Andropov there were rumors of civilian dissatisfaction with the General Staff's near monopoly of technical expertise, and reports that the party leader wanted to increase the input of civilian technical experts into the arms control process. "Think tanks," such as Arbatov's USA-Canada Institute, will probably undertake more sensitive politico-military analyses as Gorbachev seeks to expand his sources of national security advice. We can expect that the General Secretary will expand his own limited staff of foreign and defense policy experts and call more often on the Central Committee's International Department for independent advice. He may also look more to the KGB. (Gorbachev quickly promoted the head of the KGB to full Politburo membership after he came to power.)

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There are indications that Gorbachev is prepared to deal decisively with the "immobilism" in Soviet policy making. He has bounced many of the "Old Guard" from their positions of power and prestige--including Foreign Minister Gromyko, Premier Tikhonov, Defense Industry tsar Romanov, State Planning Committee head Baybakov, and others. In their place Gorbachev has promoted younger, more technically competent individuals. More importantly, for the most part they are loyal to the new General Secretary and possess only modest power bases of their own. For example, four men allied with Gorbachev have been promoted to full membership in the Politburo since his accession to the General Secretaryship. Perhaps significantly, the Minister of Defense, Marshal Sokolov, has been awarded only candidate Politburo membership.

Gorbachev is off to a fast start. It remains to be seen, however, whether personnel changes alone will be sufficient to reinvigorate Soviet policy making, or whether Gorbachev will have to consider serious reforms in the system itself. If he opts for reform, he is sure to spur the opposition of entrenched bureaucratic elements that would stand to lose power or prestige as a result of change. Their opposition could well derail, or at least effectively slow, even the best intended efforts for change.

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