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BACK TO THE FUTURE? KHRUSHCHEV, GORBACHEV, AND THE WEST

INTRODUCTION

The Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev has been hailed for his new approach to Soviet domestic and foreign policies. He is pledging *glasnost* (the right to speak freely) and *perestroyka* (restructuring). Gorbachev and his reforms, however, are not unique in Soviet political history. In his attempt to spur the economy with a modicum of political relaxation and a guarded economic decentralization, Gorbachev closely resembles another Soviet innovator, Nikita Khrushchev, the party's First Secretary from 1953 to 1964. As such, Western observers should remember that Khrushchev's "reformism" was reversed by his successors and was accompanied by Khrushchev's belligerent foreign expansionism.

In the domestic area, Khrushchev's legacy is evident in such Gorbachev policies as:

◆◆ A broad and vigorous repudiation of the previous leadership ("the subjective factor") but not of the system itself ("the objective factor"), which is said to be fundamentally sound.

◆◆ The self-assigned mission to "unlock the potential" of the Soviet economic and political systems through partial economic decentralization and a political "thaw."

◆◆ "Democratization" that is aimed not at dismantling the key structures of totalitarian control but at ridding them of a few excesses.

◆◆ A carefully calibrated and controlled expansion of the allowed public discourse (*glasnost*) designed to invigorate the demoralized intellectual elite, bolster the Communist Party's moral authority and help project its image as the most constructive force in the Soviet society.

◆◆ Revival of a "personalized" Leninism, with selective quotes from the "softer" Lenin of the New Economic Policy (NEP) era when, in the 1920s, the Soviet regime tolerated limited private enterprise and private agriculture.

◆◆ The ritual of "going back to Lenin" as a way of repudiating preceding Soviet leaders.

◆◆ A strongly populist personal style, and a penchant for working the crowd, public exhortations, and blaming "the bureaucrats" for the system's faults.

In foreign affairs, Gorbachev's similarities with Khrushchev include:

◆◆ An activist, imaginative style, with an increased sensitivity to public relations and timing.

◆◆ Bombast, millennialism, and utopianism in public proposals.

◆◆ The ability to see a failed policy as such and to retreat--but not before all the options have been exhausted.

◆◆ Vigorous courtship of the Third World.

In light of these doctrinal and operational similarities, Khrushchev's past may yield some clues to Gorbachev's future. In the domestic sphere, reforms are likely to be resisted fiercely, diluted, and perhaps defeated by the giant, inert, corrupt, and recalcitrant bureaucracy. Gorbachev's harsh treatment of the Moscow Party Chief Boris Yeltsin already reveals the narrow limits of domestic reform. Yeltsin was deposed from power and publicly humiliated because, as *The New York Times* reports, "Yeltsin had the temerity to suggest that the widely publicized plan for restructuring Soviet society was not working."¹

In the foreign policy sphere, Gorbachev, as Khrushchev, is unlikely to retreat on any key long-term Soviet objectives, such as control of Eastern Europe, separation of the two Germanies, the superpower status of the Soviet Union, strategic parity with the United States, and Soviet penetration of the Third World.

Grave Mistake. For the West, the central lesson of the Khrushchev experience is that it is not to be assumed that a partial domestic "liberalization" will necessarily be accompanied by a restructuring of fundamental priorities of Soviet foreign policy. As such, it would be a grave mistake for the U.S. and its allies to try to "help" Gorbachev by arranging a "favorable international climate" for his domestic programs. Instead, the West must make the potential costs of undesirable Soviet foreign behavior too high for Gorbachev to proceed.

1. *The New York Times*, November 14, 1987, p. 1.

DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

The key similarity between the Gorbachev and Khrushchev reforms is the absence of structural change. Both attempted to change elements within the Soviet political system, rather than the system itself, which is considered viable and legitimate. Like Khrushchev, Gorbachev appears to have set out not to dismantle the totalitarian mechanism but to fine-tune it by making it less conspicuous, more flexible and sensitive to changing reality, and thus less counterproductive.

In an effort to gain at least a modicum of credibility for himself and the Soviet state and to garner the energy and creativity of the intellectuals, Gorbachev launched "democratization" and "*glasnost*": two carefully calibrated confidence-building policies that Khrushchev, under different names, devised thirty years ago.

Democratization

Despite the seemingly radical rhetoric, the actual measures of Gorbachev's democratization so far have been the same as Khrushchev's. First, in the beginning of this year, Gorbachev granted an "amnesty" for political prisoners that was unpublicized inside the USSR, incomplete, and conditional.² Second, he fired the most brazenly corrupt bureaucrats and pre-Gorbachev local party barons, thus reasserting direct control of Moscow's Secretariat over provinces. Third, he restored "socialist legality" by ridding the police of the most corrupt and brutal functionaries, tempering the most outrageous excesses but continuing to allow the repressive apparatus to enjoy enormous power unchecked by anyone or anything except for the party leadership. Finally, a number of nonpolitical informal organizations--literary, ecological, historical--were allowed to appear.

Gorbachev's only original contribution to the Khrushchevian democratization scheme has been the so-called experiment in multicandidate elections. It affected one percent of all electoral districts. There was an average of 1.3 candidates per slot--all prescreened by the corresponding party organizations. The experiment, moreover, was applied to largely ceremonial governmental posts rather than the

2. Even by the lowest estimate of the total number of political prisoners (1,200), Gorbachev's "amnesty" has affected no more than 35 percent; by the highest estimate (15,000), the share of the released did not exceed 2 percent. Only four of the 42 prisoners were released from the most brutal, "strict regiment" camps, such as the notorious Camps 36 and 36-1 in the Perm province. Few national minorities dissidents were pardoned and only a handful of religious prisoners. Those to be released had to sign pledges of no political activity. No apologies were offered for the unlawful imprisonment, and not a single official responsible for their confinement was ever punished. There are striking similarities between the routines of Gorbachev's "amnesty" and that of 1956, as described by Alexandr Solzhenitsyn in *Gulag Archipelago*: "Prisoners are summoned one by one into the office where the commission sits. A few factual questions are asked about each man's case. The questions are perfectly polite and apparently well meant, but their drift is that the prisoner must admit his guilt....He must be silent, he must bow his head, he must be put in the position of one forgiven, not one who forgives!...They obtained their freedom--but this was the wrong way to confer it, a denial of its true meaning....This was no way to lay new moral foundations for our society...."

What of those who out of incomprehensible pride refused to acknowledge their guilt? They were left inside. There were quite a few of them...."

powerful party positions. Recently, the major Communist Party newspaper *Pravda* reiterated the policy of party control over the election process when it stated that "the leading role [of the party] is fixed by the constitution. That is why the party committees...have the right to openly express their opinion on the people recommended to this or that post."³

Glasnost'

What may be called legitimization by dissociation has been a permanent feature of Soviet successions. With the exception of Lenin, every Soviet leader who lasted more than a couple of years has been denounced publicly by his successor. As did Khrushchev, Gorbachev is relying heavily on this technique as he seeks to gain at least some credibility for his regime via a national catharsis produced by criticism of his predecessor's legacy. Assuming leadership of the Soviet Union after the two longest periods of personal rule in the Soviet history--that of Stalin and Brezhnev--they had especially long and dramatic stories to tell.

In legitimization by dissociation, selective disclosures revolve around the most conspicuous failures and crimes of the previous regimes: in Khrushchev's case, Stalin's massacre of the party cadres (the millions of noncommunists killed by Stalin were ignored); in Gorbachev's, the Brezhnev regime's corruption, bureaucratic callousness, social anomie, and economic decline. While Khrushchev put greater emphasis on Stalin's crimes than Gorbachev so far has, the media under Gorbachev for the first time since the 1920s have been permitted to dwell on such taboo topics as horrendous housing and food shortages, the pitiful quality of medical care, widespread bribery, wastefulness of the "bureaucratic" planning, drug addiction, and prostitution.

Totalitarian Sacred Cows. A new Soviet ruler traditionally also uses the Soviet media to identify pockets of resistance to the current "line." Whereas Khrushchev used the press to hound Stalinists, Gorbachev's *glasnost'* is charged with the task of harassing bureaucrats and foes of *perestroyka*.

While considerably expanding the boundaries of a permissible public debate and relaxing censorship of arts, Khrushchev's "thaw" did not and Gorbachev's *glasnost'* and democratization so far have not come even close to the key structures of Soviet totalitarianism. These include: the Party monopoly of political power; the KGB; the secret personal dossiers (*lichnoye delo*) that are compiled on every Soviet citizen starting with the grade school; the *nomenclatura* system, whereby every appointment, from a shop steward to a college dean is cleared by the Party; the absence of an institutionalized mechanism for the orderly turnover of highest political elites; the principle of collectivized agriculture; the absence of independent trade unions; the domestic passports and residence restrictions; the absence of an independent judiciary; the criminal code with articles used against political dissent; the suppression of religion and prohibition of religious education; the total state control of the mass media; the censorship of the arts; the restrictions on foreign travel; the restrictions on foreign publications; the captive East European countries; the jamming of Western broadcasts; the vicious anti-Western and especially anti-

3. *Pravda*, November 16, 1987.

American propaganda; the xenophobic "military-patriotic" education of schoolchildren.

Party Populism and the Cult of Lenin

Under Gorbachev, as under Khrushchev, the Party, as institution, is exempt from criticism. As Khrushchev, Gorbachev makes scapegoats of state bureaucrats--not Party bosses.

Far from discarding the Party as an effective tool of social and economic change, Gorbachev has embarked on a party renaissance, attempting to rejuvenate and relegitimize this ossified, intellectually and morally compromised political organization. Numerous party committees, commissions, boards, and administrations are explicitly charged with overseeing reforms.

Gorbachev is strongly reminiscent of Khrushchev in using what can be called "party populism." He travels around the country, adlibbing, exhorting, cajoling, and browbeating. He appeals to "the people" over the heads of the "bureaucrats."

Most of all he quotes Lenin. As Khrushchev, Gorbachev is personally leading a campaign to reinvigorate the official cult of Lenin. He appeals to the "softer" Lenin of the 1920s, portrayed as a foe of bloated bureaucracies and proponent of economic liberalization under the New Economic Policy.

FOREIGN POLICY: THE HOUSECLEANING SYNDROME

Western officials and observers of Soviet developments typically have fallen for the arguments of what may be called the housecleaning syndrome. It takes the form of the seemingly reasonable plea: "The Soviets want a peaceful foreign policy interlude in order to concentrate on domestic problems." The Khrushchev period was fraught with such Western expectations. They have been in evidence again since Gorbachev took power in March of 1985.⁴

The housecleaning syndrome stems from an erroneous projection of the Western democratic political tradition onto the entirely different Soviet political culture. In the West, barring a war or a natural disaster, a political leader is judged largely by the electorate's economic well-being. Success in dealing with economic problems is by far the most important component of political legitimacy in a democracy. Both the Russian and the Soviet traditions are quite different.

4. *Time Magazine's* July 27, 1987, cover read: "Gorbachev's Revolution. Is the Cold War Ending?" Inside, on the first page of the cover story *Time* proclaimed that "in foreign policy, Gorbachev is seeking relaxation of tensions so that he can devote energy and resources to his domestic reforms." Similarly, in an editorial titled "Kicking the Cold War Habit" *The New York Times* stated that "the new factors that challenge cold war principles are plain. Mikhail Gorbachev seems to be turning the gaze of Soviet leadership more inward, toward galvanizing a moribund economy...." (August 10, 1987). In the same vein, *The New York Times* Moscow correspondent declared recently: "To revive a stagnant economy, and to provide citizens with a standard of living even remotely comparable to that of the West, Mr. Gorbachev needs a period of international stability and stabilized defense spending," October 11, 1987.

Through the centuries of war and steady expansion by conquest, either invading or being invaded, nothing in Russia has bound the rulers and the ruled closer together than patriotic pride in military and diplomatic victories. Domestic misery has always been forgiven and forgotten in the glow of foreign successes.⁵ Conversely, nothing was resented more strongly than a humiliation abroad: both Russian revolutions, in 1905 and 1917, occurred in the wake of military defeats, while the 1962 Cuban missile crisis fiasco played a central role in Khrushchev's ouster two years later.

Recalling Peter the Great. Successes abroad that boost USSR's great power status are especially important in times of domestic confusion and turmoil that invariably attend the initial stages of reform. Thus, foreign policy is not sacrificed to the imperatives of domestic change. To the contrary, the need to uphold Moscow's great power position is presented by the rulers as the key justification for internal reform. It was precisely such modernizing tsars as Peter the Great in the first quarter of the 18th century and Alexander the Second in the 1860s and 1870s, who conducted vigorous and aggressive foreign policy during the domestic turmoil caused by their reforms.

Pursuing superpower status for his country, Khrushchev justified his reforms by the need to "catch up with and surpass America." As Gorbachev's reforms run into stormy weather at home, he, too, begins to invoke the same unending symbolism with increasing frequency. Recently, *Izvestia* columnist Alexander Bovin, who is believed to be among Gorbachev's closest advisors, urged the Soviet people to understand that

...if the restructuring [*perestroika*] is not achieved...if socialism cannot harness the new wave of the scientific-technical revolution, then the correlation of forces in the world may tip in favor of capitalism.⁶

Hungarian Uprising. The Khrushchev experience reveals that reform may often precipitate a tougher stance abroad in an effort to placate domestic opponents. This was one of the arguments that Khrushchev advanced to justify his bloody suppression of the 1956 Hungarian revolution. At the time the Soviet leader "implied that the anti-Stalinists had to show firmness, outdo the Stalinists if necessary, in order to pursue the course of de-Stalinization. Doing nothing would only play in the hands of Molotov and Kaganovich."⁷

Later, the embarrassing economic difficulties and shortages of the early 1960s were to be at least partly offset by verbally assaulting President John Kennedy in Vienna in June 1961, building the Berlin wall, breaking the nuclear test moratorium the same year, and dispatching missiles to Cuba in 1962.

5. See, for example, Richard Pipes, *Survival Is Not Enough* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), p. 41.

6. *Izvestia*, July 11, 1987.

7. Charles Gati, "Imre Nagy and Moscow, 1953-56," *Problems of Communism*, May-June 1986, p. 48.

Similarly, Gorbachev has been invoking anti-U.S. rhetoric probably to cover the flanks that domestic reform is exposing. His report to the 27th Party Congress in February 1986, Gorbachev's first as General Secretary, made this the most militantly anti-American congress since Stalin's 19th Congress in 1952. Gorbachev stated, for example, that in the United States,

...[t]rade unions are subjected to harassment and economic blackmail. Anti-labor laws are being enacted. The Left and generally progressive movements are being persecuted. Control of, or to be more exact, prying into people's minds and behavior has become the norm. Conscious cultivation of individualism, the right of the strong in the fight for survival, immorality and hatred of everything democratic are being practiced on an unprecedented scale....

Wealth and power are increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few. Militarism expands boundlessly and strives to gradually seize the levers of political power as well. It becomes the ugliest and most dangerous monster of the 20th century.⁸

INNOVATION AND CONTINUITY IN SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY

Khrushchev conducted an activist foreign policy characterized by a high degree of "personal diplomacy." He emphasized "summitry," doctrinal flexibility in adjusting Marxist-Leninist dogma to the imperatives of realpolitik, public relations bombast, and a special blend of brinkmanship and pragmatism that kept the West almost always on the defensive.

Preserving the East European Empire. This unconventional style, however, went hand in hand with the traditional objectives of Soviet foreign policy: enhancement of the country's world influence at all costs short of nuclear war with the U.S.; preservation of the Soviet East European empire; military and political "decoupling" of Western Europe from the U.S.; support of pro-Soviet political movements in the former Western colonies.

In pursuing these goals, Khrushchev by and large was successful. In a decade or so after Khrushchev's ouster, his successors reaped the benefits of the policies that he so doggedly and uncompromisingly pursued: Western acquiescence to the post-World War II division of Europe--particularly the permanent division of Germany and Soviet dominance of Eastern Europe. The USSR, moreover, had achieved superpower status based on strategic nuclear parity with the United States, while pro-Soviet totalitarian regimes proliferated in the Third World.

The Mechanics of Detente

While incomparably more sophisticated and polished than Khrushchev, Gorbachev is conducting foreign affairs with the same energy, optimism, willingness to put personal prestige on the line, as well as creativity and imagination in finding

8. *Pravda*, February 26, 1986.

new vehicles for advancement of Soviet objectives. In many cases his choice of tools bears remarkable similarity to that of Khrushchev.

Thus a unilateral nuclear test moratorium, which the Soviet Union announced in August 1985, is borrowed directly from the Khrushchev era when on March 31, 1958, nuclear tests were "abolished" in the Soviet Union. Likewise, Gorbachev's January 15, 1986, proposal to "liberate mankind from nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction by the year 2000" harks back to the 1955 Geneva Summit when Moscow proposed gradual abandonment of nuclear weapons and to Khrushchev's 1959 United Nations speech calling for "general and complete disarmament." This call, which was deemphasized in Soviet public statements toward the end of the Brezhnev rule, is once again gaining popularity.⁹

Wooing the Third World. From the very beginning, Khrushchev's foreign policy combined a strident "peace" campaign with a broad attack on Western interests in the Third World. Two months after the 1955 Geneva summit where the Soviet delegation sought to cultivate Western good will with a newly discovered flexibility and won innumerable kudos from the media for good behavior, Moscow, in a reversal of Stalin's policy of neglect of the Third World, began shipping weapons to Egypt, which was challenging British control of the Suez Canal and threatening Israel.

Gorbachev, likewise, is wasting no time in his "opening" to the Third World. His overtures to Asian, South Pacific, and Latin American nations as well as renewed diplomatic activity in the Middle East typify this. Gorbachev shares Khrushchev's emphasis on personal diplomacy as well. Khrushchev's tour of Southern Asia, which "opened" India, Burma, and Afghanistan to the Soviet Union, is likely to be repeated in Gorbachev's opening to South America in a planned tour--the first such trip ever by a Soviet leader.

Changes in Rhetoric

Again as Khrushchev did, Gorbachev is modifying the theory of Soviet foreign policy. Although his declarations so far have been more modest than Khrushchev's package of "peaceful coexistence," "noninevitability of wars," and "nonviolent passage to socialism," Gorbachev is fashioning a new tenor of Soviet public diplomacy by wholesale adoption of the reasoning, terminology, and symbolism of Western peace movements.

Gorbachev's "new political thinking" (*novoe politicheskoye myshlenie*), as it is becoming widely known, teems with such terms as "nuclear catastrophe" (*yadernaya katastrofa*), "survival" (*vyzhyvanie*), "nuclear-free world" (*bezyadernyi mir*), "world interdependence" (*mirovaya vzaimozavisimost'*), "equal security for all" (*ravnaya bezopasnost' dlya vseh*), "philosophy of the secure world formation" (*filosofia formirovaniya bezopasnogo mira*), and even such a profoundly un-Marxist notion as "universal norms of morality" (*obshechelovecheskie normy npravstvennosti*).

9. See, for example, Academician M. Markov, "To Learn to Think in a New Way," *Pravda*, July 14, 1987.

Eyes on the Same Prize

Gorbachev's "new political thinking" so far seems to be a tactical innovation in pursuit of traditional Soviet strategic goals, as was Khrushchev's "peaceful coexistence." There is little deviation from Brezhnev's foreign policy. In sharp contrast to the tempo of his domestic reforms, there has been little movement in areas that require a genuine Soviet compromise. Gorbachev balks, for example, at such matters as reducing Soviet conventional forces in Europe, withdrawing Soviet troops from Afghanistan, repudiating the Brezhnev doctrine that declares the Soviet control of Eastern Europe permanent, pressing Hanoi to end Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia, returning to Japan the islands occupied since World War II, ceasing hostile anti-Western propaganda in the Soviet mass media, and ending the militaristic and xenophobic "military-patriotic education" of schoolchildren.

Nor is there evidence suggesting that, for Gorbachev, peaceful coexistence has a meaning any different than it had for Khrushchev and Brezhnev, namely, a "form of class struggle." A leading Soviet political magazine for foreign consumption asserts that "such coexistence is an objective historical necessity flowing from the world-wide class struggle, which will eventually lead to victorious socialist revolutions in other countries...."¹⁰ Likewise, *Pravda* explains that the new approach to foreign policy is based on a "scientific analysis...of class interests" and that "the enemy of peace and the enemy of the laboring masses are the same forces."¹¹

THE KHRUSHCHEV EXPERIENCE AND GORBACHEV'S STAYING POWER

At the moment, Gorbachev's position appears to be stronger than Khrushchev's ever was. One reason may be that Gorbachev's ascent to the top resulted from something unprecedented in Soviet politics: an agenda-specific appointment. Rather than becoming "the first among equals" gradually, starting with an independent power base and extending it over years of artful and bloody maneuvering, Gorbachev appears to have been selected by fellow oligarchs to carry out a number of specific tasks. Chief among them are shoring up the Soviet economy and killing Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative. The broad mandate given to the new General Secretary to pursue both goals probably explains his moving farther and faster in his first two years in power than any Soviet leader, Lenin excepted.

A second reason why Gorbachev seems more powerful than Khrushchev is that today's variant of *glasnost* does not threaten the vast power and tsar-like privileges of an entire political generation of Soviet leaders, as Khrushchev's de-Stalinization did with the "class of 1937." These top political and military leaders who had come to power on the wave of the Great Purge of 1937 were still in their prime when Khrushchev attacked Stalin. They obviously were threatened by this attack and they ultimately overthrew Khrushchev and went on to rule through the entire Brezhnev period. By the time Gorbachev became General Secretary, the aging members of that group held only a few positions of power.

10. *International Affairs*, June 1987, pp. 72, 77.

11. *Pravda*, July 7, 1987.

This does not mean that Gorbachev sits solidly in the saddle. After all, he is attempting to carry out a contradictory policy of using the Party to enforce reforms which ultimately will result in the weakening of local Party authorities.

Balking at Curbing Privileges. Soviet Party bosses fiercely resist attempts at a more responsible system of government. In 1961 Khrushchev pushed through a rule mandating a one-third turnover of each Party committee with every election. After his ouster three years later, this practice was immediately abolished. At the Party Congress in February-March 1986, Gorbachev's more audacious followers talked about a mandatory retirement age for Party officials and curtailment of their boundless privileges. The Congress balked. This January, Gorbachev renewed the effort, by hinting at secret ballot and multicandidate elections to Party committees below the Central Committee. He was rebuffed by the Central Committee, and nothing has been heard of these proposals since.

An incipient danger exists, moreover, in the inevitable blue-collar resentment of the increasing work and discipline demands and possible massive dislocations resulting from Gorbachev's economic reforms. Benefits for the workers, of course, will not materialize until years from now--if ever. In the meantime, you cannot eat *glasnost*'.

"HELPING" GORBACHEV

Some Western leaders and Soviet specialists may be tempted, as their predecessors have been, to try to "help" Gorbachev. Here "help" means making it easier for Gorbachev to pursue his domestic reforms. Such help usually is proposed in the form of the West's "greater flexibility" and "good faith" in arms control, restraint from overreaction to the Soviet human rights violations and expansionism in the Third World, and, of course, economic cooperation, a euphemism for the West's massive financial and technological assistance. History offers important lessons on efforts to help Soviet leaders, and in doing so, steer their policies in a direction favorable to Western interests or ideals. In the early 1920s, for example, Herbert Hoover's American Relief Administration saved the lives of ten million Russians and perhaps the Soviet regime itself. Yet it did nothing to make Lenin more democratic. Two decades later, the U.S. shipped tens of thousands of planes, tanks, and guns, millions of tons of foodstuffs, fuel, and raw materials to the Soviet Union to help Moscow fight Hitler's armies. Though these supplies helped Stalin turn the tide of war and may have saved his regime, they had little impact on Stalin's postwar policies.

Winning Two Key Prizes. More recently, no Soviet regime has enjoyed a better international climate, a stronger and more consistent outpouring of Western good will, or more Western peacetime help than that of Leonid Brezhnev. During the Brezhnev reign, the West granted the Soviet Union the two key strategic prizes it had sought relentlessly since the end of World War II: *de facto* acquiescence to the permanent division of Germany and the Soviet domination of Eastern Europe. Five U.S.-Soviet summits and the SALT I and SALT II treaties were the recognition of Soviet superpower status that had been sought by three generations of Soviet leaders. There was a dramatic expansion of Western cooperation in every area of

human endeavor imaginable. More important, there were unprecedented infusions of Western food, credits, technology, and know-how into the USSR.

The results: a mammoth military buildup, especially in nuclear weapons; an aggressive expansion of the Soviet sphere of influence through sponsorship and propping up of the pro-Soviet totalitarian regimes in Ethiopia, Angola, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Nicaragua, Mozambique, South Yemen, and Guinea-Bissau; and of course the invasion of Afghanistan. Domestically, as Gorbachev is never tired of reminding his compatriots, during this period of Western help and good will, the Soviet Union reverted to neo-Stalinism.

CONCLUSION

For the West, the key lesson of the Khrushchev period is that "liberalization" at home is not necessarily or even likely to be accompanied by fundamental reassessment of Soviet priorities in foreign affairs. The Berlin Wall went up within two months of the virulently anti-Stalinist 22nd Party Congress. As Khrushchev was giving the permission to publish Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, the boats with Soviet nuclear missiles were steaming toward Cuba. And the brutal suppression of the Hungarian Revolution took place in the year of Khrushchev's "secret speech" denouncing Stalin.

As Khrushchev did, Gorbachev is likely to engage in the same dogged pursuit of long-term Soviet objectives--as well as swift exploitation of targets of opportunity. The manner in which he will conduct his foreign policy is likely to be more sophisticated, less rigid but also, at times, more prone to risk taking than that of the conservative Soviet leadership of the Brezhnev era. The barrage of public relations gestures notwithstanding, Gorbachev, too, can be expected to be an equally staunch guardian and promoter of key Soviet geostrategic and doctrinal interests. After two and one-half years in power, he has yet to demonstrate any intention of reaching genuine accommodation with the West on any of the key issues he inherited from the Brezhnev era, with the possible exception of some aspects of arms control.

Frustrated Western Expectations. As long the foreign policy of the Soviet Union is informed by Communist messianism, a Manichaean vision of the mortal counterposition of the "two worlds," an ideological warfare between them, and by the imperial tradition of great power expansion, which Khrushchev, and now Gorbachev, never showed signs of discarding, Western expectations of a substantively "new," less aggressive, and more accommodating Soviet foreign policy will be frustrated again and again.

Of course, the West should try to take advantage of such potentially positive elements in the Khrushchev/Gorbachev style in foreign affairs as a more realistic approach to the relations with the West, the ability to recognize failure and to discontinue a failed policy, doctrinal flexibility, relative openness of mind, and the energy and intelligence of a Soviet modernizing leader.

But rather than "help" for Gorbachev, the U.S. and its allies should base their policies solely on their own long-term strategic interests. Only by refusing to give something for nothing and by responding decisively to every Soviet transgression can the West make a difference in Gorbachev's cost/benefit calculus and insure the least detrimental agenda possible for Western ideals and security.

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