of this character matter when they issue from a General Secretary. The language about taking into account the other side's legitimate interests, and restraining the arms race before the "equal danger" becomes less reliable, is new. It seems to imply a more mutual and balanced concept of international security than prevailed under Brezhnev's leadership. If so, the change may help to explain and validate the substantial movement in Soviet arms control positions since Gorbachev's succession.

There have in fact been a number of "deeds" to accompany Soviet words on arms control in the past year:

—On April 7, 1985, Gorbachev reintroduced the Soviet moratorium on deployment of additional SS-20's in Europe.

—On July 29 he announced a unilateral moratorium on Soviet nuclear testing until January 1 (later thrice extended), and invited the United States to join in.

—He came out of the November Summit without the "serious and productive" progress on arms control he was looking for, yet decided to continue the Summit process.

These are all, domestically, risk-taking ventures that strain Gorbachev's political flexibility. They give context to the far-reaching January 15 proposals. *(See next page—Ed.)*

Relations With the Third World

Here, too, the declarations of the XXVII Congress brought changes.

—The role of "national liberation," Soviet language describing revolution in the Third World, was greatly downplayed in this Congress.

—Gorbachev picked up a theme of previous congresses but elaborated it: "Today, too, we are firmly convinced that encouraging revolution from the outside, and doubly so by military means, is futile and inadmissible." He spoke also about the inadmissibility of "counter-revolution," in the Soviet lexicon a description of intervention by the U.S. and other capitalist states; but the generality of his language makes it applicable as well to intervention by socialist states.

—He acknowledged the resiliency of capitalist influence in the Third World, which "has in many ways managed to sustain the earlier relationships of economic dependence."

—Finally, the Party Program adopted by the Congress explicitly encourages Third World countries to resolve disputes among themselves and with the capitalist economic powers "by means of talks."

The tone and content of the XXVII Congress on Third World issues is thus clearly one of moderation. It is possible, but not certain given the evidence available, that those in the Soviet elite have prevailed who have been arguing that tensions created by conflict in the Third World undercut Soviet interests in relations with the United States and also the interests of "progressive forces" in the Third World.

Party-Military Relations

Given the strongly rooted perception in the United States, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, that military interests have dominated Soviet economic- and foreign-policy priorities, it was probably least expected that Gorbachev would recast party/military relations, especially in his first year. But strong evidence suggests that he has done just that.

First, Soviet military leaders were accorded a much lower profile in Gorbachev's first year than they had at the end of the Brezhnev period. The contrast between the central role played by Defense Minister Dmitry Ustinov in the last three years of the Brezhnev leadership and the role of his 74-year old successor, Marshal Sergey Sokolov, could hardly be greater. Ustinov in many ways propped up a sagging Brezhnev leadership and helped propel his successor, Yury Andropov, into office. Sokolov has played a reduced and ceremonial role in public and has achieved only candidate status in the Politburo. Similarly, the new Chief of the General Staff, Marshal Sergey Akhromeyev, has not taken anything like the visible role on political, economic, and military issues that his predecessor, Marshal Nikolay Ogarkov, had in the months leading up to and following the XXVI Party Congress.

Second, the policy preferences elsewhere articulated by these military leaders seem tame and insipid in their character. A series of articles published just before the Congress on February 22, Army-Navy Day, provide opportunity to assess those views. The articles of both Sokolov and Akhromeyev appear remarkably passive in contrast with those of the late Brezhnev years. Party control over the military is repeatedly stressed—in terms not only of the general strategy of the Soviet state, where party supremacy has always been acknowledged, but also on "military-technical" questions, where strong military leaders have usually been reluctant to concede leadership to civilian Party leaders. Moreover, the military leadership here recognizes that current economic conditions present the USSR with "complex and multi-faceted tasks," that investment in the country's military capability can only be resolved "in conjunction with (solution of) other tasks." The clear implication is that while Soviet defenses will continue to receive "everything necessary," the military will not get everything it desires under current economic priorities.

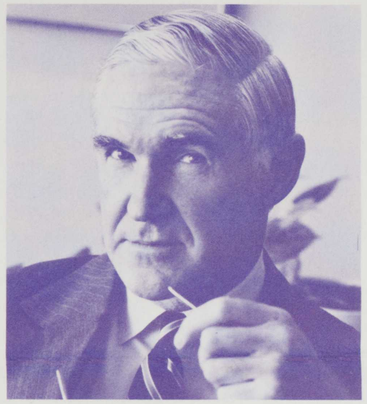
The principles of Party control over the military and of priority for economic growth over further increases in the rate of growth for military spending were thus accepted by a relatively subdued military leadership during Gorbachev's first year. That does not mean, of course, that Soviet military quiescence is indefinitely guaranteed. It is not, and nothing in the national history suggests that military interests can be discounted by the political leadership. But for now Gorbachev has brought his military under tighter reign than prevailed late in the period preceding his ascension.

Conclusion

The implications of the XXVII Party Congress for Soviet national security affairs come across as somewhat surprising, but analysis must be tentative. Gorbachev has taken some internal risks to improve his external relations. He has also, for the time being, brought into check a military leadership that had been restive in the last years of the Brezhnev period. For the moment, they support his priorities, at least in public. In declaratory policy toward the Third World the tone has changed, although at the moment the Soviets are still militarily engaged in Afghanistan and may be increasing their military assistance to Angola and Libya and North Korea. The line is nonetheless clear: Moscow's need to turn its economy around will take priority, and Third World clients, at least prospective ones, may find the Soviets a less generous supporter in the future. It remains true that in the general policy area of national security, the intriguing concepts of the Party Congress have yet to be translated into detailed and coherent policy.

The New Soviet Posture on Nuclear Armaments

by Townsend Hoopes



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The most striking foreign policy theme of the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of USSR, fully and repeatedly expounded, was that the Leninist doctrine of an inevitable, final, physical clash between Capitalism and Communism has been rendered obsolete—suicidal and therefore inoperative—by weapons technology. Soviet spokesmen have made the point before, but rarely with supporting analysis. In his marathon speech to the recent Congress, the new Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, seemed to make this theme the very basis of Soviet policy, repeatedly returned to it, was at pains to set it in context, and drew from it the conclusion that the superpowers share together a common problem of survival.

For example, the section of his speech on international policy contained these passages: "The character of present-day weaponry leaves no country with any hope of safeguarding itself solely with military and technical means, for example, by building up a defense, even the most powerful. To ensure security is seen increasingly as a political problem . . . The highest wisdom is not in caring exclusively for oneself, especially to the detriment of the other side . . . Without being blind to social, political and ideological differences, all have to master the science and art of restraint and circumspection on the international scene. . . . Thus, the objective—I emphasize objective—conditions have taken shape in which confrontation between capitalism and socialism can proceed only and exclusively in forms of peaceful competition and peaceful contest."

General Themes

This emphatic Gorbachev assessment of the new realities was foreshadowed in his lengthy interview with Time Magazine last September, and indeed the comprehensive arms control proposals of January 15 proceed from the same new Soviet conclusion: that nuclear weapons are unusable in the pursuit of any rational political goal, that present arsenals are much too large, that a "tremendous responsibility" devolves upon the leaders of the US and the USSR; for: "Nuclear weapons harbor a hurricane with the potential of sweeping the human race from the face of the Earth."

Are these to be taken as hopeful portents, indicating that Soviet international policy is now based on a more penetrating, realistic assessment of conditions? Or should they be dismissed as more Soviet propaganda—a new and phony "peace offensive"?

A reasonable assessment of the January 15 proposals is that they appear to create a considerable opportunity to halt the deployment of further new weapons, reduce and stabilize the enormously redundant destructive power on both sides, and foster a climate for better political relations between the two powers. They are tactically adroit, in the sense of challenging the Administration to move beyond rhetoric to action regarding weapons reductions. They do so by going more than halfway to meet several basic, long-held American positions—for example, on verification and middle-range missiles in Europe. In major respects, they are far more reasonable and forthcoming than any previous Soviet proposals.

There is other evidence of Soviet seriousness on arms control. The dominant goal to emerge from the 27th Party Congress was revitalization of the Soviet economy. But to achieve this even partially, Gorbachev needs a stable international environment, and especially a stable relationship with the United States. He needs, above all, to avoid a vast new arms race for that would severely constrain his ambitious plans for economic growth.

One Gorbachev proposal calls for total elimination of nuclear weapons by the end of the century—an unrealistic idea. But suffice it to say that American political archives are also replete with similar expressions of piety. Such ritual incantations should be quietly set aside; our serious attention should focus on what is practical in the new Soviet package.

Particular Proposals

The most immediately promising, though not the most important, proposal calls for the "complete elimination" of all intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe. This amounts to acceptance of the original U.S. "zero option" which sought a total elimination of Soviet SS-20s targeted on Europe, in exchange for no deployment in Europe of land-based cruise and Pershing II missiles under U.S. control. The Soviet proposal is unencumbered by inclusion of U.S. strategic bombers based in England or U.S. carrier aircraft offshore, even though these continue to pose a direct nuclear threat to Soviet territory. Nor does it insist on reducing, or even counting, the British and French nuclear forces; it asks rather that these national forces refrain from "build-up"

Administration spokesmen have raised the fear that the mobile SS-20s now in Europe would simply be moved across the Ural mountains into Soviet Asia from whence they could be redeployed to Europe in the event of crisis. In fact, large-scale redeployment of SS-20s would not be a quick or easy operation—certainly no easier than the redeployment of Pershing II missiles from the U.S. back to West Germany. Moreover, the Soviet Chief of Staff has now given assurances that the European SS-20s would be dismantled or destroyed, and Gorbachev has made a special