

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Digital Library Collections

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

Collection: Executive Secretariat, NSC:
National Security Study Directives (NSSD): Records, 1981-1987
Folder Title: NSSD 11-82
US Policy Toward the Soviet Union (7 of 8)
Box: Box 91278

To see more digitized collections visit:
<https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digitized-textual-material>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Inventories, visit:
<https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/white-house-inventories>

Contact a reference archivist at: **reagan.library@nara.gov**

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/research-support/citation-guide>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

91001
1
IF FILE NSSD 11-82

Response to
NSSD 11-82

U.S. Relations With The USSR

December 6, 1982

DECLASSIFIED

Authority E96-0691 #134 SMF 1/11/00
BY LOI NARA DATE 10/27/06

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

Contents

INTRODUCTION

Part I - The Determinants of Soviet Behavior	p. 1
A. Soviet Strengths and Weaknesses	p. 5
(1) Internal Factors	p. 5
a. The Economy	p. 5
b. Social Issues	p. 6
c. Political Process and Structure	p. 8
(2) Foreign Policy	p. 8
a. Instruments of Policy	p. 8
b. The Soviet Union and International Communism	p. 9
c. The Economic Burdens of Empire	p. 11
d. Opportunities and Challenges	p. 11
B. Prospects for Change	p. 13
(1) Changes in the Political System	p. 14
a. A Military Coup?	p. 15
b. Return to One-Man Rule	p. 15
c. "Liberalization" of the System	p. 15
(2) Changes in Policies Through the Mid-1980s	p. 16
a. Economic Policy	p. 16
b. Military Spending	p. 17
c. Foreign Policy	p. 17
d. Longer-Range Uncertainties	p. 18
C. Implications for U.S. Policy	p. 19
(1) U.S. Influence on Soviet Behavior	p. 20
(2) Impact on the Political System	p. 20
(3) Leverage over Policy	p. 21

Part II - Meeting the Soviet Challenge	p. 23
A. Shaping the Soviet Environment: Areas of Engagement	p. 24
(1) Functional	p. 24
a. Military Strategy	p. 24
b. Economic Policy	p. 26
c. Political Action	p. 30
(2) Geopolitical	p. 32
a. The Industrial Democracies	p. 32
b. The Third World	p. 33
c. Weakening the Soviet Empire (Eastern Europe, Cuba, Third World Alliances)	p. 34
d. China	p. 36
e. Yugoslavia	p. 37
(3) Bilateral Relationships	p. 38
a. Arms Control	p. 38
b. Official Dialogue	p. 38
B. Priorities in the U.S. Approach: Maximizing Restraining Leverage Over Soviet Behavior	p. 41
C. Articulating The U.S. Approach: Sustaining Public and Congressional Support	p. 43

4

Response to NSSD 11-82:

U.S. Relations With The USSR

INTRODUCTION

The record of US-Soviet relations since October, 1917, has been one of tension and hostility, interrupted by short-lived periods of cooperation. The Soviet challenge to U.S. interests has many roots, including: (1) an imperial tradition; (2) threat perceptions rooted in Russian history; and (3) the nature of the Communist regime, its internal insecurity, its superpower ambitions, and its ideologically-mandated animosity toward the United States as the "main bastion of capitalism."

U.S. tensions with the Soviet Union have resulted in substantial measure from the unrelenting growth of Soviet military power and Moscow's readiness to use force in ways which threaten U.S. Allies and pose a threat to the security of the United States. The U.S. has built up its military power vis-a-vis the Soviets, and has pursued a policy of containment on the periphery of the Soviet Union. Such responses are essential, and the United States must sustain the resources and the will to compete effectively with the Soviet Union. This will remain the primary focus of U.S. policy toward the USSR.

Because Soviet aggressiveness has sources in the Soviet internal system, an effective national strategy requires that U.S. policies toward that country also take into account their impact on its internal development. For example, it is inconsistent to raise the defense budget to meet the Soviet threat and at the same time allow Western economic relations with Moscow to contribute directly to the growth of Soviet military power. There is also concern among Americans about the human rights situation in the Soviet Union and the lack of individual freedom in Soviet society. This too requires that the U.S. take into account the nature of the Soviet system in formulation of policy toward the USSR.

U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union proceeds on the assumption that the maintenance of power by the Soviet regime rests ultimately on force and that Soviet external aggressiveness stems in part from the nature of the Soviet political system. Therefore, the U.S. must, within the limits of its capabilities, design political, economic, and other measures which advance the long-term objective of promoting: (1) the decentralization and demilitarization of the Soviet economy; (2) the weakening of the power and privileged position of the ruling Communist elite (nomenklatura); (3) gradual democratization of the USSR.

~~SECRET~~
DECL: ~~OADR~~

5

~~SECRET~~

- 2 -

The U.S. almost certainly lacks the capability to bring about major beneficial changes in the Soviet internal order over the near to middle term. Indeed, there is a real possibility that increased external pressure on the Soviet Union could, at least in the short run, give the ruling Communist elite greater incentive for internal repression and external aggressiveness. However, it is also possible that carefully designed and implemented U.S. policies could have an important, if marginal, beneficial impact on Soviet internal developments. This impact could grow over time if there is a sustained effort to see that U.S. policies toward the Soviet Union systematically take into account the potential impact on Soviet internal developments.

Thus, the first two tracks of U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union are:

- To compete effectively on a sustained basis with the Soviet Union in the international arena, particularly in the overall military balance and in geographical regions of priority concern to the United States.
- To undertake a coordinated, long-term effort to reduce the threat that the Soviet system poses to our interests.

There is an important third track. The U.S. must engage the Soviet Union in dialogue and negotiations to attempt to reach agreements based on strict reciprocity and mutual interest. This is particularly important when the Soviet Union is in the midst of a process of political succession.

All three tracks of U.S. policy must be implemented simultaneously and sustained over the long term. It will be important that the West, with firm U.S. leadership, create and sustain negative and positive incentives powerful enough to influence Soviet behavior. Moscow must know that irresponsible and aggressive behavior will incur costs that would outweigh any gains. At the same time, the U.S. must make clear to the Soviets that real restraint in their behavior would pave the way for an East-West relationship that might bring important benefits for the Soviet Union. It is particularly important that this message be conveyed clearly during the succession period, since this may be a particularly opportune time for external forces to affect the policies of Brezhnev's successors.

The study which follows is not specifically an analysis of the Soviet political transition, although its implications for U.S. policy are addressed. This study is instead designed to outline a US-Soviet policy for the near to medium term. The first part of the study examines in detail the determinants of Soviet behavior, the strengths and weaknesses of the Soviet system, prospects for future developments in Soviet foreign policy and within the Soviet Union itself, and the

~~SECRET~~

6

~~SECRET~~

~~- 3 -~~

degree of vulnerability of the system to external leverage. The second part sets forth in detail a U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union, with emphasis on the role of the military balance, U.S. relationships with Allies and developing countries, interaction with Soviet allies in Eastern Europe and the Third World, and bilateral relations with the Soviet Union itself. Within the latter, the study places particular emphasis on how economic relations and expanded political action programs can be structured and utilized to advance U.S. interests.

~~SECRET~~

7

~~SECRET~~

- 4 -

PART I - THE DETERMINANTS OF SOVIET BEHAVIOR

The Soviet challenge to U.S. security interests is rooted in Moscow's conception of its relationship with the United States as fundamentally adversarial. This concept, based on ideological antagonism, geopolitical rivalry and an imperial tradition, governs Soviet behavior and also shapes Soviet perceptions of U.S. policies toward Moscow. Its most dramatic manifestation is growing Soviet military power and capabilities which form the cutting edge of Moscow's persistent efforts to extend its global presence and influence at the expense of the United States and the West.

Communist ideology posits an inevitable struggle between capitalism and socialism and thus views non-socialist states both as potential targets for revolution and as potential threats. It sees class antagonism as the driving force behind political and economic change, and the policies of other nations as shaped by domestic economic and social struggles. This view provides the intellectual prism through which Soviet leaders perceive the outside world, reinforces the expansionist tendencies inherited from the Russian tradition, and assures them that history is on their side.

Most importantly, Communist ideology is the main source of the regime's legitimacy. It explains why there is only one political party, which controls the state administration and all spheres of society, why the media are subject to censorship, and why the party Politburo dominates political life. This ideology also serves to buttress and rationalize the privileged position of the ruling elite (nomenklatura) in Soviet society. For a variety of reasons--including a deeply rooted fear of "anarchy" and the absence of any regularized process for transferring power--questions of the regime's legitimacy continue to be of basic concern to Soviet leaders.

But Soviet authorities also see their own international role in terms of traditional great power interests. Their specific policies and tactics are perforce often shaped by geopolitical considerations. Thus ideology and the imperatives of great power interests are mutually reinforcing.

The insecurity and suspicion engendered by Russian history and Marxist-Leninist ideology have been tempered somewhat by the USSR's emergence as a military superpower and the growth of its political role in world affairs. Soviet leaders see military power as the essential foundation of an assertive foreign policy. The pattern of their policies since the mid-1970's suggests increased confidence in their global power position--expressed in Soviet parlance as "the changing correlation of forces in favor of socialism." The Soviet leadership also sees continuing opportunities to exploit and foster international tensions and instabilities to their own advantage and

~~SECRET~~

8

~~SECRET~~

- 5 -

the detriment of the United States. At the same time a new element of insecurity probably has been added by the growing recognition that serious domestic problems seem to defy solution.

A. Soviet Strengths And Weaknesses

The political system that has evolved out of this historical and ideological tradition has provided the means for a serious challenge to U.S. interests. Its leaders have formidable military power, considerable economic might and an impressive political action capability at their disposal. The highly centralized decision making apparatus enhances the Soviet leadership's ability to develop a cohesive foreign and domestic policy and to move quickly to take advantage of international opportunities. At the same time such centralization often makes Soviet domestic policy rigid, and ideological orthodoxy inhibits adaptations to changing internal and international conditions. These strengths and weaknesses will be particularly evident as the Soviet Union deals with major global challenges and opportunities in the 1980s.

(1) Internal Factors

a. The Economy

The USSR has entered a period of slow economic growth that confronts the leadership with tough policy choices. Shortfalls in industrial production, and four consecutive harvest failures have reduced the growth in Soviet GNP to less than 2 percent a year since 1978--its lowest rate since World War II.

This decline indicates that the formula Moscow has used to stimulate growth over the past 25 years -- maximum inputs of labor and investment -- no longer works. During the past few years, the USSR has experienced:

- a sharp slowdown in oil production growth and a decline in coal production;
- a major rise in raw material costs;
- a fall-off in investment and labor-force growth; and
- a sharp decline in labor productivity growth.

To judge from 11th Five-Year Plan figures, the Soviet leadership nevertheless expects GNP to grow 4 percent per year through the mid-1980s. This goal, however, is based on highly unrealistic assumptions about labor productivity growth. We estimate that GNP will continue to grow at less than 2 percent through the mid-1980s.

These economic difficulties have not led the leadership to make fundamental changes in policy. To maintain the military buildup, it

~~SECRET~~

9

~~SECRET~~

- 6 -

has lowered the rates of growth for consumption and capital investment. If these priorities continue, however, the living standard will hold steady and may decline and investment will be squeezed further. If overall economic growth remains at 2 percent or less, and if defense spending continues its long-term growth rate of about 4 percent a year, the defense burden, as measured by share of GNP going to defense spending, will approach 20 percent by the early 1990s compared to its current level of 13-14 percent. This would sharply restrict the resources available to non-military claimants and heighten political tensions over allocation decisions.

Despite these gloomy prospects, the USSR continues to possess great economic strengths. It has:

- a wealth of natural resources, leading the world in the production of such key industrial commodities as oil, steel, iron ore, and nickel;
- the world's largest military-industrial complex; and
- a highly centralized economy that has enabled the leadership to command resources and set priorities between regions and sectors.

Moreover, although keenly aware of their difficulties, Soviet leaders apparently believe that the 1990s will bring some relief from at least two of their major problems -- manpower shortages and energy constraints. They also take comfort in the gloomy projections of growth for most Western industrial nations and have expressed doubt publicly and privately about the United States' ability to carry out its defense buildup.

b. Social Issues

The sources of popular discontent in the Soviet Union -- a perceived decline in the quality of life, continuing restrictions on freedom of expression and belief, and rising national consciousness among more than 20 major ethnic groups -- pose problems of varying severity for the Soviet leadership. Discontent over the quality of Soviet life probably represents the most immediate and important challenge. The Soviet people no longer are confident that their standard of living will continue to improve. Food shortages have become more apparent and the availability of some consumer goods has dropped. The sense of rising expectations, made possible by real consumer advances until the mid-1970s, has yielded to an apparent growth of dissatisfaction and cynicism. This is manifesting itself in declining growth in labor productivity -- a trend that will make it more difficult to achieve the rates of economic growth that the leaders plan. Recent regime actions -- such as massive imports of grain and the creation of special food distribution systems -- indicate that the Soviet leaders are aware of the problems, but their policies are as yet inadequate to solve them.

~~SECRET~~

10

~~SECRET~~

- 7 -

The slowing of economic growth, and the consequent near stagnation in per-capita consumption, has led to a growing malaise in Soviet society -- manifested in growing consumption of alcohol, declining life expectancy, increasing labor turnover, sporadic strike activity, a flourishing black market, and widespread corruption. Such phenomena are not only contributing to the reduction of labor productivity, but also creating elite concern over the political implications of this shift in popular attitudes.

The malaise in Soviet society is symptomatic of an underlying loss of commitment to the system and to the political order. Although impossible to quantify, the ideological underpinnings of the system have clearly been eroding. Some erosion was probably inevitable as the generation that made the revolution passed from the scene. The post-war generation, which now comprises a majority of the population, had no direct experience of the war and of the purges and has come to expect more in the way of material comforts. But a more fundamental problem has been the increasingly palpable inconsistency between the Communist ideal -- equality, community, etc. -- and the reality of a bureaucratic state whose principal purpose is maintaining in power the present elite. The threat this loss of moral authority poses to the regime and its order is hard to determine -- for the Soviet leaders as well as for ourselves. But from the Soviet perspective the trends are not good, and it is hard to see how the current set of leaders could lead or control a reformation that would create a sense of shared belief in the rightness of the present order. It seems likely that this problem will loom larger in the concerns of Soviet leaders, and they will feel themselves increasingly defensive and vulnerable to efforts by the West to give succor to the idea that beneficent change is possible in the USSR, particularly in light of the disintegration of the Communist Party in Poland.

The Soviet leadership thus far has been successful in isolating and repressing political, religious, and cultural dissent through widespread arrests and imprisonment of dissident leaders, confinement in psychiatric hospitals, and exile. It has been far less successful in containing illicit economic activity that disrupts economic plans and programs. In the long term, dissidence and non-conformity could become more widespread -- because of dissatisfaction with living standards, a continuing decline in ideological commitment, and an apparent resurgence of interest in religious faith -- and require even more leadership attention. However, over the next 10 years there is little prospect that such activity will get out of hand and threaten party rule.

Discontent among the minority nationalities also represents a latent vulnerability. There have been sporadic protests associated with linguistic and cultural policies and perceived imbalances in resource allocation. There is no widespread, disruptive protest

~~SECRET~~

4

~~SECRET~~

- 8 -

now, however, nor does any appear likely in the near or medium term. Regime policies -- granting linguistic, territorial, and some cultural autonomy; improving the standard of living; and expanding the educational base -- combined with the use of repressive police power, have thus far ensured the dominance of Great Russians over other nationalities. A rising national consciousness among many of these groups, however, suggests that discontent could eventually become more serious. It has resulted in occasional work stoppages and demonstrations -- particularly in the Baltic States, the Ukraine, and Central Asia. It is impossible to predict the degree of strain on the system which nationality problems might cause in coming decades. There is, however, a possibility that these tensions might eventually force the regime to reassess its basic approach to the problem.

c. Political Process and Structure

Soviet leaders exercise pervasive control over political activity in the USSR, and their determination to ensure the preeminence of the party and implementation of its decisions is an important underpinning of all national policy objectives. The successful pursuit of this aim, together with effective restrictions on public dissent, has given unity and cohesiveness to both domestic and foreign policy.

This focus on the maintenance of party control, however, also has introduced some rigidity and inefficiency that have been harmful to the pursuit of national goals. This has been especially evident in the economy. Party leaders, despite their interest in improving the efficiency and technological base of the economy, have been reluctant to back fully the kind of decentralization and economic incentives that would contribute to this end, mainly for fear that this would dilute their power. They have also been unwilling to codify their powers and responsibilities within the political system. Even a superficially smooth political succession creates potentially disruptive personal and policy conflict. The lack of any mechanism to ensure rejuvenation of the administrative elite has reduced the flow of fresh ideas. A continuation of this situation could challenge the self-confidence and cohesion of the party and weaken its ability to cope with growing problems and pressures.

(2) Foreign Policy

a. Instruments of Policy

To judge from the USSR's sustained heavy investment in military forces and weapons research and development, the Soviet leaders believe that military power is the principal basis of their influence and status in international relations, and in controlling their own population. In strategic nuclear forces, the Soviets probably now

~~SECRET~~

12

~~SECRET~~

- 9 -

credit themselves with aggregate nuclear capabilities at least equal to those of the United States and in some respects, such as the ability to threaten land-based missile silos, with superiority. The Soviets have also significantly improved theater nuclear and conventional forces, thus reinforcing Moscow's regional superiority vis-a-vis China and Western Europe.

In the Third World, arms sales, training, and advisors also are effective instruments of Soviet policy. While such aid does not necessarily translate directly into political leverage, it usually is the keystone of Soviet relations with less developed countries and with revolutionary and insurgent groups. Despite Soviet interest in garnering hard currency from arms sales, Moscow has been willing, where it perceives political advantage, to make major concessions, such as extended repayment periods and payment in soft currency. This, combined with their apparent responsiveness, allows the Soviets to depict their actions as manifestations of solidarity with the Third World.

Another trend in Soviet Third World involvement is the continuing use of proxies and other intermediaries, together with covert Soviet involvement in supporting insurgent groups and in aiding the military ventures of client or dependent regimes. For the Soviets, the proxy relationship -- one that has proven most successful in Angola and Ethiopia -- minimizes the level of direct Soviet involvement while achieving Soviet aims and projecting the image of "socialist solidarity" with the recipient regimes.

Foreign debt obligations and hard currency shortages, however, affect the overall level of Moscow's commitment to client regimes. The hard currency crunch has made the Soviets reluctant to provide other clients with economic aid as extensive as that provided to Cuba or Vietnam. The net result is that Moscow is more dependent on military aid as an entree of influence in the Third World.

In recent years the Soviets also have strengthened their traditional diplomatic activities, supplementing them with increased usage of a broad range of pseudo-official and covert activities that the Soviets themselves refer to as "active measures." These include political training, covert support to insurgencies, grooming of agents of influence and propaganda activities. The increased use of such measures is in part a reflection of the importance Moscow attributes to the "ideological struggle," which is waged not only through propaganda, but also with psychological warfare and subversion.

b. The Soviet Union and International Communism

The international Communist movement is no longer the unambiguous asset to the USSR that it once was. Soviet leadership and control

~~SECRET~~

13

~~SECRET~~

- 10 -

of both ruling and non-ruling Communist parties is under increasing challenge. The turmoil in Poland and problems in Romania underscore the limited effectiveness of Moscow's costly policy of buying stability and loyalty in Eastern Europe through economic subsidies.

East European countries, beset by economic problems, are being pressed to forge closer economic links to the USSR. The objective possibilities for the USSR to continue to pursue a policy of buying political stability there, however, are fading quickly due to Soviet economic problems and Western resistance to deeper economic involvement in Eastern Europe. In the coming decade slow economic growth in Eastern Europe will threaten regime stability in bloc countries. The downfall of a corrupt and incompetent party leadership in Poland, precipitated by the protests of a popular workers' movement, and the use of the military to fill the gap, also raise disquieting questions about the legitimacy and effectiveness of Communist party rule throughout the bloc.

In dealing with these problems, Moscow's options are limited. An economic bailout would be too costly. Economic reform and greater Western involvement would diminish central control and could stimulate pressures for political reform. A resort to greater repression, on the other hand, would further complicate Moscow's relations in the West and the Third World.

Beyond Eastern Europe, another serious challenge to Soviet control and orthodoxy in the world Communist movement comes from Eurocommunism. The West European parties are trying to balance their ties to the Soviet Communist Party with their own national and political interests. They resist Soviet efforts to subordinate national parties to Soviet control. Criticism of Soviet policies has now become common and probably will increase if the Soviets increase repression at home and political and military expansion abroad.

The return of the Chinese Communist Party to active involvement in the international movement and its opposition to Soviet hegemony also are potentially severe challenges facing the Soviet leadership. The Chinese are in the process of forming a tacit alliance with several of the leading West European parties. The Chinese, in addition, have indicated their intention to compete with the Soviets for influence with "progressive forces" in the Third World, including such pro-Soviet radical regimes as Ethiopia, Angola, and Mozambique.

Moscow's concern over these developments and over US-Chinese relations animated their long-standing desire to work out their problems with Beijing. The recent talks in China have come at Beijing's initiative, and so far the Chinese have made demands regarding Soviet border troops, support for Vietnam, and the invasion of Afghanistan which Moscow will not be willing to

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

- 11 -

satisfy. Still it is very much in the USSR's interest to get a closer relationship with the Chinese, and it is possible that the Soviets will make, at some future time, further gestures to move the relationship into a less antagonistic phase.

c. The Economic Burdens of Empire

The Soviets almost certainly believe that their economic support of other Communist countries and clients brings substantial strategic and political benefits, but rising costs and economic stringencies are prompting a tougher aid posture. Assistance to East European and Third World clients rose dramatically from \$1.7 billion in 1971 to \$23 billion in 1980 -- some 1.5 percent of GNP. Moscow is prepared to shoulder a large aid burden for its Communist clients; their economies are generally in trouble, and their stability is important to Soviet foreign policy objectives. The Soviet leadership is attempting to slow the rise in aid costs, however, by cutting subsidized oil deliveries to some East European allies, refusing increased deliveries of fuel to Vietnam and demanding that allies end their trade deficits with the USSR.

Moscow's tight-fisted aid policy toward non-Communist LDCs will almost certainly continue as well. Moscow's present hard currency problems will make it even more reluctant to extend substantial hard currency aid to such countries as Nicaragua, despite repeated requests for it. Several radical clients, such as Ethiopia and South Yemen, are increasingly unhappy with their inability to augment Soviet military support with extensive economic cooperation.

d. Opportunities and Challenges

Through careful and calculating use of their assets, the Soviets have made important international gains, most prominently in the Third World where they now have a significant larger number of clients and better access than at the beginning of the Brezhnev era. The Soviets are now faced with both opportunities and challenges abroad. Their international strengths derive for the most part from their huge military investments and their willingness and ability to exploit instability in countries and regions important to U.S. interests; their vulnerabilities stem principally from changes in the international environment that could threaten past gains.

The Soviet Union's growing military power has strengthened its ability to pursue political goals in Western Europe. By threatening additional nuclear deployments if NATO's INF decision is implemented, the Soviets are in effect attempting to force the West Europeans to accept de facto Soviet military superiority on the continent.

The Soviets also believe Washington's ability to raise the economic and military costs of the East-West competition is subject

~~SECRET~~

5

~~SECRET~~

- 12 -

to competing U.S. economic priorities and to reluctance on the part of U.S. allies to follow our lead. The Soviets think that conflict between Western Europe and the United States over arms control and East-West economic relations presents opportunities to provoke divisions within the alliance. In particular, the failure thus far of U.S. efforts to dissuade its West European allies from participation in the Yamal gas pipeline project has probably encouraged the Soviets in their assumption that differences in the Western alliance can be exploited to Soviet advantage. Moscow also remains hopeful that NATO's consensus in favor of new intermediate-range missile deployments can be broken, perhaps leading to a serious rupture in the alliance.

In the Far East, Moscow's military buildup opposite China remains not only a lever on the PRC but a potential bargaining chip should Beijing wish to move seriously in the dialogue now underway and to ameliorate Sino-Soviet tensions. Opportunities in the Far East are also afforded by the frictions in U.S.-Chinese relations and potential divergences between the United States and Japan stemming from trade problems, disagreements over economic sanctions against the USSR, and Japanese reluctance to accelerate defense spending.

Moscow believes that its military investment also has improved somewhat its capabilities for projection of its military power into more distant regions. Although the Soviets recognize the limitations of that capability against a major military power, they hope that their increased capacity will deter U.S. military action against Soviet proxies or clients and promote trends in regional conflicts favorable to themselves. Moscow's increased involvement in the Third World also reflects a belief that the United States has been constrained from direct military intervention there by the trauma of Vietnam and the difficulty of reaching a domestic political consensus on foreign policy in general. Indeed, political and economic instability throughout the Third World, together with the radicalization of postcolonial elites, have been viewed by the Soviets as major U.S. and Western vulnerabilities and, conversely, relatively low-risk opportunities for the Soviet Union to insinuate itself through programs of military and technical aid, political training and "active measures."

An overriding issue is the extent to which Moscow's international posture will be affected by a growing preoccupation with the country's great, and growing, domestic problems. Economic problems, the loss of ideological commitment, a growing malaise in society and the succession process now underway should impinge more on the consciousness of the leaders in the Kremlin in the coming decade than they did in the past. It is possible that the post-Brezhnev leadership might wish to turn its attention to sorting out its own internal political squabbles and to avoid foreign policy actions that they perceive as risky and deliberately provocative. They may, in fact, propose

~~SECRET~~

16

~~SECRET~~

- 13 -

initiatives designed to give them a respite to deal with internal problems. They also may try to reduce external economic commitments in order to devote more resources to domestic economic problems. This would be especially likely if there is growing domestic unrest, in the form of strikes and demonstrations, over declining economic conditions. At this juncture all of these domestic problems seem manageable, but neither the West nor the Soviets can be confident about what the future may bring.

The deteriorating US-Soviet relationship is a major source of concern to Moscow, potentially eroding Soviet military and foreign policy gains of the past decade. Planned U.S. strategic and non-strategic nuclear programs also are seen by the Soviets as an attempt to negate the USSR's strategic advantages and to create a credible "first strike" capability.

In the Far East, the Soviets view China's improved relations with both the United States and Japan as a serious security problem, raising the possibility that the USSR might be opposed by all three countries in a conflict in the Far East. More immediately, the USSR suspects that this trilateral rapprochement portends active U.S. and Japanese aid in the modernization of Chinese armed forces. Moscow's territorial disputes with both China and Japan, moreover, are major obstacles to any dramatic improvement in its relations with either country.

In the Third World, the Soviets recognize that even where they have substantial political and military investments their continued influence is not guaranteed. The defeat of Soviet clients in Lebanon and Soviet inability to intervene effectively was the most recent demonstration. Similarly, the Soviets see current U.S. efforts to broker a more comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East and to achieve a settlement in Namibia as potentially leading to a further erosion of Soviet influence in the Third World.

B. Prospects for Change

Soviet economic and social problems will provide the strongest impetus for systemic or policy change over the next 10 years. Unless major changes are forthcoming, economic growth rates will remain at historically low levels, popular dissatisfaction with a perceived decline in the quality of life will grow, and resource allocation decisions will become more difficult for the leadership. The gravity of these problems for the Soviet system, however, remains difficult to measure, and there are important uncertainties in our judgments about the possibility that they could cause major system or policy changes.

~~SECRET~~

While the rhetoric of the Soviet leadership reflects concern, there is no sense of mortal danger to the Soviet state. The gloomier projections of foreign observers and dissident Soviet citizens, on the other hand, reflect a perception that Soviet problems are intractable and less optimism that the added manpower and energy resources the Soviets are counting on in the 1990s will reverse adverse economic trends.

Even with a more negative assessment of Soviet economic and social difficulties, however, we believe that in the next decade the strengths of the system -- its control mechanisms, its economic power, and (despite growing restiveness) the patriotism and passivity of its populace -- will almost certainly allow Soviet leaders to contain internal pressures that might result in changes of basic philosophy or the nature of Communist party rule. While the leadership will have to cope with important long-term vulnerabilities, it does not, in our judgment, appear to be faced with an imminent challenge to the stability of its rule. Preserving this stability, however, may ultimately require the regime to devote more attention and resources to its economic problems and to maintaining an acceptable standard of living rather than to foreign adventures or to continuing an expanding rate of military growth.

While this assessment leads us to believe that the prospect for major systemic change in the next few years is relatively low, the likelihood of policy shifts is much higher, and some of these could set the scene for broader changes in the system over the long run. The immediate post-Brezhnev leadership will almost certainly make a more vigorous effort in the next 3-5 years to reverse the economic slowdown, and in the process alter sectoral and regional resource allocations, administrative structures, prices and incentives, and even tighten administrative controls. Toward the end of the decade and with the emergence of a new generation of leaders, more far-reaching solutions to this fundamental problem could emerge, involving perhaps much greater use of market forces, cuts in the growth rate for military spending or more repression. At the same time, any group of leaders almost certainly will continue to rely on military power as a key instrument of foreign policy and will seek to maintain its competitive strength vis-a-vis the United States. They are likely to count on Third World developments to provide new political and diplomatic opportunities as well as openings for subversion.

(1) Changes in the Political System

Despite internal weaknesses, the institutions of political control remain strong and firmly entrenched in the USSR. Popular discontent -- although threatening to economic goals -- does not as yet challenge the party's authority. Revolutionary collapse or major

alterations in the system are highly unlikely in the next three to five years. It is much more likely that the current system, based on the privilege and power of the ruling elite and the bureaucratic police and military power of the state, will remain in place, perhaps buttressed by increased appeals to and reliance upon Great Russian nationalism.

a. A military coup?

A military takeover within the next 10 years is highly unlikely. Although the military has the organizational skills and certainly the muscle to take charge, it has been indoctrinated from the regime's beginnings to stand aside from higher politics and historically has rarely been a major political actor. Moreover, its interests have been well served by the current party leadership. It has, for example, been given a large role in defining the security threat and in determining the programs required to deal with it -- its two main political interests. The party, in addition, has developed a wide array of checks and controls to forestall a military coup. The military probably would attempt to assume power only in the event that it perceived a serious undermining of social discipline and threat to the military's priority claim to resources or under conditions of political and economic chaos similar to those that have arisen in the Polish crisis.

b. Return to One-Man Rule

Within the framework of the existing system of party rule, however, a variety of changes are possible. Although Andropov will not initially have Brezhnev's authority, the time required for his consolidation of power could be far shortened by a shared sense of urgent national tasks. During the next decade, Andropov or another leader could come to exercise power far in excess of that wielded by Brezhnev or Khrushchev. Such a development could result from frustration with the lack of clear national direction, a perception that more discipline is needed in the party and society, and a confluence of serious domestic and international problems. The emergence of such a leader, less constricted by the need for consensus, would make major policy shifts and changes much more likely. Domestic policies probably would take an authoritarian turn, but external policies would depend as well on other internal and external factors and thus could range from highly aggressive to pragmatic.

c. "Liberalization" of the System

Another possibility would be some liberalizing reform that would allow for much greater personal freedom and decentralization of political and economic authority. This seems a less likely prospect, considering the absence of effective popular pressure for such

19

~~SECRET~~

- 16 -

change, the strength of the regime's control mechanisms, and the apparent lack of significant sentiment in that direction within the Soviet establishment. It is possible that a Soviet Government, while preoccupied with internal reform, would seek to stabilize the international environment and thus be somewhat less prone to external adventures. Given the nature of the great power rivalry, however, a "liberal" Soviet regime would not necessarily be more accommodating to U.S. interests. Indeed, such a regime might be more effective at overcoming some of the Soviet Union's systemic and policy weaknesses, making it an even more formidable adversary.

(2) Changes in Policies through the Mid-1980s

More likely than systemic change are changes in specific policies, some probably following shortly on Brezhnev's death and the beginning of a long-term political transition in the Soviet Union. Although our knowledge of Soviet internal debate is limited, there have been discernible differences among Politburo members on several key issues. Conflict over these and other issues, heightened by political jockeying and the complexity of the country's problems, could lead to major policy shifts in the next three to five years.

a. Economic Policy

The most immediate changes are likely in economic policy, where the current investment strategy has prompted considerable debate. Differences in priorities already have emerged between the pronouncements of one group (represented by former Brezhnev deputy Kirilenko, Shcherbitskiy, and others) that has advocated the priority development of heavy industry, and another (represented mainly by Chernenko) that has emphasized the need to increase the availability of consumer goods. Since Andropov made few public comments on this subject before Brezhnev's death, we have little hard information concerning his stance on these issues. Whatever the outcome of this debate, some reallocation of resources almost certainly will be advocated in the immediate post-Brezhnev era, with agriculture -- in the absence of its principal patron -- becoming a likely target. Other sectors also will be affected by the political fortunes of their sponsors, however, making the eventual economic beneficiaries largely uncertain.

In addition to investment disputes, succession politics may bring forth new proposals to improve the economy's efficiency. Concern over declining growth already has led some leaders to reevaluate economic and administrative reforms they earlier found unacceptable. Since 1978 several Soviet leaders, reportedly including Andropov, have publicly endorsed Hungary's "New Economic Mechanism" -- a system based on centrally formulated plans and economic goals but using some market forces to guide the economy at the micro-level.

~~SECRET~~

Although there is little prospect that the Soviet Union will adopt changes so sweeping, some administrative reforms will almost certainly be enacted. The multitude of functionally related and overlapping ministries might be placed under more centralized management. This could be accompanied by some decentralization of operational authority -- a move that already has been at least started in the agricultural sector. (It is in this area that the Hungarian model has been most closely studied and emulated.) Changes that are politically feasible, however, probably will not significantly improve the economic situation.

b. Military Spending

Concern about the domestic economy also could eventually impel one or another leader to propose in the mid-1980s some reduction in the rate of growth of military spending, if not an absolute cut as Khrushchev did in the mid-1950s. A number of additional factors, however, make significant reductions in the growth of the defense budget unlikely in the near term, including

- the political commitment of most Soviet leaders to a strong military posture;
- the momentum of weapon development and production programs that are underway; and
- the challenge of planned U.S. defense programs.

In the succession environment, contestants for power will, in the absence of an existing consensus, be unlikely to risk antagonizing the military establishment and conservative forces in the party by proposing cuts in defense spending. Indeed, the military could even come away from the present power struggle with some increase in the rate of growth of defense spending for a few years.

Over time, as the post-Brezhnev leadership struggles with declining economic growth, there will likely be greater pressure to reduce the growth in military spending in order to free up the labor and capital resources urgently needed in key civilian sectors. In this connection, the cost-avoidance benefits of arms control agreements could assume greater importance. Even in the mid-1980s, however, absolute reductions in the defense effort seem unlikely, barring economic catastrophe, but some reduction in its rate of growth seems a more likely possibility. Moreover, Soviet military investment is now so large that even with reduced growth -- or indeed with no growth at all -- military capabilities would continue to increase well into the 1990s.

c. Foreign Policy

The existing consensus on foreign policy is stronger than that on domestic issues, and major changes are less likely in that area in the next few years. Some issues, nonetheless, could become a bone of contention in the post-Brezhnev Politburo. Although these issues will be

-1-

21

~~SECRET~~

- 18 -

determined largely by the international situation at the time, a successor regime will have to deal with both the challenges and opportunities outlined above.

Claimants to leadership in the immediate post-Brezhnev era are likely to share a commitment to sustain the global dimensions of Soviet policy. This commitment could be reinforced by a possible tendency on the part of a younger generation of Soviet leaders to equate the growth of military power with the growth of global power and influence. Supporting such thinking, moreover, are factors that go beyond tangible or measurable indexes -- ideological conviction, a sense of insecurity and of hostile encirclement, and a contrasting confidence and sense of achievement in the USSR's emergence as a global superpower.

Soviet leaders probably will wish to continue arms control negotiations with the United States for at least the next few years, seeking new agreements that will slow U.S. weapons programs, thereby facilitating Soviet planning, reducing weapons costs, and lessening the possibility of technological surprise. In the past some leaders (including both Andropov and Chernenko) have seemed more enthusiastic about pursuing this goal than others. The price the Soviet leadership is willing to pay for an arms limitation agreement, therefore, may depend in part on the outcome of the succession.

The new Soviet leadership may, in addition, undertake new initiatives designed to alter the geopolitical environment. They may, for instance, attempt a breakthrough in relations toward Western Europe or China. Moscow's principal assets in these instances would be the ability to offer greater intercourse between East and West Germany and to offer China significant concessions on contentious military and border issues.

The Soviet Union's other future policy options will depend on events beyond its control. A collapse of the Saudi monarchy, for example, could usher in an anti-Western regime, presenting the Soviets with major new opportunities for expanding its influence in the area. Opportunities in Central America may beckon or the outcome of the Iran-Iraq war might create significant opportunities or dangers from Moscow's perspective that could lead to policy shifts. The Soviets' potential options will also be shaped importantly by the extent to which the United States might preempt such opportunities and exploit the vulnerabilities in Moscow's global situation.

d. Longer-Range Uncertainties

For the next 3 to 5 years, Soviet policies will continue to be shaped by leaders who provided the consensus that supported Brezhnev's policies, and they may be less willing than their younger colleagues waiting in the wings to push for major policy or systemic change. The departure within the past year of three kingpins of the

~~SECRET~~

topmost leadership level (Suslov, Brezhnev, Kirilenko), however, makes it possible that Andropov could move Soviet policies in new directions should he be so inclined.

Soviet policies will become less predictable in the late 1980s and early 1990s, however, as the gap between economic performance and leadership expectations widens, as the basis for optimism about future economic performance erodes, and as the generational change in the Soviet leadership takes hold. The policy preferences of this younger generation are largely unknown. Although they have discretionary authority in implementing the Politburo's domestic policies, these officials now hold positions -- in the Central Committee apparatus, regional party organizations, and the government bureaucracy -- that provide little involvement in foreign policy.

What little evidence we have of this younger group's views reveals no clearly dominant orientation and no apparent consensus regarding the direction of future policies. Their eventual domestic course will probably reflect elements of both orthodox and reformist views, perhaps undertaking some decentralization of economic management, while at the same time tightening labor discipline.

Their foreign policy course is even more difficult to predict. Conceivably, some members of this group might favor a more accommodating foreign policy stance in order to increase trade with the West and ease domestic economic problems. The same pressures, however, might lead others to urge the adoption of economic self-sufficiency (autarky) at home and a more adventurist policy abroad, increasing the risk of a US-Soviet confrontation.

C. Implications for U.S. Policy

Changes in the Soviet system or policies over the next decade could affect Soviet behavior in areas that the United States considers important. The succession and difficult internal problems could lead the new leadership to be more circumspect in using Soviet power and resources abroad and even cause it eventually to restrain the rate of growth of its military machine. Limited accommodations in the areas of arms control or other bilateral issues may be possible, but a more encompassing accord on bilateral relations or geopolitical behavior is precluded by fundamentally divergent attitudes regarding desirable political or social change in the international order.

Although the Soviets will not wish to provoke a major confrontation with the United States, their belief that they now enjoy strategic equality and some advantages enhances the prospects for an even more assertive foreign policy. Soviet leaders probably also can be expected to seize new opportunities offered by instability in the Third World to enhance Soviet geopolitical influence and divert U.S. attention from areas of direct US-Soviet

- 20 -

interaction, even in situations where the USSR has little prospect of making significant gains for itself. If the Soviets are able to ameliorate some of their current internal and external weaknesses -- for example, by stemming the decline of economic growth -- this also would improve their ability to compete with the United States for global influence.

It is doubtful, however, that Soviet leaders perceive a "window of opportunity" stemming from an overweening confidence in present Soviet nuclear forces relative to future prospects. From the perspective of the Soviet leadership, there will remain important deterrents to major military actions that directly threaten vital U.S. national interests. These include the dangers of a direct conflict with the United States that could escalate to global proportions, doubts about the reliability of some of their East European allies, and an awareness of the greater Western capacity to support an expanded defense effort. These concerns do not preclude action abroad, but they act as constraints on military actions in which the risk of a direct US-Soviet confrontation is clear.

(1) U.S. Influence on Soviet Behavior

The future of the Soviet political system and its basic values will be determined primarily by internal political forces that the United States has only marginal ability to influence. Over at least the next decade, as noted above, the fundamentals of the Soviet system are likely to persist, regardless of U.S. actions. Over the longer term, U.S. policies can help to shape -- through diplomatic, military, economic and political actions -- the environment for further evolution of the system, but how that evolution will proceed is difficult to predict. Although also limited, the U.S. has greater ability to affect Soviet behavior and specified policies in the international arena, even in the near term, by requiring the ruling elite to face up to the costs and risks of its policy choices.

(2) Impact on the Political System

U.S. and Western influence over the ongoing Soviet political succession process is highly limited. Even if this were not the case, a contender whose stance appears more favorable to Western interests today may alter his position. In the initial stages of the Lenin succession, for example, Stalin appeared to be one of the more moderate Soviet leaders. During the Stalin succession, Khrushchev at first adopted a hardline internal position and later shifted to a more moderate course.

The West's ability to influence the nature and evolution of the Soviet system is limited as well. The degree of vulnerability of the USSR is difficult to judge, for the Soviet system has never undergone the kind of passage it will be taking in the 1980s and the

West has not in the post-war period made change in the Soviet Union an explicit objective of its dealings with the USSR, and taken steps to give practical meaning to that objective. Clearly, the Soviet system is extremely formidable in its ability to control its population. And it would be very difficult for the West to be confident that its actions, even if affecting change in the USSR, would affect change that was democratic or otherwise positive for the Soviet people and the USSR's dealings with the West. Indeed, in the short term, a Soviet regime that felt itself genuinely threatened by Western policies would likely make life even tougher for the Soviet people and those within Soviet society who had the temerity to suggest far-reaching changes in the internal order.

(3) Leverage over Policy

U.S. policies, however, may be able to exacerbate weaknesses in Soviet foreign and domestic policy. Foreign policy actions which the Soviets perceive as necessary to preserve existing equities -- such as repressive measures in Eastern Europe -- tend to isolate them in the world and complicate achievement of other goals. Moreover, the increasing attraction that some Western values hold for the Soviet people will cause the regime to expend considerable effort to protect them from foreign contagion and to prevent the development of a stronger dissident movement. The Soviet economy also will be hard pressed to keep pace with rising consumer expectations, probably resulting in more leadership attention to work stoppages, strikes, and other manifestations of social unrest.

Past U.S. efforts to use trade leverage to influence specific Soviet policies have had some limited success.* The prospect of improved trade relations was one of the factors behind the increase in Jewish emigration in the early 1970s. Moscow has circumvented most economic restrictions and refused to modify its policies substantially in return for increased trade, however, and it almost certainly will remain resistant to attempts at trade leverage.

Western goods and technology, however, are becoming more important to the USSR's strained economy; the volume of imports tripled in the 1970s and imports have been crucial to completion of several major production projects and to overcoming production shortfalls. Unilateral U.S. trade restrictions could create short-run difficulties for the Soviets in some sectors -- such as the oil and gas and chemical industries -- but would probably not persuade Moscow

*USDA recommends that the following sentence be substituted for the sentence which now appears in the text: "Past U.S. efforts to use trade leverage to influence specific Soviet policies, however, have been unsuccessful."

25

~~SECRET~~

~~- 22 -~~

to alter major domestic or foreign policies. Similarly, the Soviets also certainly would view renewed U.S. offers of increased trade for certain political concessions with considerable suspicion. Unified and sustained Western trade restrictions, particularly in such areas as energy equipment and agricultural products, however, could impose substantial costs on the Soviets and cause them to reassess important aspects of their foreign and defense policies. Such restrictions probably would not cause the Soviets to change basic policies, particularly if international tensions were high, but they would affect the Soviet calculation of costs and benefits in particular situations.*

Moreover, the United States can affect the USSR's behavior in other ways, chiefly by conditioning the leaders' perceptions of the costs and risks involved in Soviet expansionism. It is the Soviet leadership's respect for U.S. military capabilities, for example, that has prevented it from becoming involved in military hostilities in the Middle East over the years. The Soviets recognize, moreover, that if the U.S. has the political will, it is better positioned to use its military, economic, and political power on a global scale than they are.

Soviet perceptions of Western vulnerabilities and weaknesses, on the other hand, serve to enhance their confidence in their ability to compete with the U.S. The Soviets currently view Washington's ability to heighten the economic and military costs to Moscow as subject to competing U.S. domestic priorities, the ability to rally popular support, and reluctance on the part of U.S. Allies to incur the costs of increased defense expenditures or increased tensions with Moscow. The Soviets recognize, moreover, that divergent views within NATO present opportunities to provoke major divisions between the United States and its principal Allies. Strengthened Western unity and continued U.S. resolve, therefore, could have a significant impact on future Soviet calculations and behavior.

*USDA recommends that the following sentences be substituted for the last two sentences of this paragraph: "Unified and sustained Western trade restrictions, particularly in such areas as energy equipment and agricultural products, however, could, at best, impose a significant inconvenience to the Soviets. They probably would not change basic policies, particularly if international tensions were high."

~~SECRET~~

26

~~SECRET~~

- 23 -

PART II - MEETING THE SOVIET CHALLENGE

The foregoing analysis indicates clearly that the West faces a sustained Soviet challenge which requires a firm and measured long-term Western effort. This will be forthcoming only if the United States exercises fully its capacity for leadership. U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union must therefore address both the requirement to contain and reverse Soviet expansion and the need to strengthen and sustain a process of promoting change within the USSR itself that will reduce the Soviet threat to U.S. interests and those of our allies. This second track of U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union is not designed to preserve the status quo, but to assist internal forces that might lead to constructive change.

In addition to these two tracks of U.S. policy -- effective and sustained competition with the Soviet Union and promotion of internal change -- there is an important third track. We need to engage the Soviet Union in negotiations to attempt to reach agreements based on strict reciprocity and mutual interest. This aspect of U.S. policy will be particularly important when the Soviet Union is in the midst of a process of political succession.

All three tracks of U.S. policy must be implemented simultaneously and sustained over the long term. The West, with firm U.S. leadership, must create and sustain negative and positive incentives powerful enough to influence Soviet behavior. Moscow must know that unacceptable behavior will incur costs that would outweigh any gains. At the same time, the U.S. must make clear to the Soviets that real restraint in their behavior could pave the way for an East-West relationship that would have important benefits for the Soviet Union.

This approach to US-Soviet relations could involve important opportunities and benefits for the United States. It assigns appropriate priority to the task of meeting the Soviet military threat with a credible deterrent and Soviet aggression in third areas with effective countermeasures. By identifying the promotion of evolutionary change within the Soviet Union itself as an objective of U.S. policy, the United States takes the long-term strategic offensive. This approach therefore contrasts with the essentially reactive and defensive strategy of containment, which concedes the initiative to the Soviet Union and its allies and surrogates. While entertaining no illusions that this kind of change can be affected easily or quickly, this strategic approach does hold out the possibility of an ultimate reduction of the Soviet threat to U.S. interests and the level of U.S. resources that must be devoted to countering that threat.

The strategic approach outlined above also has potential risks and costs which must be minimized if the strategy is to succeed:

~~SECRET~~

1. Some opponents of an activist American strategy believe that such an effort would involve the abandonment or downgrading of US-Soviet negotiating efforts, especially in the arms control area. The U.S. can, to some extent, address and minimize Congressional and Allied concerns on this score by emphasizing that the U.S. approach is gradual and peaceful and that its ultimate objective is not confrontation, but a stable and constructive basis for East-West relations. At the same time, it is unlikely that this strand of U.S. policy will gain universal acceptance in the West. Indeed, energetic American leadership to implement it may at times be divisive domestically and within the Alliance.

2. There is also the danger that U.S. policy might provoke a more militant Soviet response designed to further increase internal repression and utilize the USSR's current military advantage to maximum effect -- before U.S. efforts to redress the military balance and exploit Soviet internal vulnerabilities have time to succeed. While recognizing that this is not a negligible risk, we nevertheless believe that the combination of increased confidence and assertiveness, a military buildup, and a diplomatic offensive in areas such as the Middle East, will limit Soviet options, particularly during a period of leadership succession.

3. As noted above, our knowledge of the structure and dynamics of the Soviet regime is at best imperfect, and we cannot be certain what kinds of U.S. policies would be effective in promoting evolutionary change within the Soviet system. Indeed, U.S. policies which forced the USSR to undertake economic reform or otherwise modify internal practices mandated by Communist ideology might actually enable the Soviet Union to compete more effectively with the West, albeit in different ways. Nevertheless, we believe that, with appropriate recognition of the necessity for flexibility and a pragmatic approach, an effective strategy for promoting evolutionary change within the Soviet Union is possible.

A. Shaping the Soviet Environment: Arenas of Engagement

Implementation of U.S. strategy must focus on shaping the environment in which Soviet decisions are made -- both in the wide variety of functional and geopolitical arenas in which U.S. and Soviet interests are engaged, and in the US-Soviet bilateral relationship.

1. Functional

a. Military Strategy

Foremost in shaping the military environment Moscow faces is the US-Soviet military balance. The U.S. must modernize its military forces so that several goals are achieved:

~~SECRET~~~~- 25 -~~

- Soviet leaders must perceive that the U.S. is determined never to accept a second place or deteriorating strategic posture. The U.S. must act to minimize doubts about the military capabilities of U.S. strategic nuclear deterrent forces, and about the U.S. will to use them if necessary;
- Soviet calculations of possible nuclear war outcomes, under any contingency, must always result in outcomes so unfavorable to the USSR that there would be no incentive for the Soviet leaders to initiate a nuclear attack;
- Leaders and the publics in all states must be able to observe that this indicator of U.S. strength remains equal to or greater than that of the USSR. They will then understand that U.S. capacity for pursuing the broader US-Soviet competition shall not be encumbered by direct Soviet coercion of the United States;
- The future of U.S. military strength must also appear to friend and foe to be assured: technological advances must be exploited, research and development vigorously pursued, and sensible follow-on programs undertaken so that the viability of U.S. deterrent policy is not placed in question.
- The U.S. must tighten controls over transfer of military related/dual-use technology, products, services and know-how in order to protect the lead-time on which the qualitative advantage of U.S. military strength depends.

In Europe, the Soviet leadership must be faced with a reinvigorated NATO focused on three primary tasks: strengthening of conventional forces, modernization of intermediate-range nuclear forces, and improved mobility and sustainability for U.S. units assigned rapid deployment and other reinforcing missions to the NATO area and Southwest Asia. Worldwide, U.S. general-purpose forces must be ready to move quickly from peacetime to wartime roles, and must be flexible enough to affect Soviet calculations in a wide range of contingencies.

The US-Soviet military balance is also a critical determinant shaping Third World perceptions of the relative positions and influence of the two major powers. Moscow must know with certainty that, in addition to North American defense, other areas of interest to the U.S. will be defended against Soviet attacks or threats. But it must know also that areas less critical to U.S. interests cannot be attacked or threatened without risk of serious U.S. military countermeasures.

~~SECRET~~

b. Economic Policy

U.S. policy on economic relations with the USSR must serve strategic and foreign policy goals as well as economic interests. Economic policy should therefore be seen in the context of a larger, long-term effort to encourage evolutionary change in the Soviet Union and to moderate Soviet external policies. Economic measures alone cannot realize these goals, but economic diplomacy can be a critical component in a larger strategy to meet the Soviet military, political and economic challenge to the United States and its Allies. To be effective, such an economic policy must be sustainable over the long term; hence, it must be realistic about what can or cannot be achieved and specific in its aims.

Within this overall framework, U.S. economic objectives should be:

- Above all, to ensure that East-West economic relations do not facilitate the Soviet military buildup or contribute to Soviet strategic advantage or capability. This requires preventing the transfer of critical technology and equipment which would make a substantial contribution, directly or indirectly, to Soviet military power.
- To restrict Soviet military and foreign policy options through appropriate long-term measures of economic diplomacy.
- To minimize the potential for Soviet exercise of reverse leverage on Western countries based on trade, energy supply, and financial relationships.
- To avoid subsidizing the Soviet economy or unduly easing the burden of Soviet resource allocation decisions, so as not to dilute pressures for structural change in the Soviet system.
- To permit mutually beneficial trade -- without Western subsidization or the creation of Western dependence -- with the USSR in non-strategic areas, such as grains.

A strategy of sustained, disciplined economic diplomacy must flow from these objectives. While uncertainties remain about the exact effects on Soviet policy of the economic constraints analyzed in Section I, it is clear that the Soviets -- faced with grim economic prospects in the 1980s -- look to inputs of Western equipment, technology, and products to ease the increasingly difficult choices they face between military spending on the one hand, and consumption and investment on the other. Diminished Soviet prospects for growth in hard-currency exports make the availability of Western credit important to maintain current import levels. As Section I points out, unilateral U.S. trade restrictions could create short-run difficulties for the Soviets in some sectors, but would probably not persuade Moscow to

~~SECRET~~
- 27 -

alter major domestic or foreign policies. Unified and sustained Western trade restrictions on credits, militarily critical technology, and other selected controls on exports or imports, however, could impose substantial costs on the Soviets by forcing them to face hard choices over the next decade, increase their preoccupation with domestic problems, and thereby perhaps decrease their expansionist tendencies. The possibility of foreign policy sanctions on some or all non-strategic items remains for extreme situations where, on a unified basis, the West can affect Soviet calculations of costs and benefits for particular decisions.

The U.S. can and should seek to restrict Soviet military and foreign policy options through economic policies. Because US-Soviet trade is only a fraction of total Western trade with the USSR, the U.S. needs the support of its European Allies and other key trading partners. Indeed, the USSR's best hope of improving its strained hard currency position in the longer run is to secure the cooperation of Western Europe in building new large pipelines for the delivery of additional natural gas in the late 1980s and 1990s. At the same time, the policies of the U.S. should be based on its special responsibilities within the Alliance and not on the lowest common denominator.

The United States must therefore exercise strong leadership with its Allies and others to develop a common understanding of the strategic implications of East-West trade. West European reluctance to accept restrictions on trade and credits to the USSR to the extent the U.S. believes to be strategically and economically justified stems from economic as well as political considerations. Although trade with the Soviet Union and its CEMA partners is not of critical importance to any Western country, it is more significant economically to the West European Allies than to the U.S., especially in some sub-sectors (e.g., steel pipe). They are reluctant to restrict export credits which might enhance their ability to export to the East. They oppose stopping construction of the Yamal pipeline, in part because it will enhance Soviet hard-currency earnings and hence Soviet ability to purchase more goods from them. They perceive not only such short-term economic self interests but also a contribution to long-term improvement in East-West political relations resulting from increased trade with the Soviets.

The U.S. task is to shift their emphasis to a more realistic appreciation of strategic realities in order to forge a common approach to East-West economic relations. Substantial progress in this regard has already been made by virtue of the agreement announced on November 13, 1982. At the same time, the U.S. must take into account the interests of specific domestic constituencies, e.g., with respect to grain, to avoid constant policy oscillations because of domestic pressures. At the same time, while the U.S. must argue its case with respect to U.S. agricultural exports, it must also recognize that the Allies have groups whose interests are analagous to those of U.S. grain farmers.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

- 28 -

If there is general agreement with the Allies on the need for control of military-related equipment and technology exports to the Soviets, there has been no consensus on which of three basic approaches to the management of East-West economic relations the U.S. should take:

- The detente policy of the 1970s postulated that growth in East-West trade would, over the long term, induce more responsible Soviet behavior. A condition of this policy was that Soviet failure to respond as expected could lead to the withdrawal of benefits. However, the resultant Soviet appetite for Western equipment, technology and credits has been turned to Western political and strategic advantage in only limited ways. Producer pressures and concern about the ripple effects of a financial squeeze prevented the West from using trade as political leverage except for relatively modest measures. Moreover, the detente policy did not constrain Soviet activities in Poland and Afghanistan.
- A second approach starts from the premise that a sustained strategy of economic diplomacy can limit Soviet options over the short term and move toward long-term structural change. This approach recognizes that trade is beneficial to both sides but must be conducted in a larger strategic context. It must also be managed so as to minimize Soviet reverse leverage and ensure that the West is the net economic beneficiary.
- A third approach would be a virtually total denial of Western trade and finance with the USSR to force fundamental changes in the USSR by accelerating a collapse of the Soviet economy. Such "economic warfare" would most closely resemble the measures taken by the UK against Argentina during the Falklands war and is a measure usually conceived of as one step short of full-scale war. It is unreasonable and unacceptable to the Allies and unnecessary to further U.S. objectives.

For now, U.S. policy should be the second approach, building on the agreement announced on November 13, 1982. Such an approach, although it cannot significantly reduce Soviet freedom of action in the short term, could affect the Soviet calculation of costs and benefits of fundamental policy approaches over time. Implementing such a policy will require extensive consultations with the Allies on the relative priority of objectives toward the USSR and on clarifying common assumptions and approaches. The more emphasis the U.S. places publicly on internal change in the USSR and on linkage to Soviet external behavior, the harder it will be to obtain allied consent. Nevertheless, this approach offers the best chance for building a common understanding with the Allies on the strategic implications of East-West trade, and a set of basic ground rules and

~~SECRET~~

22

~~SECRET~~

- 29 -

mechanisms to safeguard Western interests and take long-term advantage of Soviet economic vulnerabilities.

The longer-term U.S. objective of limiting Soviet options and encouraging systemic change in the USSR must be pursued even if the situation in Poland should improve. Building on the foundation established, the U.S. must continue to engage the Allies in extended discussions and negotiations to implement common understandings of the strategic implications of East-West trade. To succeed, U.S. objectives must be precise, realistic and sustainable, and the U.S. must assure its Allies that it is seeking a balance of benefits and sacrifices. Agreement has already been reached on some basic considerations of East-West economic policy: that it does not make sense to provide the USSR with technology it can use to enhance its military potential; that it makes no sense to subsidize the Soviet economy; that the West must not contribute to Soviet strategic advantage; and that trade must proceed on the basis of a strict balance of advantages.

These basic understandings create the framework in which the West can study energy, credits, and technology transfer in appropriate fora to set the stage for agreement on a common approach. The program which would flow from this common approach should aim at elements, within the Western purview of influence, currently assisting the Soviet military buildup. These include principally Western military-related technology, European markets for Soviet gas and Western subsidized credit. The following specific measures would make more difficult the decisions the USSR must make among key priorities in the 1980's:

- Enhanced controls through COCOM on the flow of critical and certain non-critical military items used in the Soviet military, and critical technology and equipment used in Soviet defense-priority industries. In the long run, tighter COCOM restrictions on militarily sensitive technology would perhaps be the most valuable action for the West.
- Developing alternative energy proposals so that the Europeans eschew additional gas projects and increased levels of dependency on Soviet energy resources. This could cause the USSR to lose up to an estimated ten billion dollars a year in hard-currency earnings in the 1990s.
- Steps to restrict the strategic capabilities of the USSR, for example, restriction of the export of oil and gas technology in any future contracts with the USSR. The USSR depends on the West for specialized oil exploration, drilling, pumping and processing equipment. Denying all Western oil equipment and technology would cost the USSR an estimated ten billion dollars annually for several years, but a decreasing amount thereafter.

~~SECRET~~

- Stricter limits on the terms and volume of government-supported credits. Eliminating interest subsidies could cost the Soviets some five hundred million dollars a year. European acceptance of credit restraints and the need to end credit subsidies may be a realistic goal over time, and construction of a common regime may be feasible.
- Enhance the stature and scope of activities of the OECD and the NATO Economic Committee in East-West trade analysis and policy consideration.

Looking to the longer term, the U.S. and its Allies can go either of two ways. If Soviet behavior should worsen (e.g., an invasion of Poland), the West would need to consider extreme measures such as a total trade boycott, including grain, in which Allied cohesion would be essential.* Should Soviet behavior improve, there is room for carefully calibrated positive economic signals. These might include a broadening of government-to-government economic contacts. Such steps could not alter the direction of U.S. policy or dilute its objective of making the Soviets pay the price of the defects of their economic system.

c. Political Action

U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union must have an ideological thrust which clearly demonstrates the superiority of U.S. and Western values of individual dignity and freedom, a free press, free trade unions, free enterprise, and political democracy over the repressive character of Soviet communism. We should state openly -- as the President did in the British Parliament -- our belief that people in Communist countries have the right to democratic systems.

In pursuing a more effective strategy of political action, we must counter the frame of mind that has been cultivated in the West by years of Communist propaganda -- a frame of mind in which: opposition to Soviet actions is tantamount to a return to the "cold war;" any country that has been taken over by a Communist regime must never be allowed to change its social or political institutions, whereas the "ideological struggle" must be allowed to proceed unfettered in all other societies; non-Communist governments have no choice but to cooperate with the Soviet Union and follow its initiatives, or face the prospect of a nuclear war that will terminate human existence.

*USDA recommends that the following sentence be substituted for the sentence which now appears in the text: "In the longer term, if Soviet behavior should worsen, e.g. an invasion of Poland, we would need to consider extreme measures in which Allied cohesion would be essential."

34

~~SECRET~~

- 31 -

To break the mental habits these ideas have fostered, it is essential that the United States take the offensive in exposing the bankruptcy of the Communist system, its failure to provide adequately for the basic needs of its peoples, and its dependence on the force of arms for the seizure and retention of political power. The U.S. should stress that, 65 years after the October Revolution, the Soviet regime continues to deny its people fundamental human rights and to pour enormous economic resources into the military sector at the cost of continuing to fall behind the U.S., the Western democracies and Japan in agricultural and industrial productivity and in the provisions of basic economic benefits. In short, the U.S. must make clear to the world that democracy, not Communism, is mankind's future.

We must also expose the illegitimate concepts which underlie Soviet foreign policy. For example, the so-called "Brezhnev Doctrine", which is cited by Moscow to justify military intervention in Communist states, has no basis in international law and violates every international statement of principles signed by the USSR (including the United Nations Charter and the Helsinki Final Act). The U.S. must insist as a matter of principle that every country in the world, Communist and non-Communist alike, be free to change its system at any time in accord with the desires of its people. Similarly, we should, in condemning Soviet human rights violations, reject Soviet attempts to seek refuge behind the principle of non-interference in other states' internal affairs. Soviet treatment of political dissidents and "refuseniks," as well as Moscow's arbitrarily applied restrictions on emigration, contravene basic moral principles as well as the USSR's own international obligations and must be challenged both in public and private fora.

The U.S. must accordingly review and significantly strengthen its instruments of political action to encourage democratization. These should include:

- The President's London initiative to support democratic forces: This initiative seeks concrete support for building democratic institutions such as a free press, labor unions, political parties, and an independent judiciary. This will include support for regional institutes that promote democratic values, and support for organizations that promote democratic procedures and principles.
- Focus on Soviet human rights violations: The U.S. should emphasize Soviet responsibility for human rights violations in Afghanistan and Poland. It should also be a U.S. objective to emphasize the USSR's responsibility for violations of the human rights of its own population and to improve means of publicizing these violations.

~~SECRET~~

- Broadcasting Policy: Additional resources should be devoted to the USG's international radio broadcasters -- VOA and RFE/RL -- for broadcasting into the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The U.S. should continue to devote high priority to finding ways to penetrate and overcome Soviet jamming of VOA and RFE/RL to a greater extent than at present. An international technical task force consisting of technical experts from VOA, RFE/RL, BBC and Deutsche Welle should be established to work together to find additional ways of dealing with Soviet jamming techniques. BBC has responded positively to VOA's proposal for such a task force. RFE/RL should be given access to USG information on events in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

- Other Measures: Political action is the least developed of U.S. tools to influence Soviet policy. The U.S. has done and is doing much more in the defense and economic areas. But the potential impact of political measures is so substantial that much more thought needs to be given to how to develop them.

2. Geopolitical

a. The Industrial Democracies:

One of the central propositions of U.S. foreign policy throughout the post-war period has been and continues to be that an effective response to the Soviet challenge requires close partnership among the industrial democracies. To meet successfully the challenges to its interests, the U.S. will require stronger and more effective collective defense arrangements. It will also be important to seek increased Allied support for U.S. efforts to counter security threats beyond the NATO area. There will continue to be inevitable tensions between the U.S. determination to exercise leadership and the U.S. need for Allied support in making policies work. More effective procedures for consultation with the Allies can contribute to the building of consensus and cushion the impact of intra-alliance disagreements. However, the U.S. may on occasion be forced to act to protect its vital interests without Allied support and even in the face of Allied opposition. Even in this event, the U.S. should consult to the maximum extent possible with its allies.

The Allies have been slow to support in concrete ways the overall U.S. approach to East-West relations. In part because of an intensive program of consultation, Allied governments have expressed rhetorical support for the U.S. assessment of the Soviet military challenge, the U.S. rearmament program, and U.S. negotiating positions in START and INF. Less progress has been made in obtaining Allied action in the vital areas of upgrading conventional defense and in gaining Allied support for military planning to protect vital

Western interests in the developing world, particularly the Persian Gulf. With INF deployments scheduled to begin in 1983, West European governments will come under increasing domestic pressure to press the U.S. for progress in START and INF. If the U.S. cannot obtain an acceptable INF agreement with Moscow, it may be necessary during 1983 to subordinate some other policy initiatives with the Allies to the overriding objective of obtaining Allied action to move forward on INF deployments. Improving conventional defense, however, should remain a high priority goal.

b. The Third World

As in the 1970s, the Soviet challenge to U.S. interests in the Third World will continue. Thus, the U.S. must continue efforts to rebuild the credibility of the U.S. commitment to resist Soviet encroachment on U.S. interests and those of Allies and friends, and to support effectively those Third World states that are willing to resist Soviet pressures. The U.S. must where possible erode the advances of Soviet influence in the developing world made during the 1970s.

Given the continued improvement of Moscow's force projection capabilities and the Soviet emphasis on arms aid to pro-Soviet Third World clients, any effective U.S. response must involve a military dimension. U.S. security assistance and foreign military sales play an important role in shaping the security environment around the periphery of the USSR and beyond Eurasia. But security assistance will not be enough unless the U.S. makes clear to the Soviets and to its friends that the U.S. is prepared to use its own military forces where necessary to protect vital U.S. interests and support endangered Allies and friends. Above all, the U.S. must be able to demonstrate the capability and the will for timely action to bring U.S. resources to bear in response to fast-moving events in Third World trouble spots.

An effective U.S. policy in the Third World also depends critically upon diplomatic initiatives (e.g., the President's Middle-East proposal, the Caribbean Basin Initiative, and the Namibia/Angola initiative) to promote the resolution of regional crises vulnerable to Soviet exploitation. The U.S. should counter, and if possible weaken or displace, Soviet aid relationships, particularly those involving states that host a Soviet military presence or act as Soviet proxies. The U.S. must also develop an appropriate mixture of economic assistance programs and private sector initiatives to demonstrate the relevance of the free economies to the economic problems of the developing world, while exposing the bankruptcy of the Soviet economic and political model.

Possibly the greatest obstacle the U.S. faces in carrying out this approach in the developing world is the problem of obtaining

37

~~SECRET~~

- 34 -

adequate budgetary resources. As in the case of the rearmament program, pressures for budgetary restraint are certain to generate calls for reduction of the resources devoted to meeting the Soviet challenge in the developing world. These pressures must be resisted if the U.S. is to meet its commitments and secure its vital interests.

c. Weakening the Soviet Empire (Eastern Europe, Cuba, Third World Alliances)

As noted above, there are a number of important vulnerabilities and weaknesses within the Soviet empire which the U.S. should seek to exacerbate and exploit. This will involve differentiated policies that recognize the need for a different mix of tools for each problem. The U.S. should not accept the notion that, once a Communist or pro-Soviet regime has come to power in a state, this situation is irreversible. Indeed, U.S. policy should seek wherever possible both to encourage such states to distance themselves from the Soviet Union in foreign policy and to move toward democratization domestically.

Eastern Europe: Although the crackdown in Poland cut short a process of peaceful change there, the continuing instability in that country is certain to have far-reaching repercussions throughout Eastern Europe. In addition, the deteriorating economic position of East European countries and the possible long-term drying up of Western resources flowing to the region will force them to face some difficult choices: greater dependence on the Soviets and relative stagnation; or reforms to generate a renewal of Western resources.

The primary U.S. objective in Eastern Europe is to loosen Moscow's hold on the region while promoting the cause of individual human rights in all countries of the region. The U.S. can advance these objectives by carefully discriminating in favor of countries that show relative independence from the USSR in their foreign policy, or show a greater degree of internal liberalization. Our policies must also make clear that East European countries which reverse movements of liberalization, or drift away from an independent stance in foreign policy will incur significant costs in their relations with the U.S. Western influence in the region is limited by Moscow's willingness to use force against developments which threaten what it perceives as its vital interests. The United States, however, can have an important impact on the region, provided it continues to differentiate in its policies toward the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact countries, and among the countries of Eastern Europe, so as to encourage diversity through political and economic policies tailored to individual countries. While the impact of differentiation in some cases may be marginal, it offers the best vehicle for achieving the primary U.S. goal of weakening overall Soviet control. This policy of differentiation in Eastern Europe is the subject of NSDD 54.

~~SECRET~~

38

~~SECRET~~

- 35 -

Afghanistan: A significant vulnerability in the Soviet empire is Afghanistan, where Moscow's imperial reach has bogged Soviet forces down in a stalemated struggle to suppress the Afghan resistance. A real exercise of self-determination by the Afghan people and a withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan would be perceived as a major foreign policy defeat for the Soviet Union and thus might well increase the likelihood that other Third World countries would resist Soviet pressures. Thus, the U.S. objective should be to keep maximum pressure on Moscow for withdrawal and to ensure that Soviet political, military, and other costs are high while the occupation continues. In this connection, the U.S. should redouble its efforts to focus world attention on Soviet atrocities in Afghanistan, including the use of chemical weapons.

Cuba: The challenge to U.S. interests represented by Moscow's alliance with Cuba requires an effective U.S. response. The Soviet-Cuban challenge has three critical dimensions (as well as numerous other problems):

- Soviet deliveries of advanced weapons to Havana: The flow of advanced Soviet weapons to Cuba has accelerated so as to represent a growing threat to the security of other Latin American countries, U.S. sea lines of communication and, in the case of potentially nuclear-capable systems, the U.S. itself. The U.S. must take strong countermeasures to offset the political/military impact of these deliveries.
- Soviet-supported Cuban destabilizing activities in Central America and the Caribbean Basin: The U.S. response must involve bilateral economic and military assistance to friendly governments in the region, as well as multilateral initiatives to deal with the political, economic, and social sources of instability. The U.S. should retain the option of direct action against Cuba, while making clear U.S. willingness seriously to address Cuba's concerns if Havana is willing to reduce its dependence on and cooperation with the Soviet Union. The U.S. should also take steps to prevent or neutralize the impact of transfers of advanced Soviet weapons to Nicaragua, as well as other arms supplies being provided to insurgents in the area. Finally, the U.S. must take steps to counter increasing Cuban activities and influence in Grenada, Suriname, and Guyana.
- Soviet-Cuban interventionism in southern Africa: The U.S. should counter and reduce Soviet and Cuban influence by strengthening relations with friendly African states, and by energetic leadership of the diplomatic effort to bring about a Cuban withdrawal from Angola or, failing that, by increasing the costs of Cuba's role in southern Africa.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~
- 36 -

Soviet Third World Alliances: The U.S. should seek to weaken and, where possible, undermine the existing links between the Soviet Union and its Third World allies and clients. In implementing this policy, the U.S. will need to take into account the individual vulnerabilities of Soviet Third World allies and the unique circumstances which influence the degree of cohesion between them and the Soviet Union. In some cases, these ties are so strong as to make the Third World state a virtual proxy or surrogate of the Soviet Union. The U.S. should be prepared to work with Allies and Third World friends to neutralize the activities of these Soviet proxies. In other cases, ties between the Soviet Union and a Third World client may be tenuous or subject to strains which a nuanced U.S. policy can exploit to move the Third World state away from the Soviet orbit. U.S. policy should be flexible enough to take advantage of these opportunities.

Finally, the U.S. should seek where possible and prudent to encourage democratic movements and forces to bring about political change inside these countries. In this connection, the U.S. must develop the means to extend U.S. support to individuals and movements in the developing world that share the U.S. commitment to political democracy and individual freedom. Long-term political cadre and organization building programs, long a strongly emphasized instrument of Soviet policy, must become a regular, and more developed, part of U.S. policy.

d. China

The United States views China as a country with which it is not allied, but with which it shares common interests. China continues to support U.S. efforts to strengthen the world's defenses against Soviet expansionism, and its perception of the Soviets as the number one threat to world peace influences its policies in various areas. The PRC has supported the Khmer coalition effort and provided supplies and equipment to the resistance forces, mainly the Khmer Rouge, which is the most effective armed resistance to the Soviet-supported Vietnam occupation of Kampuchea. It ties down at least half as many North Vietnamese (500,000) in northern Vietnam as it ties down Soviet troops along the entire Soviet border and in Mongolia. It openly stresses the importance of improved Japanese defense efforts and close US-Japan relations, works hard to reduce Soviet influence in North Korea and to restrain Kim Il-sung, and provides military and economic aid to Pakistan. And it also provides defense-related equipment to Egypt and some military assistance to Syria, Iraq, the Yemens, and Somalia in an effort to reduce Soviet influence.

US-China relations have cooled over the past year as both countries have struggled with the issue of U.S. arms sales to Taiwan. In moving forward now to develop renewed dialogue, the U.S. aim

~~SECRET~~

should be, over time, to achieve enhanced strategic cooperation and policy coordination. In this regard, the U.S. will continue to pursue a policy of substantially liberalized technology transfer in keeping with Presidentially approved policy, which states that, "Our strategic interests dictate the preservation of China as an effective counterweight to growing Soviet military power and the strengthening of strategic cooperation with China." The U.S. will also be willing to consider the sale of military equipment to China on a case-by-case basis within the carefully constructed parameters of the policy approved by the President in 1981.

As the U.S. develops these policies, it will be essential to take into account developments in Sino-Soviet relations. The renewal of state-to-state dialogue between Beijing and Moscow may indicate a desire on the part of both parties to moderate some aspects of their competition, although it is not likely to result in restoration of anything approaching the Sino-Soviet cooperation of the 1950s. While the U.S. should not attempt directly to influence the Sino-Soviet dialogue, it must conduct its policies toward Moscow and Beijing in a way that will maintain and strengthen China's posture as a counterweight to Soviet expansionism. In this connection, it will be important that the Chinese perceive no weakening of U.S. determination to resist Soviet aggression. The U.S. must also continue to develop bilateral ties with China. US-China trade has expanded fivefold since normalization in 1979. China is now the United States' 14th largest trading partner and fourth largest market for agricultural products. Bilateral exchanges in the areas of culture, science, and technology have expanded rapidly. Each year, for example, approximately 9,000 Chinese study in the U.S. and some 100,000 Americans visit China.

e. Yugoslavia

Yugoslavia has been able to maintain its independence from the Soviet Union in the post-war years. It is U.S. policy to support the independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia's current difficulties in paying its foreign debts have increased its vulnerability to Soviet pressures. The USSR has for years been a major supplier of crude oil to Yugoslavia, and now supplies about half its needs. With Yugoslavia now desperately short of hard currency needed to buy oil elsewhere, the Soviet Union is clearly in a position to apply increased pressure on it. The USSR now accounts for over one third of Yugoslavia's exports. The Yugoslav government, well aware of this vulnerability, would like to reduce its trade dependence on the Soviet Union. It is in the U.S. interest to prevent any deterioration in Yugoslavia's economic situation that might weaken its resolve to withstand Soviet pressure. The U.S. is, therefore, addressing the possibility of putting together a multinational financial assistance package to help Yugoslavia solve its current foreign exchange difficulties and set the country on the road to long-term structural economic reform.

3. Bilateral Relationships

Despite the attenuation of US-Soviet bilateral ties in the last three years due especially to events in Afghanistan and Poland, there remain sectors of the bilateral relationship that are important to Moscow and thus to any effort to induce moderation of Soviet conduct.

a. Arms Control

Arms control negotiations and agreements, pursued soberly and without illusions, are an important part of overall U.S. national security policy. The U.S. should be willing to enter into arms control negotiations and seek agreements when they serve national security objectives. At the same time, arms control agreements are not an end in themselves but are, in combination with continued efforts by the U.S. and its Allies to maintain the military balance, an important means for enhancing national security and global stability. The U.S. must make clear to the Allies as well as to the USSR that its ability to reach satisfactory results will inevitably be influenced by the international situation, the overall state of US-Soviet relations, and the difficulties in defining areas of mutual agreement with an adversary which often seeks unilateral gain. It should not be assumed that ongoing arms control negotiations will give the U.S. leverage sufficient to produce Soviet restraint on other international issues.

U.S. arms control proposals should be consistent with necessary force modernization plans and should seek to achieve balanced, significant, and verifiable reductions to equal levels of comparable armaments. The START and INF proposals the U.S. has tabled meet these criteria and would, if accepted by the Soviets, help ensure the survivability of the U.S. nuclear deterrent and the viability of NATO's conventional defenses, and thus enhance the national security of the U.S. and its Allies and reduce the risk of war. While the commencement of these negotiations served somewhat to reduce public pressure on the U.S. and on Allied Governments for early arms control agreements with Moscow, in the absence of progress in START and INF such pressures can be expected to grow. This is particularly relevant in INF as the deployment dates for Pershing IIs and GLCMs in Europe draw nearer.

b. Official Dialogue

The Soviets will continue to press the U.S. for a return to a US-Soviet agenda centered on arms control. The U.S. must continue to resist this tactic and insist that Moscow address the full range of U.S. concerns about Soviet international behavior and internal human rights violations if bilateral relations are to improve. US-Soviet diplomatic contacts on regional issues can serve U.S. interests if they are used to keep pressure on Moscow for

responsible behavior and to drive home that the U.S. will act to ensure that the costs of irresponsibility are high. The U.S. can also use such contacts to make clear that the way to pragmatic solutions of regional problems is open if Moscow is willing seriously to address U.S. concerns. At the same time, such contacts must be handled with care to avoid offering the Soviet Union a role in regional questions which it would not otherwise secure.

Dialogue at Foreign Minister Level: A continuing dialogue with the Soviets at the level of Foreign Minister facilitates necessary diplomatic communication with the Soviet leadership and helps to maintain allied understanding and support for the U.S. approach to East-West relations. Secretary Haig met with Gromyko on three occasions between September 1981 and June 1982, and Secretary Shultz met with Gromyko in September 1982. This pattern of frequent Ministerial-level contacts should be maintained in the future.

Summitry: The question of a possible US-Soviet summit will continue to be raised by the Soviets, U.S. Allies, and important segments of U.S. domestic opinion. Every American President since Franklin Roosevelt has met with his Soviet counterpart. In some cases, U.S. Presidents have attended summits for the purpose of establishing personal contact with their counterparts (e.g., Kennedy in Vienna) or in the vague expectation that an improvement in US-Soviet relations would flow from the summit. In other cases, Allied pressures for East-West dialogue at the Head of State level have played a major role in a Presidential decision to meet at the summit (e.g., Eisenhower at Geneva and Paris).

The approach to summitry which prevailed throughout the 1970s held that American Presidents should not meet with their Soviet counterparts until there were concrete US-Soviet agreements ready to serve as the centerpiece of the summit. However, these summits did not always produce durable improvements in US-Soviet relations, and they sometimes complicated management of US-Soviet relations by generating expectations that could not be realized.

A summit between President Reagan and his Soviet counterpart should be considered if beneficial results could be expected. Such a meeting could play a critical role in shoring up Allied support for a common East-West strategy. Therefore a summit should be timed to achieve the maximum possible positive impact in terms of U.S. interests with the Allies as well as the Soviets, while making clear to both audiences that improvement in Soviet-American relations depends on changes in Soviet conduct. A summit would not necessarily involve signature of major new US-Soviet agreements, but it could nonetheless be an important element of an aggressive U.S. effort to maintain the diplomatic initiative vis-a-vis Moscow.

There are some possible drawbacks to a summit. Such a meeting might falsely suggest that US-Soviet relations were on the mend, thus raising public expectations that would not be fulfilled. A summit could also further stimulate unilateral Allied initiatives toward Moscow. In order to minimize these potential disadvantages, U.S. handling of the summit question must clearly underscore that a summit without real changes in Soviet behavior will not signal an overall improvement in U.S.-Soviet relations.

The substance of a summit agenda would, of course, have to be determined in light of circumstances at the time. However, among the issues which should figure prominently would be those on which we have already engaged the Soviets at lower levels, including:

- Arms control issues (e.g., initiatives in START, INF, MBFR or in other areas such as reduction of defense budgets).
- Regional issues (e.g., Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, Soviet willingness to permit or encourage relaxation of repression in Poland, Soviet cooperation with Namibia/Angola settlement involving Cuban withdrawal from Angola, reduction or cessation of Soviet support for Vietnamese and Cuban aggression).
- Human rights (e.g., significant increase in emigration, reduction of repression of Soviet dissidents, cessation of jamming of foreign radios).

US-Soviet Cooperative Exchanges: The role of US-Soviet cultural, educational, scientific and other cooperative exchanges should be seen in light of the U.S. intention to maintain a strong ideological component in relations with Moscow. The U.S. should not further dismantle the framework of exchanges; indeed those exchanges which have the potential for advancing the objective of promoting evolutionary change within the Soviet system should be expanded. At the same time, a greater effort is needed to secure full reciprocity (and to encourage the Allies to do so as well). This recognizes that unless the U.S. has an effective official framework for handling exchanges, the Soviets will make separate arrangements with private U.S. sponsors, while denying reciprocal access to the Soviet Union. As exchanges develop, U.S. policy must also take into account the necessity to restrict transfers of sensitive U.S. technology to the Soviet Union.

44

~~SECRET~~

- 41 -

B. Priorities in the U.S. Approach: Maximizing
Restraining Leverage over Soviet Behavior

The interrelated tasks of containing and reversing Soviet expansion and promoting evolutionary change within the Soviet Union itself cannot be accomplished quickly. U.S. success in managing US-Soviet relations during the next five to ten years may well determine whether the U.S. will be able to attain its long-term objectives. Despite the long-term vulnerabilities of the Soviet system, Soviet military power will continue to grow throughout the 1980s. Moreover, the Soviet Union will have every incentive to prevent the U.S. from reversing the trends of the last decade which have seen an unprecedented growth of Soviet military power relative to that of the U.S. Thus, the coming five to ten years will be a period of considerable uncertainty in which the Soviets may test U.S. resolve by continuing the kind of aggressive international behavior which this Administration finds unacceptable.

These uncertainties, moreover, will be exacerbated by the fact that the Soviet Union will be engaged in the unpredictable process of political succession to Brezhnev. As noted above, we cannot predict with confidence what policies Brezhnev's successors will adopt. Consequently, the U.S. should not seek to adjust policies to the Soviet internal conflict, but rather try to create incentives (positive and negative) for any new leadership to adopt policies less detrimental to U.S. interests. The U.S. posture should be one of a willingness to deal, on the basis of the policy approach set forth since the beginning of the Administration, with whichever leadership group emerges. The U.S. should underscore that it remains ready for improved US-Soviet relations if the Soviet Union makes significant changes in policies of concern to it; the burden for any further deterioration in relations must fall squarely on Moscow.

Throughout the coming decade, the U.S. rearmament program will be subject to the uncertainties of the budget process and the U.S. domestic debate on national security. In addition, U.S. reassertion of leadership with the Allies, while necessary for the long-term revitalization of U.S. alliances, is certain to create periodic intra-alliance disputes that may provide the Soviets with opportunities for wedge driving. The U.S. effort to reconstruct the credibility of U.S. commitments in the Third World will also depend upon U.S. ability to sustain over time commitments of resources, despite budgetary stringencies. As noted above, these constraints on the U.S. capacity to shape the Soviet international environment will be accompanied by real limits on the U.S. capacity to use the US-Soviet bilateral relationship as leverage to restrain Soviet behavior.

The existing and projected gap between finite resources and the level of capabilities needed to implement U.S. strategy for

~~SECRET~~

US-Soviet relations makes it essential that the U.S.: 1) establish firm priorities for the use of limited U.S. resources where they will have the greatest restraining impact on the Soviet Union; and 2) mobilize the resources of allies and friends which are willing to join with the U.S. in containing the expansion of Soviet power.

Underlying the full range of U.S. and Western policies must be a strong military, capable of acting across the entire spectrum of potential conflicts and guided by a well-conceived political and military strategy. The heart of U.S. military strategy is to deter attack by the USSR and its allies against the U.S., its allies, or other important countries, and to defeat such an attack should deterrence fail. Achieving this strategic aim largely rests, as in the past, on a strong U.S. military capability. Strategic nuclear forces remain a crucial element of that capability, but the importance of other forces -- nuclear and conventional -- has risen in the current era of strategic nuclear parity.

Although unilateral U.S. efforts must lead the way in rebuilding Western military strength to counter the Soviet threat, the protection of Western interests will require increased U.S. cooperation with Allied and other states and greater utilization of their resources. U.S. military strategy must be better integrated with national strategies of allies and friends, and U.S. defense programs must consider Allied arrangements in the planning stage.

U.S. military strategy for successfully contending with peacetime, crisis, and wartime contingencies involving the USSR on a global basis is detailed in NSDD 32. This military strategy must be combined with a political strategy focused on the following objectives:

- Sustaining steady, long-term growth in U.S. defense spending and capabilities -- both nuclear and conventional. This is the most important way of conveying to the Soviets U.S. resolve and political staying power.
- Creating a long-term Western consensus for dealing with the Soviet Union. This will require that the U.S. exercise strong leadership in developing policies to deal with the multifaceted Soviet threat to Western interests. It will require that the U.S. take Allied concerns into account and also that the allies take into equal account U.S. concerns. In this connection, and in addition to pushing the Allies to spend more on defense, the U.S. must make a serious effort to negotiate arms control agreements consistent with U.S. military strategy and necessary force modernization plans. The U.S. must also develop, together with the Allies, a unified Western approach to East-West economic relations, implementing the agreement announced on November 13, 1982.

- Maintaining a strategic relationship with China, and efforts to minimize opportunities for a Sino-Soviet rapprochement.
- Building and sustaining a major ideological/political offensive which, together with other efforts, will be designed to bring about evolutionary change inside the Soviet Union itself. This must be a long-term and sophisticated program, given the nature of the Soviet system.
- Effective opposition to Moscow's efforts to consolidate its position in Afghanistan. This will require that the U.S. continue efforts to promote Soviet withdrawal in the context of a negotiated settlement of the conflict. At the same time, the U.S. should keep pressure on Moscow for withdrawal and ensure that Soviet costs on the ground are high.
- Blocking the expansion of Soviet influence in the critical Middle East and Southwest Asia regions. This will require both continued efforts to seek a political solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and to bolster U.S. relations with moderate states in the region, and a sustained U.S. defense commitment to deter Soviet military encroachments.
- Maintenance of international pressure on Moscow to permit a relaxation of the current repression in Poland and a longer term increase in diversity and independence throughout Eastern Europe. This will require that the U.S. continue to impose costs on the Soviet Union for its behavior in Poland. It will also require that the U.S. maintain a policy of differentiation among East European countries.
- Neutralization and reduction of the threat to U.S. national security interests posed by the Soviet-Cuban relationship. This will require that the U.S. use a variety of instruments, including diplomatic efforts and security and economic assistance. The U.S. must also retain the option of use of its military forces to protect vital security interests against threats which may arise from the Soviet-Cuban connection.

C. Articulating the U.S. Approach: Sustaining Public and Congressional Support

The policy outlined above is one for the long haul. It is unlikely to yield a rapid breakthrough in bilateral relations with the Soviet Union. In the absence of dramatic near-term victories in the U.S. effort to moderate Soviet behavior, pressure is likely to

47
~~SECRET~~

- 44 -

mount for change in U.S. policy. There will be appeals from important segments of domestic opinion for a more "normal" US-Soviet relationship, particularly in a period of political transition in Moscow. This is inevitable given the historic American intolerance of ambiguity and complexity in foreign affairs.

It is therefore essential that the American people understand and support U.S. policy. This will require that official U.S. statements and actions avoid generating unrealizable expectations for near-term progress in US-Soviet relations. At the same time, the U.S. must demonstrate credibly that its policy is not a blueprint for an open-ended, sterile confrontation with Moscow, but a serious search for a stable and constructive long-term basis for US-Soviet relations.