

SOVIET DOCTRINE JUSTIFYING
MILITARY INTERVENTION FROM 1945 TO 1989

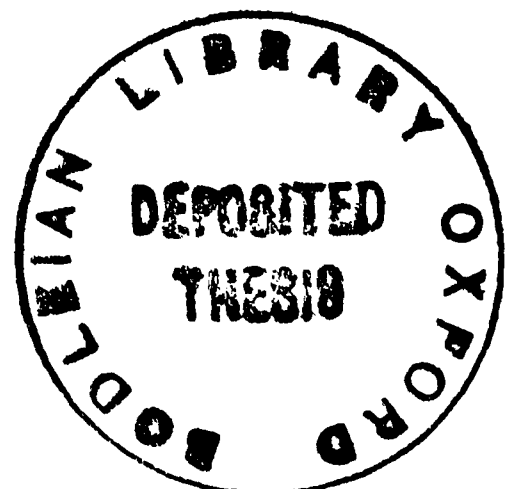
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ABSTRACT

Title: SOVIET DOCTRINE JUSTIFYING MILITARY INTERVENTION
SINCE 1945

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This thesis is about the Soviet doctrine used to justify or threaten military intervention since 1945. This interventionist doctrine achieved greater currency in 1968 in the form of the "Brezhnev Doctrine". This doctrine, generally associated with the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, stipulated that Moscow reserved the right to intervene militarily or otherwise if developments in any given socialist country inflicted damage on socialism within that country or the basic interests of other socialist states. The ideological justification for the Soviet invasion was assumed by many observers to have been a quickly engineered reaction to the crisis, rather than a long-standing doctrine. This thesis suggests, however, that the "Brezhnev Doctrine" was not an original formula, but a newer version of a previous doctrine.

The thesis traces the origins of the "Brezhnev Doctrine". It examines four crises in Soviet-East European relations for evidence of the doctrine. The thesis looks at how the effectiveness of the doctrine as a tool of Soviet foreign policy began to decline in the mid-1970s. While the doctrine appeared to be extended to the Third World - Afghanistan 1979 - and was "self-administered" by an East European country - Poland 1981 - it proved far less successful than in the past in suppressing opposition. Finally, the thesis examines the demise of the doctrine under Mikhail Gorbachev.

The conclusions drawn by this thesis are: that the Soviet interventionist doctrine was not a new phenomenon; that it contained political, ideological, and military components; and, that it served a number of functions within the socialist community.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Proletarian internationalism is the subordination of the interests of the proletarian struggle in one country to the interests of the struggle on a world scale.¹

- Lenin, II World Congress of Comintern (1920)

... when external and internal forces hostile to socialism try to turn the development of a given socialist country in the direction of restoration of the capitalist system, when a threat arises to the cause of socialism in that country - a threat to the security of the socialist commonwealth as a whole - this is no longer merely a problem for that country's people, but a common problem, the concern of all socialist countries.²

- L. I. Brezhnev, Fifth Congress of the Polish United Worker's Party (November 1968)

Limitations upon state sovereignty have been an ever-present feature in international relations. Through such devices as hegemonic arrangements and

1 V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol.31 (Moscow: Progress, 1977), p.148.

2 Pravda, 13 November 1968.

military interventions, one state can dictate or restrict another state's freedom of maneuver. At the 1820 Congress of Troppau, for instance, the major powers pledged to intervene on behalf of any European monarch who was threatened by liberal revolution:

... when political changes, brought about by illegal [without royal approval] means, produce dangers to other countries by reason of proximity, and when the Allied Powers can act effectively as regards these conditions, they shall, in order to bring back those countries to their allegiances, employ, first, amicable means, and then coercion.³

Although there have been many types of limitations upon sovereignty in the past, and also in the post-1945 world, this thesis will concern itself with the Soviet doctrine used to justify or threaten military intervention from 1945 to 1989. This interventionist doctrine achieved currency in 1968 in the form of the "Brezhnev Doctrine". This doctrine, generally associated with the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, stipulated that Moscow reserved the right to intervene militarily or otherwise if developments in any given socialist

3 Quoted in K. J. Holsti, International Politics: A Framework for Analysis (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1972), p.300.

country inflicted damage on socialism within that country or to the basic interests of other socialist states. The "Brezhnev Doctrine" remained a tenet of Soviet foreign policy until its decline, which was particularly evident in the years 1986-89.

In the minds of many people, the doctrine was elaborated in two major articles by S. Kovalev in Pravda, "On Peaceful and Nonpeaceful Counterrevolution" (11 September 1968) and "Sovereignty and Internationalist Obligations of Socialist Countries" (26 September 1968). It was, however, only after Leonid Brezhnev's speech in November 1968, in which he reiterated the main points that Kovalev made, that the term "Brezhnev Doctrine" came to be widely used in the West. The ideological justification for the Soviet invasion was assumed by many observers to have been a quickly engineered reaction to the crisis rather than a long-standing policy. This thesis suggests, however, that the "Brezhnev Doctrine" was not an original formula but a newer version of a previous doctrine. Although this line of thought has been called the "Brezhnev Doctrine", for the purpose of this study the overall doctrine will be called the "Soviet interventionist doctrine".

I. Definition of Terms

In this thesis and in much public debate, the Soviet practice or ideas of interventionism was seen as a challenge to the principles of sovereignty and nonintervention on which the international legal system is based. Although the concept of sovereignty is frequently mentioned, it is an ambiguous term that has led to many efforts of definition. I do not intend to give the definitive meaning, but to use the classic conception of sovereignty: the state is viewed as the supreme authority, i.e. sovereign, within a certain territory and a particular segment of the human population, and with no legal authority above it.⁴ It is "the supreme political characteristic" or "the central legal formula" of international society.⁵ States assert both internal sovereignty (supremacy over all other authorities within that territory and population) as well as external sovereignty

4 See Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), pp.318-19; and Hedley Bull, The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics (London: Macmillan, 1977), pp.8-9.

5 Joseph Frankel, International Relations (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), p.10.

(independence from outside authorities).⁶

In theory, each state is free to manage its own affairs internally and externally at its own discretion. In reality, however, state sovereignty is not absolute and can be either restricted voluntarily or by external forces.⁷ States are subject to formal limitations by other states in the form of treaty provisions or rules of international law; however, these restrictions are not imposed by others but are voluntarily consented to by states who view them as actual expressions of sovereignty.⁸ States, therefore, do not view sovereignty in terms of complete freedom of action, but see themselves as decision-making centers, responsible for a particular territory and population, and enjoying the benefits of international society. Although state sovereignty may be restricted, it is not meaningless and does serve an important function in international relations.

Sovereignty can at times appear to be

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Iran, for example, voluntarily permitted the presence of Soviet and British military forces on its territory during the Second World War.

The economic sanctions imposed on Cuban in 1960 by the United States, on the other hand, were an example of a constraint on Cuban sovereignty.

⁸ See Morton A. Kaplan and Nicholas deB. Katzenbach, The Political Foundations of International Law (New York: John Wiley, 1961), pp.135-37.

incompatible with international law, to which all states are to submit their absolute authority. International law can be defined as "a body of rules which binds states and other agents in world politics in their relations with one another and is considered to have the status of law."⁹ The rules and regulations of international law help define, delineate, and protect state sovereignty as well as facilitating and adding a degree of predictability to international relations.

In addition, unlike its domestic or municipal counterpart, international law operates without a superior central authority: it is, therefore, seen as a law between states, not above them. In general, states recognize and, for the most part, observe the regulations of international law. Violations may occur, but always with some form of justification, whether: by questioning the legitimacy of the rule; by declaring self-preservation superior to that rule; or by claiming that one rule has precedence over another.¹⁰ Therefore, while states might violate certain provisions of international law they still attempt to justify their actions in legal terms.

⁹ Bull, op. cit., p.127.

¹⁰ See J. L. Brierly, The Outlook for International Law (Oxford: Clarendon, 1944), pp.1-11.

The Soviet role in Eastern Europe and other similar global arrangements have been termed as hegemonic relationships. In general, a "hegemony" can be described as the preponderant influence by one great power over the lesser powers in a particular area or constellation. Force or the threat of force can be used, but it is not "habitual and uninhibited"; rather "occasional and reluctant".¹¹ The application of force is used only in extreme situations when the benefits outweigh the political costs. Violation of the lesser power's rights of sovereignty, equality, and independence may occur, but is justified by some specific overriding principle.¹²

A hegemonic power exerts control over its particular "sphere of influence", an area in which its predominance is acknowledged (such as the United States in Latin America or the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe). The local government is normally left undisturbed unless the interests of the hegemon are threatened.¹³ Hegemonic relationships exist not only in East-West relations, but also between states in the Third World.¹⁴

11 Bull, op. cit., pp.215-16.

12 Ibid.

13 See F. S. Northedge, The International Political System (London: Faber and Faber, 1976), p.217.

14 With decolonization, for example, several post-colonial

When the vital concerns of a hegemon are challenged, military intervention is one option available to the dominant power. Military intervention, in the traditional international legal sense, can be defined as "forcible interference, short of declaring war, by any one or more powers in the affairs of another power."¹⁵ It takes place "when troops are dispatched to keep order or to support a revolution in a foreign state, or when military aid is given to a government whose internal position is insecure or which is in conflict with a neighboring state."¹⁶ Military intervention can occur in either the internal or external affairs of a country, can be either direct or indirect, can be opposed to or in support of a government (by invitation), open or clandestine, and offensive or defensive. It can also be forcible or non-forcible, although the core of this type of intervention is forcible (There are non-forcible military interventions, but they are not addressed in this thesis).

Interventions have been justified in various

states have become hegemonic - such as India toward Bhutan or Sri Lanka.

15 Martin Wight, Power Politics (London: Penguin, 1978), p.191.

16 R. J. Vincent, Nonintervention and International Order (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974), p.9.

ways, whether in political, military, economic or ideological terms. In general, interventions have been viewed by other states as being legally and morally wrong since they violate the sovereign state's right to its sphere of jurisdiction. K.J. Holsti and Hedley Bull argue, however, that intervention has not only been a ubiquitous feature of modern international relations but has sometimes also justifiable.¹⁷ In addition, through such concepts as the Monroe Doctrine and the Soviet interventionist doctrine, great powers have appealed "to an overriding moral or historical principle claiming a higher legitimacy than that of international law."¹⁸ Whatever the motive, reason or justification for intervention, the question as to the morality and legality of such a measure still remains:

The principle that states should never intervene in the domestic affairs of other states follows readily from the legalist paradigm and less readily and more ambiguously, from those conceptions of life and liberty that underlie the paradigm and make it plausible.

17 See Holsti, *op. cit.*, p.300; Hedley Bull (ed), Intervention in World Politics (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), pp.2-3.

18 Philip Windsor, "Superpower Intervention," in Bull, Intervention, *op. cit.*, pp.54-55.

Intervention is not defined as a criminal activity, and though the practice of intervening often threatens the territorial integrity and political independence of invaded states, it can sometimes be justified ... and always has to be justified.¹⁹

II. Issues Raised by the Soviet Interventionist

Doctrine

Of the many questions and issues raised by the Soviet interventionist doctrine regarding Soviet intra-bloc and international relations, the following are the particular ones on which this thesis mainly focuses:

1. What were the origins of the Soviet interventionist doctrine and how did its meaning or characteristics evolve or change from 1945 to 1989?
2. Military intervention was justified in largely ideological terms, but how large a role did security play in decision-making? Did security interests dictate greater concern for events in Czechoslovakia, for example, than in Hungary or Romania? Was socialism or the Soviet Union being

¹⁹ Michael Walzer, Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustration (London: Pelican, 1980), p.86.

protected? For example, in the case of Czechoslovakia 1968, was military intervention the result of a disruption in the security of the bloc or the protection of the working class and socialism?

3. What were the limits of deviation permissible within the bloc? How much of a departure from orthodox socialist models could be tolerated without the doctrine being involved and military intervention considered?

4. What functions did the "Brezhnev Doctrine" serve during the various crises in Soviet-East European relations? Was it used as a signaling device warning a bloc country of its "transgression" as well as an ex post facto theoretical justification? Was it a tool for uniting bloc interest and mobilizing support? Did it clarify Moscow's "ground rules" of behavior? Was it a "weapon" of last resort?

5. Which countries were considered part of the "socialist commonwealth"? Did it, for example, include Yugoslavia, China, or Cuba?

6. What was the impact of the Soviet interventionist doctrine on East-West relations, on Eastern Europe, and on other communist and non-communist movements?

7. Was the doctrine essentially legal or political? Was a serious effort made to relate the Soviet

doctrine to international legal norms on intervention? Or did the doctrine relativize international norms, and privilege the presentation of the socialist system as in some sense hierarchically superior to them? Moreover, did the doctrine's multilateral approach increase its legality?

8. What were the similarities and differences between the Soviet doctrine and other comparable pronouncements, including the Monroe Doctrine and statements made by France regarding its involvements in Africa since decolonization?

9. What changes led to the decline and, ultimately, the demise of the Soviet interventionist doctrine under Gorbachev?

There are, in addition, many other questions yet to be addressed about the doctrine. Did it, for example, really reflect ideological strength or weakness? Was there any evidence of Soviet "copying" from other doctrines?

III. Outline of Approach

I approach these and other questions raised by

the Soviet interventionist doctrine by first examining the theoretical and practical aspects of hegemonic relations in general, and then specifically French interests in Africa as well as US concerns in Latin America. The purpose of this part of the study is to provide a comparison of other dominant/subordinate state relations with that of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Second, the origins of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" are examined. The ideological roots of the doctrine are traced from Lenin's notion of proletarian internationalism (which defined relations between socialist parties) through Stalin's concept of socialist internationalism (which described relations between socialist states) to Khrushchev's attempts at a "socialist commonwealth". The historical origins of the Soviet interventionist doctrine, rooted in Soviet security concerns and the Stalinist model of socialism imposed on Eastern Europe after the Second World War, are also analyzed.

Third, four crises in Soviet-East European relations - East Germany 1953, Poland and Hungary 1956, and Czechoslovakia 1968 - are analyzed for evidence of the Soviet interventionist doctrine. During these various crises, certain policies and practices associated with the doctrine can be found

in the form of public speeches, visits by Soviet delegates, newspaper articles (often authored under pseudonyms), military maneuvers, the terminology used in official speeches and publications, and, of course, the direct use of force. While Soviet troops, for example, were used to quell the East German Uprising, there were few examples of doctrinal statements. The Polish October, on the other hand, is instructive as a case where the Soviet interventionist doctrine was used to warn and deter against deviation, but where no military invasion was undertaken. In both Hungary and Czechoslovakia various aspects of the doctrine were used - as a threat, as a method of unifying bloc interest, and, ultimately, actual force. In addition, comparisons and contrasts will be made between the various crises.

Fourth, this thesis traces the beginnings of the decline of the Soviet interventionist doctrine in the 1970s. While Brezhnev sought greater cohesion within the bloc, a number of factors - such as the Helsinki process, the impact of détente, and the global economic recession - undermined Soviet influence in the region. Although the doctrine appeared to be extended to the Third World - Afghanistan - and was self-administered by an East European country - Poland - the doctrine proved far

less successful than in the past in suppressing opposition. In addition, the Afghan crisis provides an example of Soviet interventionism in a socialist country outside of the East European bloc.

Finally, the demise of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" in the 1980s is examined. The various factors which undermined Soviet influence in the region - Moscow's inability to "win" in Afghanistan, the difficulty of "normalization" in Poland, the ideological challenges to the primacy of the Soviet Union and fundamental premises of Communist rule from the "Eurocommunists" and other autonomous parties in the West, as well as from dissident groups within Eastern Europe - will be addressed. Also analyzed will be the impact on the Soviet bloc of the debate within the USSR on the legitimacy of socialism as a policy. Gorbachev's policy toward the region will be traced from one of moderation to crisis management and, ultimately, the denunciation of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" in 1989.

IV. Focus and Methodology

This thesis focuses mainly on the field of international relations, not Sovietology. It is a

study of a public doctrine and examines both the private and public rationale for Soviet policy in Eastern Europe. The thesis examines the Soviet interventionist doctrine and how it related to the development of Soviet policy in Eastern Europe, This thesis does not examine the general policy of the Soviet Union to the socialist bloc. Moreover, it does not evaluate in detail certain aspects of Soviet policy, such as the economic burdens or benefits of "empire".

The thesis is not an exercise in re-interpretation of East European crises except for the doctrinal thread which runs through them all: to distinguish elements of the interventionist doctrine, if possible, within each. I am aware that the Soviet interventionist doctrine was not applied to every crisis that occurred in the region. In addition, no attempt is being made to establish the principal authorship of the doctrine at each given time.

When referring to "Eastern Europe" the main countries being addressed are Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland: reference is also made to the other East European states. The reaction of other communist countries -

China, for example - are treated only briefly.²⁰ In addition, while the debate centered around Soviet perceptions versus Western perceptions of international law is interesting, it is extensive and can only be addressed in this work superficially.

Although there are various methods by which to achieve a proper understanding of this subject, I have chosen to pursue a historical approach. This involves, for example, tracing the evolution of the doctrine in a largely chronological fashion, examining the context in which it operated and the functions it served, outlining the main responses to it by different states, and comparing it to other similar doctrines.

As this thesis is an account of a public doctrine, I have relied mainly on secondary sources. My research is based on official public statements, whether written or oral, newspaper and journal articles, books, memoirs, transcripts of broadcasts, and historical accounts of events whether published in the East or West. Not being a Russian speaker, I

20 With the events of 1989, the term "Eastern Europe" has often been replaced by phrases such as "Central Europe" or "East Central Europe". Although these expressions are not new, they have come into vogue much more since 1989. For the purposes of this study, however, I prefer to use the pre-1990 term "Eastern Europe".

have used sources either written or translated into the English language, such as those provided by the United States Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). In addition, I have utilized material written in the Polish language. I have made an effort to employ references depicting Western, Soviet, and East European views and approaches toward the sequence of events. I have incorporated material which has appeared since the events of Autumn 1989, but inevitably there will be further revelations which may shed new light on the subject of this thesis.

CHAPTER II

HEGEMONIC RELATIONSHIPS

Relations between the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the postwar period had been considered by many observers as an example of a hegemonic system. Before discussing the role of the USSR in the region, it is first necessary to define what is meant exactly by a "hegemonic relationship", and what such an arrangement entails. Specifically, this chapter will address three different questions about hegemonic systems:

(i) Hegemonic relationships are seen as part of "international order" and "international society". What is meant by this?

(ii) There are many terms and expressions used to describe hegemonic relationships. What are they and what do they mean?

(iii) Is a hegemonic relationship based solely on the dominance of one state over others, or is there a certain degree of "push and pull" in such a system?

I. Hegemonic Relationships, International Order, and International Society

When discussing the hegemonic activities of states, the focus of debate inevitably centers around the impact that their actions will have on the international order. But what is meant by "order" and "international order" specifically?

Order, in an elementary sense, denotes "regular, methodical or harmonious arrangement in the position of the things contained in any space or area or composing any group or body."¹ Hedley Bull has likened order to a row of books on a shelf as opposed to a heap of books on the floor, which can be considered disorder.² In social life, order is not composed of just any pattern in the relations of human individuals or groups, but one that leads to a particular result or arrangement that promotes certain goals or values. International order can be described as "a pattern or disposition of international activity that sustains those goals of the society of states that are elementary, primary or universal": the "elementary" goal is that of the preservation of the system and society of states as a whole;

¹ Oxford English Dictionary, Vol.X, 2nd ed. (1989).

² Bull, Anarchical Society, op. cit., p.3.

the "primary" is that of maintaining the independence or external sovereignty of individual states; and the "universal" is the goal of peace - the absence of war among member states as the normal condition of international society.³

An international society exists when "a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another, and share in the working of common institutions."⁴ It differs from an "international system" which is formed when a plurality of sovereign states have sufficient contact between them, and sufficient impact on one another's decisions, to cause them to behave as parts of a whole.⁵

Throughout the history of the modern state system there have been three competing traditions of thought regarding the basic character of international society: Hobbesian, Kantian and Grotian. The Hobbesian, or realist school, views international relations as essentially the struggle of states for power. State relations take place in a state of nature which is a state of war. States are in a condition of war not because they are always fighting, but that over a period of time they have a known disposition to fight. Bull

3 For details, see *ibid*, pp.16-19.

4 *Ibid*, p.13.

5 Hedley Bull, lecture given at the Examination Schools, Oxford University on 25 January 1985.

argues in "Hobbes and the International Anarchy" that war in this sense is inherent in states which are not dissuaded by the power of other states; peace, which in this case is the lack of a disposition to fight, is beyond their reach.⁶

In this state of war, the behavior of sovereign states, although circumscribed by considerations of prudence, are not limited by rules or law or morality. As Hobbes wrote in Leviathan: "The notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice, have there no place."⁷ Although states are in a state of nature or war, there are certain measures which can be taken to avoid conflict: to seek peace while, at the same time, defending themselves if peace is elusive; and, to sacrifice a certain degree of freedom by entering into agreements in which others will accept comparable sacrifices of their liberty.⁸

The Kantian or universalist tradition, on the other hand, sees international society as a potential community of mankind. Replacing conflict is the notion of transnational social bonds, linking citizens of different states together. Conflicts of interest can still be found among the ruling elites, but these are only superficial and could be overcome if properly understood. Similarly, the moral imperatives of

6 Hedley Bull, "Hobbes and the International Anarchy," Social Research, Vol.48, No.4, pp.717-38; at p.721.

7 See Sir William Molesworth (ed), The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, Vol.3 (London: J. Bohn, 1836-45), p.115.

8 Bull, "Hobbes," op. cit., p.729.

the community of mankind are primary over the reality of international politics and deserve the highest priority. The rules that sustain coexistence and social intercourse among states should be ignored if required by the imperatives of a higher morality.⁹

In the midst of the two schools lies the Grotian or internationalist tradition, which is the most applicable to today's interpretation of international society. Hugo Grotius, in De Jure Belli ac Pacis, described international politics in terms of a society of states or international society. States are not, as Hobbes argued, in a permanent state of war, but are limited in their conflicts by common rules and institutions. Unlike Kant, Grotius viewed sovereigns or states as the principal actors in international politics. In global politics there is neither complete conflict of interests between states nor total identity; rather, a mixture of both. States are bound not only by rules of prudence and expediency, but also by the imperatives of morality and law. Neither conflict nor community are the norm of behavior; rather, coexistence and cooperation.¹⁰

9 Bull, Anarchical Society, op. cit., pp.24-26.

10 Ibid.

II. Hegemonic Relationships, Spheres of Influence and Military Intervention

There are many terms used to describe hegemonic relationships. Words such as spheres of influence, buffer zones, spheres of interest, and military intervention raise many definitional difficulties, particularly as they are not always accepted as legally meaningful terms. A brief examination of these various expressions, therefore, is necessary.

Spheres of Influence

A hegemonic relationship is one in which a dominant power exercises influence, or at most indirect and informal rule, over one or several subordinate states.¹¹ In such an arrangement, the dominant power "resorts to force and the threat of force, but this is not habitual and uninhibited, but occasional and reluctant". The hegemon prefers to rely upon instruments "other than the direct use or threat of force; and will employ the latter only in situations of

¹¹ See James R. Kurth, "Economic Change and State Development," in Jan F. Triska (ed), Dominant Powers and Subordinate States: The United States in Latin America and the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe (Durham: Duke University Press, 1986), p.87.

extremity and with a sense that in doing so it is incurring a political cost". According to Bull, the influencing power is ready to violate the rights of sovereignty, equality, and independence enjoyed by lesser states: however, it does not disregard these rights. The dominant power recognizes that they might exist, and justifies their violation by appeals to some specific overriding principle.¹² Such a principle could involve protection of "socialist internationalism" or the promotion of "democracy".

A sphere of influence is, in Paul Keal's words, "a determinate region within which a single external power exerts a predominant influence, which limits the independence or freedom of action of political entities within it."¹³ Such a region can be either a single state, a group of adjacent states, or an ocean with island and/or littoral states. Although most spheres of influence have an identifiable geographic focus (such as the Caribbean for the United States), their precise borders may be less clear. Thus, there have at times been ambiguities as to whether Yugoslavia was, or was not, in the Soviet sphere of influence. States not in a sphere of influence might be either free of constraints or in areas of superpower competition where it is not clear which party predominates,

12 Hedley Bull, "World Order and the Super Powers," in Carsten Holbraad (ed), Super Powers and World Order (New York: St. Martin's, 1979), pp.148-49.

13 Paul Keal, Unspoken Rules and Superpower Dominance (London: Macmillan, 1983), p.15.

a so-called "grey area".

The influencing power is defined as "external" in that the influenced states do not fall within its national boundaries, and indeed sometimes are far removed. By "predominant influence" it is meant that the influencing power prevails both over the entities in the region and against the influence of other comparable powers, sometimes to the point of exclusivity.¹⁴ In practice, however, exclusion is not absolute as state relations are complex, varied, and difficult or undesirable to control completely. The degree of influence on the lesser powers varies from direct action, such as military intervention, to more subtle forms, such as a "gentleman's agreement".¹⁵

Spheres of influence differ from a "dependence", which is an external reliance of one state on another that connotes an exploitative symbiotic relationship.¹⁶ They also differ from outright annexation, which involves: the extension of the territorial boundaries of the dominant state; and the complete incorporation of the territory into the greater power's political and legal system, which extinguishes its previous legal status. In addition, spheres of influence

14 See G. W. Rutherford, "Spheres of Influence: An Aspect of Semi-Suzerainty," American Journal of International Law, Vol.XX, No.2 (1926), pp.300-25.

15 Keal, op. cit., pp.15-16.

16 For an examination of "dependency" theory see Tony Smith, "The Underdevelopment of Development Literature: The Case of Dependency Theory," World Politics, Vol.XXXI, No.2 (January 1979), pp.247-88.

can be distinguished from colonial systems, which frequently consist of indirect rule or suzerainty, operating through indigenous rulers and institutions, and are often of long standing.¹⁷

The concept of spheres of influence is sometimes expressed in what have come to be considered the synonymous terms of "spheres of action", "zones of influence", "spheres of preponderance", and "spheres of responsibility".¹⁸ "Spheres of influence", however, should not be confused with other related, but different concepts. The term "sphere of interest", for example, is often used in the place of "sphere of influence" in order to "soften" the connotation. In his 1907 Romanes lecture, for example, Lord Curzon asserted that a "Sphere of influence is a less developed form than a Protectorate, but it is more developed than a Sphere of Interest".¹⁹ This implies that there can be "interest" without "influence", but once "influence" is present the term "interest" becomes redundant.

A "buffer zone" has been described by Martin Wight as "an area occupied by a weaker Power or Powers between two or more stronger Powers" in which it is in "the vital interest of each stronger Power to prevent the other from

17 Kurth, op. cit., p.87. For a history of the concept of spheres of influence, see Keal, op. cit., pp.16-26.

18 For a description of how these terms have evolved and why they are considered synonymous, see *ibid*, pp.19-24.

19 G. N. Curzon, Frontiers: The Romanes Lecture, 1907 (London: Clarendon, 1907), p.42.

controlling."²⁰ Although buffer zones sometimes coincide with spheres of influence, they need not always be aligned with a great power. They can be neutral and independent and, therefore, not necessarily a sphere of influence: for instance, the Anglo-French declaration of 15 January 1896 established that Siam would fall under neither French nor British spheres of influence.

A final related - but distinct - term from "spheres of influence" is "spheres of restraint". It may be regarded as an area in which no one power is predominant. In these areas, the nature and extent of superpower involvement is unclear and, therefore, the freedom of action of each state is somewhat restricted for fear of coming into conflict.²¹

There are various methods by which a region comes to be regarded as being in the sphere of influence of a particular power, whether by unilateral declaration, mutual agreement, or tacit understanding. The most notable example of a unilateral declaration is the 1823 Monroe Doctrine. The United States asserted its predominance in the Western Hemisphere by claiming that any external (such as European) designs on Latin America would be perceived as a threat to the peace and safety of not only the region, but also to the US. A declaration, however, does not always guarantee that a particular region is seen by other states as within that state's sphere of influence. In addition, by the mid-20th

20 Wight, Power Politics, op. cit., pp.50-51.

21 See Keal, op. cit., pp.27-28.

century such pronouncements were no longer considered morally or legally acceptable.

In previous eras there were formal, mutual agreements regarding spheres of influence. M. F. Lindley distinguished three main types of such arrangements during the late 19th and early 20th centuries: agreements between colonizing powers themselves; agreements in which the parties recognized that the other had a special interest in the territory of a third state; and agreements involving a power that was interested in a part of the territory of a somewhat advanced state and made an arrangement with the state itself.²² In addition, spheres of influence agreements can be negative or positive. The above-mentioned agreements established negative spheres of influence: where the influencing power employed a variety of devices which attempted to exclude other powers from the region. A positive sphere of influence agreement, on the other hand, is one which sets up a division of labor among the parties involved in the execution of a common task. It establishes what can be called a sphere of "responsibility".

A final method by which spheres of influence are recognized is by tacit understanding.²³ The agreements about spheres of influence of the kind discussed above belonged to a period in which European powers were ascendent

22 M. F. Lindley, The Acquisition and Government of Backward Territory in International Law (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969 - repr. from 1926 ed.), pp.207-10.

23 See Keal, op. cit., pp.45-61.

and the principle of the sovereign equality of states was not as yet universally accepted. Once non-European states became more influential in international politics, and state sovereignty was established as a universal principle to be accorded all states, formal agreements about spheres of influence were no longer an acceptable practice. The superpowers, particularly for this reason, formally deny that they have any agreement or understanding, tacit or otherwise, about spheres of influence. In addition, the superpowers formally deny, or simply omit to deny, spheres because they cannot, or do not wish to, be seen in world opinion to be openly claiming for themselves or granting each other rights to spheres of influence.

A tacit understanding, according to Keal, is one which "causes or allows particular actions or inactions of states which cannot or will not communicate directly about what is understood, but which nevertheless seem based on some kind of understanding."²⁴ This understanding may be the result of a "gentleman's agreement" or precedent. In international politics, a precedent is understood as the past actions of a state, in particular circumstances, which can be useful in helping an observer anticipate its actions in either present or future circumstances. In addition, a precedent can also establish an action as a right.

Although precedents can serve as a guide for future

24 Ibid, p.46.

activities of a certain country, they are not always a reliable predictor of action. Precedents can also serve that state which was the originator of the precedent, in that inaction by a rival power can be exploited or employed once again. When the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 erupted, for example, the Soviet intervention was not interrupted, prevented or obstructed by the United States, either before or after the crisis. This resulted in the possible Soviet expectation that the USSR could, in future, intervene in Eastern Europe without drawing a strong American reaction.²⁵

Precedents are derived not only from acts, such as military intervention, but also from non-verbal symbolic measures and verbal statements. A symbolic act can involve leaking deceptive military intelligence to an enemy or the use of "smokescreens." Verbal statements - such as speeches and comments by politicians, newspaper articles and editorials, and dialogue - in general can also contribute to expectations. Before and during the Czechoslovak crisis of 1968, for example, there were various phrases and statements issued in the press, and during informal talks between allies, which indicated the possibility that intervention was imminent. Many in the West, however, did not recognize the significance of these verbal expressions and only acknowledged them after the fact as the "Brezhnev Doctrine".

Although a sphere of influence can be tacitly established

²⁵ It could possibly even be argued that the 1953 Berlin Uprising served as a precedent.

and acknowledged, it does not always follow that this relationship is permanent. The boundaries of a sphere can be tested by probes from a challenging power in a variety of forms - overt, covert, political, economic, cultural or military.²⁶ A probe can be countered by a response on the part of the state whose sphere is being tested through a pledge, threat, or military action. If such "trespassing" is not met firmly in a given area, the dominance of that region by a certain power can come into question. If the probes are firmly rebuffed, such as during the Cuban Missile Crisis, the action serves to establish or reconfirm the boundaries of a sphere of influence. A great power can also reconfirm its dominance over its sphere of influence by actions that it initiates, such as the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Similarly, a state can use a probe to challenge the sphere of influence of another power or to incorporate an area into its own sphere.

Military Intervention

Finding a definition for the concept of "intervention" has led one observer to state "Nothing can be more static or

²⁶ See Andrew M. Scott, "Military Intervention by the Great Powers: The Rules of the Game" in W. I. Zartman (ed), Czechoslovakia, Intervention and Impact (New York: New York University Press, 1970), pp.86-88.

less rewarding."²⁷ "Intervention" is an ambiguous and imprecise term which has been described as simply as "any action affecting the interest of others" or "to make you do what I want you to do, whether or not you wish to do it."²⁸

In the realm of international politics, intervention has been denoted by Wight as an "unwelcome interference by one member of international society in the domestic affairs of another", and by international legal publicists, such as L. Oppenheim, as "dictatorial interference by a State in the affairs of another State for the purpose of maintaining or altering the actual condition of things."²⁹

In the broadest sense every act of a state constitutes intervention. Acts of intervention can range from the Israeli bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1981 to the West German decision not to enact sanctions against the Soviet Union over the 1981 declaration of martial law in Poland. Stanley Hoffmann offers three approaches toward explaining intervention: by reference to the type of activity involved; to the type of actor; and, most

27 Stanley Hoffmann, "The Problem of Intervention" in Bull, Intervention, op. cit., p.8.

28 Urs Schwarz, Confrontation and Intervention in the Modern World (New York: Oceana, 1970), p.83; Hoffmann, op.cit., p.9.

29 Martin Wight, "Western Values in International Relations," in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds), Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1966), p.112; L. Oppenheim, International Law, Vol.I, 7th ed. (London: Longmans, 1948), p.272.

importantly, the type of target.³⁰

Interventions occur in various forms, some of which are explicitly coercive through the use or threat of force, such as military maneuvers, or economic sanctions. In addition, there are interventions which are implicitly coercive: although they do not constitute obvious dictatorial interference, they force a state to undertake an action that it would not normally initiate. The type of actors which undertake intervention also vary: it might be a state, or a revolutionary group within a state, or a group enjoying the tacit support of its government. Intervention might be the action of a group of states or by regional, transnational or international organizations.³¹ While there are various targets of intervention, this thesis will examine the acts against the domestic affairs of a state, not those aimed at its foreign relations or external behavior.

Interventions can have many motives and rationales. They can occur to maintain the balance of power or to promote ideological solidarity. The motives and rationales for interventions, however, are not necessarily the same. Motives might be different from the rationale used to justify such action. Joint-stock companies between the USSR and Yugoslavia in the period of 1946-47, for example, were set up in such a way as to benefit mostly the Soviet Union. Stalin justified Soviet exploitation by invoking Marx,

30 Hoffmann, op. cit., pp.9-11.

31 See Vincent, Nonintervention, op. cit., pp.4-5.

stating they were national wealth with no direct social value.³² The motive, therefore, was financial and the rationale ideological.

Superpowers and other states have at times sponsored collective intervention to further their respective interests. Collective intervention differs from unilateral intervention in a number of important aspects.³³ While unilateral intervention is generally viewed by the international community, particularly by the intervened state, as being a violation of sovereignty, collective intervention, on the other hand, can be justified as being authorized by some international body having widespread legitimacy, such as the United Nations.

Collective intervention also differs in its purposes from unilateral intervention. The latter is undertaken by an individual state to promote its own political, economic or strategic interests. This type of intervention can be argued by that state to promote the interests of the country in which it is intervening; however, those interests are generally that of the intervening state. Collective intervention, on the other hand, can be said to be undertaken for collective purposes, such as stabilization, the restoration of peace, the maintenance of the status quo,

32 See Vladimir Dedijer, Tito Speaks: His Self Portrait and Struggle With Stalin (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1953), pp.286-87.

33 See Evan Luard, "Collective Intervention," in Bull, Intervention, op. cit., pp.157-80.

and the exclusion of great power rivalries.

Finally, collective intervention differs from unilateral intervention in its methods. The methods available to international organizations, for example, are more limited than those available to national governments; assistance to rebel forces, political interference and subversion are not normally used. Military interventions or economic sanctions can be used, but are not preferred as they often do not produce the intended results.

There also exists in international society a policy or instance of "nonintervention": one in which intervention does not occur. A state can intentionally choose a policy of nonintervention where intervention is a possibility. The rule of nonintervention can be said to derive from, and require respect for, the principle of state sovereignty. As a state has the right of sovereignty, other states have a duty to respect that right by, among other things, refraining from intervention in its domestic affairs.³⁴

Superpower freedom to intervene is partly restrained by common inhibitions about their own strength and their need to avoid crises with each other. When intervention does occur, there are certain rules which the great powers are likely to observe, thus giving their behavior a degree of predictability. These rules have not been formally agreed upon, but tacitly understood. When these rules are

34 For further discussion, see Vincent, *op. cit.*

followed, it is because they are simple and appear to accord with the interests of each state: moreover, in most cases, they are easier to comply with than to contest. These rules are not necessarily constant and can change with circumstances. In addition, there can be special rules accepted within the subsystem that might not agree with other systems or formulations of international law.³⁵

The most important rule to be followed by an intervening power in its own sphere is to act in such a way as to minimize the danger of direct confrontation with another great power, and to facilitate the other power's acceptance of that action. The following is a list of subordinate rules that Andrew Scott has outlined which the intervening nation is likely to observe:

- In its pronouncements it will minimize the extent of the intervention.
- It will minimize the precedent-breaking nature of the action.
- All pronouncements will stress the temporary and short-term nature of the intervention.
- The intervening nation will try to arrange to be invited to intervene by the government of the country in which the intervention is to take place. If the power has been invited, intervention presumably ceases to be intervention

³⁵ See Scott, *op. cit.*, pp.88-89.

and becomes a friendly act of assistance.

- The intervening country will try to achieve a speedy victory.
- To give the appearance of legitimacy to its intervention, the intervening country might try to associate other countries in its sphere of influence with the interventionist action.

The nonintervening great power will observe the following rules in relation to the intervention:

- When a great power is confronted with military intervention by the other great power in the latter's sphere of influence, it will express moral outrage and will take various symbolic actions and offer resolutions in international bodies.
- It might consider a variety of relatively mild actions designed to embarrass or punish the offending nation for its action.
- It will not treat the action as a "casus belli". Each recognizes that developments in the other's sphere are far more important to the other nation than to itself.³⁶

There are, in international affairs, some fundamental

³⁶ Both sets of rules are just a sampling of the factors taken into consideration and are not intended as a comprehensive list.

contradictions which underlie the whole subject of intervention. First, if international society is founded on the basis of state sovereignty, then intervention appears illegitimate. In previous eras, interventions raised fewer objections because the rules regarding sovereignty were not as absolute as they are currently under the UN Charter system. At the same time, however, the principle of sovereignty accepts the norm of self-help, which can include intervention.

A second contradiction involves the phenomenon of national self-determination. It is believed by some observers that all chaos could be avoided in international society if all states were based on the principle of self-determination or nationality; this, however, would only increase intervention on behalf of self-determination. Moreover, there is a general belief that the best method of preventing state sovereignty and national self-determination from leading to chaos is by imposing or maintaining a uniform government system (such as the Holy Alliance) in which all the great powers share the same political basis. But this notion would justify intervention in name of government legitimacy.

There has also been a debate among theorists about whether or not intervention is a proper method of maintaining international order. On one side are those who deny the right of intervention. Christian Wolff, for example, was the first jurist to state clearly the rule of

nonintervention, although he held that it could be overridden by the "civitas maxima".³⁷ W. E. Hall stated in his classic treatise: "No intervention is legal, except for the purpose of self-preservation, unless a breach of the law as between states has taken place, or unless the whole body of civilized states have concurred in authorizing it."³⁸

On the other side are those who consider intervention as a continuing and universal duty. This duty stems from either: the belief that the society of states ought to be revolutionized and made uniform; or the belief that it ought to be preserved as it is and kept uniform. Both imply that the independence and separateness of states is less important than the homogeneity of international society.

Between the noninterventionists and interventionists lie the proponents of the "moral interdependence of peoples".³⁹ "States are not isolated bodies," wrote Sir Charles Webster, "but part of an international community and the events which take place in each of them must be of interest and concern to all the rest."⁴⁰ For them, intervention represents an exercise not simply of the right of self-preservation, but of the duty of mutual-feeling and cooperation. "Kings" said Grotius, "in addition to the particular care of their own

37 Christian Wolff, Jus Gentium Methodo Scientifica Pertractatum (first published in 1749), Sections 255-57.

38 W. E. Hall, A Treatise on International Law, A. Pierce Higgins (ed), 8th ed. (Oxford, 1924), pp.343-44.

39 See Wight, "Western Values," op. cit., p.116.

40 Sir Charles Webster, The Foreign Policy of Palmerston, Vol.I (London: G. Bell, 1951), p.99.

state, are also burdened with a general responsibility for human society."⁴¹

III The "Push and Pull" of Hegemonic Relationships

Finally, is a hegemonic relationship based solely on the dominance of one state over others, or is there a certain degree of push and pull in such a system?

Power of the Dominant State

In general, dominant powers have three basic goals regarding their spheres of influence: first, they want to minimize the dangers to themselves in their spheres; second, they try to discourage states in those regions from acting independently; and, finally, they use regional capabilities, such as military guarantees and trade relations, to achieve their own objectives.⁴²

⁴¹ Hugo Grotius, De Jure Belli ac Pacis, Book II (Amstelaedami: Blaeu, 1667), Chapter XX, Section XLIV.I.

⁴² See Triska, op. cit., pp.5-8.

In order to maintain or achieve these goals, dominant powers use military, political, economic, and cultural means. Military agreements provide for training and officer education in the sponsoring country as well as the stationing of the dominant power's troops. Such contact is deemed important because it is believed to forge unity and identity of interests between the militaries: however, security dependence is only effective if there are no viable alternatives, and the interaction between the militaries can unintentionally raise antagonism and resentment.⁴³

Politically, hegemonic powers attempt to maintain contact (overtly and covertly) with interest groups, factions, and influential individuals inside the political elite, but not necessarily currently in top posts. Such a strategy generates or supports opposition to the incumbent leadership in the event of a rift with the dominant power. Economically, substantial foreign trade, sizable foreign investments concentrated in key areas of the economy, and extensive debts all contribute to greater economic dependency. Finally, there is ideological and cultural indoctrination of the local elites. They are schooled to share the same values, beliefs, and attributes as the hegemonic elites, and often identify with and support the policies of the dominant power.

43 See Condoleezza Rice, "The Military as an Instrument of Influence and Control," in *ibid*, pp.245-46.

Influence of the Small State

Small states situated next to large states often have to take into consideration the interests of the larger power.⁴⁴ Accommodation appears to be a logical option, but it can lead to continued subordination. Alliance with a rival power, on the other hand, might give the state a certain degree of autonomy, but at a greater risk. Consequently, the relationship between the two parties is often a compromise of "symbiotic accommodation" than "parasitic subordination".⁴⁵ In addition, subordinate states must deal with the dominant power as both an outside and domestic force.⁴⁶

Although there is a great disparity of power between the regional hegemons and the subordinate states in their spheres, the latter possess - to a certain degree - some bargaining power. According to Raymond Aron, the small power sometimes "takes the great where the latter would not have chosen to go."⁴⁷ The small power can, for example, force the great power to choose between concession or the

44 See Paul M. Johnson, "The Subordinate States and Their Strategies," in *ibid*, p.296.

45 See *ibid*, pp.458-62.

46 *Ibid*.

47 Raymond Aron, Peace and War. A Theory of International Relations (New York: Doubleday, 1966), p.69.

use of force in an dispute. It can also increase its permeability to other great powers, thus watering down the penetration by the dominant power. Subordinate states can also take advantage of turmoil in the hegemon's affairs to undertake more independent action.

The subordinate can also try to maneuver coalitions to best achieve their demands. Leaders, for instance, can use nationalism to help resist outside constraints on their conduct. A heritage of resistance to invasion, such as in Poland, can also buy more leverage for a subordinate state. Some states, like Romania, limited their participation in dominant sponsored alliances to assert a degree of autonomy. A subordinate state can also initiate steps which benefit both parties.⁴⁸

In addition, small powers can also signal to the hegemon its excesses. During the period 1949 to 1953, for instance, Eastern Europe witnessed political purges and economic exploitation which, in addition to other factors, led to popular uprisings between 1953 and 1956. These developments influenced Khrushchev to redress the basis of Soviet-East European relations.

Subordinate states can also compete for the dominant powers' favor or use "salami tactics" to gain advantages, which eventually amount to sizable concessions. They can

48 Such as the resolution of Poland's postwar border with the German Democratic Republic, which reduced its dependence on Moscow for protection and aided Ostpolitik; see Jeffrey L. Hughes, "On Bargaining," in Triska, op. cit., p.184.

form a "special relationship" with the dominant power by being so cooperative that the hegemon will feel moved to reward that state. These states often have regimes which lack legitimacy with their population or have security needs which require great power protection.

Smaller powers can also "force the hand" of the hegemon. Some states employ, for example, the stratagem of the "wooden horse": appealing directly to the hegemon's population.⁴⁹ Subordinate states can also threaten to collapse, such as the debt-ridden Latin American countries of Mexico and Brazil, which would - in turn - create bank failures and deflationary shocks for the US economy.

Finally, while most small states do not welcome hegemonic interference by a great power, there are certain states which lack self-confidence (sometimes for historical reasons), who welcome to some degree domination. Uncertain of their ability either to run their own affairs or to defend themselves against attack, they look to a larger neighbor to provide them with security. Bulgaria, for example, has historically looked to Russia for protection against the Turks, while Bhutan aligned with India for its defense.

49 The Nicaraguan government, for instance, employed a New York public relations firm in 1986 to handle its account in the United States; see the New York Times, 26 February 1986.

IV. Conclusion

Hegemonic relationships are, therefore, arrangements in which a dominant power exercises influence over one or several subordinate states. They are viewed as part of international society, which shares certain common interests, values, and rules of behavior. Terms and expressions, such as spheres of influence or buffer states, are often used to describe hegemonic relationships.

The dominant power has a number of options, including military intervention, which it can employ to prevent deviation by a subordinate states. At the same time, however, the smaller state is not always helpless and can occasionally win concessions or diminish the influence of the greater power. Hegemonic relationships, therefore, are not based solely on the dominance of one state over another, but can contain a certain degree of "push and pull" in their everyday contact.

CHAPTER III

FRANCE AND THE UNITED STATES AS HEGEMONIC POWERS

There are some similarities and differences between Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe in the postwar period and that of other states. The purpose of this chapter is to examine briefly two other hegemonic relationships in the post-1945 world: France in Africa and the United States in Latin America. Specifically, this chapter will address the following questions in respect to both the French and American spheres of influence:

(i) What are the historical roots of the hegemonic relationship?

(ii) What are the hegemon's underlying motives and what measures does it use to maintain its sphere of influence?

(iii) Is there a specific doctrine attached to the dominant power and what function does it serve?

France and Africa

Hegemonic relationships are not a new phenomenon in international relations. Since the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648, which established the modern state system, there have been a number of hegemonic systems of one kind or another. There have been hegemonic relations between equal, sovereign states (such as between the United States and Mexico) and between sovereign, but unequal states (such as Great Britain toward its colonies). In the contemporary world, hegemonic systems have included, for instance, South Africa's predominance in southern Africa and India's on the subcontinent. This chapter will focus on the examination of dominance in a particular region - that of France in Africa and the United States in Latin America - rather than on more widely spread empires.

Although France initially viewed the acquisition and dominance of its African empire in moral terms, as a "civilizing mission", French preponderance in northern and western Africa became associated with its status as a great power.¹ In the aftermath of

1 The French empire included the countries of Algeria, Benin, Burkina Fasso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Djibouti, Gabon, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo and Tunisia.

the Second World War, the decolonization movement, along with the altered global balance of power and changing world opinion, led France to restructure its relationship with the colonies. New policies were formulated to grant, at least in theory, greater independence, although some considered these new prescriptions an example of neo-colonialism. Unlike other metropolises, France continued to maintain a high degree of cooperation - political, economic, and military - with its former colonies. Moreover, the concept of "Eurafrique" was promoted as proof of the common destiny between France and Africa. Although French influence in Africa has been modified in recent years, and its role as hegemonic mentor increasingly questioned at home, French interest in Africa is likely to continue.

I.Origins of French Interest in Africa

French interest in Africa stems from its colonial experience. Since the Revolution of 1789 the French have possessed a sense of "civilizing mission"

By "civilizing mission" was meant an end to tribal warfare, human sacrifice, and the slave trade; see Edward Mortimer, France and the Africans 1944-1960: A Political History (New York: Walker, 1969), pp.31-32.

toward the rest of the world. They have promoted, at least in theory, the goals of the French Revolution - liberty, equality, and fraternity - which they believe have universal application. While the English-speaking people believed in the rights of Englishmen, the French proclaimed the universal rights of men. In theory, therefore, the African colonial subject could be treated as a Frenchman with all his rights and duties.

Moreover, the French took the view that it was not only their duty, but their right to liberate those people who were still held in "bondage" or "domination". Thus one French politician, Jules Ferry, told the French Chamber in 1885: "It must be said openly that the superior races, in effect, have a right vis-a-vis the inferior races."² Charles De Gaulle reiterated this view when he stated in 1959 that "a country in order to play its role in the world must follow that path permitting it to do so ... From its very inception the vocation of France, the purpose of France, has been a humane vocation and a humane purpose."³

² Debats parlementaires: seance de la Chambre des Deputes, 28 Juillet 1885, p.1062.

³ Charles De Gaulle, from an "Address in Dakar before the Federal Assembly of Mali at the Sixth Meeting of the Executive Council of the French Community," 13 December 1959; full text in Le Monde, 15 December 1959.

French colonial expansion was marked by three features or rationales which, with little modification, can still be found in French post-colonial relations with Africa: to acquire and develop economic markets and trade; to prevent other great powers from dominating Africa; and, finally, to boost its reputation as a great power. France's colonial experiment was not, however, the result of a calculated overall strategy; French involvement was more the result of sporadic decision-making and reaction to events.⁴

II. Evolution of French Policy

Until the last decade of the 19th century, French policy toward the African colonies was based on the concept of "assimilation" which regarded the territories as integral, though non-contiguous, parts of France. In "assimilation" men could be equal given the right opportunities, but were not equal at the present time. By the end of the 19th century, however, assimilation fell under increasing

4 For a description of the French colonial experience in Africa, see Patrick Manning, Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa, 1880-1985 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

criticism. First, it was no longer considered relevant to France's new and highly diversified colonial empire, and was condemned as rigid and unscientific.⁵ Second, a policy of assimilation carried to its logical conclusion would have involved the cultural, political, and economic integration of the empire with France. This was rejected not only on the grounds of expense, but also because many French officials were becoming increasingly doubtful as to whether the Africans could be successfully absorbed into French culture. Third, a full-scale policy of assimilation was rejected because France, with a population of 40 million, would have been dominated by its 60 million colonial subjects, becoming essentially a "colony" of its colonies.

Assimilation was, therefore, replaced with the policy of "association" in which close cooperation was to be achieved by encouraging, rather than submerging, the particular ethnic political and economic characteristics of the colony. Although association became the official colonial policy after 1918, it varied little from assimilation.⁶

5 At that time the French colonial empire was comprised of three different categories: colony, federation, and protectorate.

6 For further detail see Raymond F. Betts, Assimilation and Association in French Colonial Theory (New York: Columbia

With the coming of the Second World War, France's relationship with its colonies changed. Although French possession of its territories was deemed essential to its survival as a considerable, if not great power, France might have concluded that the developments in the international arena no longer favored the treatment of the African colonies in the traditional manner. International public opinion, such as in the United States, viewed colonial domination as a violation of the principles of sovereignty and national self-determination expressed in the Atlantic Charter. Moreover, the native populations of French Africa had aided in the fighting of the war and expected, in return, that they should be treated as equals in future relations.

At the Brazzaville Conference of January 1944, reference was made that the colonies "be accorded a large measure of economic and administrative freedom"; however, the limits to these moves toward greater "independence" were also delineated. Special emphasis was placed upon the "immortal genius of France ... for raising men toward the summits of dignity and fraternity where ... they may all unite", and upon the "definitive bond" between

France and the colonies, formed by the heavy sacrifices of blood on the part of colonial populations "who had not for a moment altered their loyalties."⁷ While France reaffirmed its commitment and obligation to aid its colonies in their quest for "independence", French predominance was seen as an integral part of this "responsibility". De Gaulle, in a speech made in September 1946, reiterated these notions of French predominance, responsibility, and common interest:

the overseas peoples who are linked with our destiny have the possibility to develop according to their own conditions and to assume the administration of their particular affairs according to their level of development; they must be associated with France and France must maintain her pre-eminence for all matters that are common to all - foreign policy, national defense, communications, over-all economic problems.⁸

Many African leaders, such as Leopold Senghor of Senegal and Felix Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, believed that Africa had something to contribute to, as well as something to receive from,

⁷ See Conference Africaine Francaise de Brazzaville, 10 Janvier - 8 Fevrier 1944 (Paris: 1945).

⁸ De Gaulle, Speech of 29 September 1946, "Discours Prononce a Epinal, Discours et Messages, Vol.2 (Paris: Plon, 1970), pp.26-33.

a purposeful relationship with France on a full partnership basis. At the Bamako Congress of 1957 they urged the creation of a "community": in this arrangement, matters falling under French jurisdiction would be handled jointly by "community" institutions. In reality, however, France continued to hold final decision-making power and to dominate foreign and defense policy. The importance of the latter was paramount, as African security was seen as an extension of French security.⁹

The French Community proved to be short-lived and was replaced in the early 1960s by a federative system based on bilateral cooperation agreements, which some have termed "neo-colonialist".¹⁰ In this policy France proposed a kind of "joint management" through special cooperation agreements in the economy, defense, foreign policy, and education; its true aim, however, was to "maintain privileged links

9 The ordinance of 7 January 1959, for instance, affirmed the concept of a global defense for France and the Community; for details on the French Community, see Edouard Bustin, The Limits of French Intervention in Africa: A Study in Applied Neo-Colonialism (Cambridge: Boston University, African Studies Center Working Paper No.54, 1982).

10 The "Community" collapsed in 1960 from a number of contributing factors, including the struggle in Algeria, Nkrumah's Pan-Africanism, the independence of Ghana and Guinea, in addition to events in Togo and Cameroon. For a discussion on the issue of "neo-colonialism", see Richard Joseph, "The Gaullist Legacy: Patterns of French Neo-Colonialism," Review of African Political Economy, No.6 (May-August 1976), pp.4-13.

in spite of international sovereignty."¹¹ For De Gaulle, maintaining a special influence in Africa was seen as essential to keeping France's great power status.¹² The idea of sharing power in Africa with other states meant implicitly surrendering a part of French sovereignty. It was, therefore, important for links with France to be created and firmly established. The greatest advantage of this system of structured cooperation was that it institutionalized, and therefore routinized, continued French presence and involvement in its former territories.

One of the most distinctive features of France's "special relationship" with its former African colonies has been its reliance on explicit legal instruments.¹³ It is evident in binding documents, such as the bilateral cooperation agreements, and in multilateral agencies, such as the "Franc zone". The legal character is particularly apparent in France's policy of intervention. The French have limited their military interventions to two conditions: formal bilateral defense agreements that provide for military action conditional upon the request of the local government, and with the

11 See Guy de Carmoy, Les Politiques Etrangères de la France (Paris: La Table Ronde, 1967), p.297.

12 Ibid, pp.111-14.

13 See Bustin, op. cit., p.10.

approval of the French authorities (even if often in reality these agreements were signed when the decision to intervene had already been made); and military technical assistance agreements which provided for French aid in the organization, equipping, and training of the national armies and police forces of the African states.¹⁴

In addition to these bilateral agreements, France had also promoted the concept of "Eurafrique" as a justification for French involvement in Africa. In the 19th century French politicians, such as Ferry, defended colonial expansion with the idea that French overseas power could contribute to France's status in Europe. Images contained in this set of ideas were refined to apply to the special case of French power in Africa. "Eurafrique" came to reflect geopolitical interest shared by both French and African leaders. After the Second World War, this concept helped ease the decolonization process by promoting a sense of mutual interest and common destiny between France and Africa: most important was the fact that the local francophone elite continued to believe in the existence of shared interests. Continued involvement in Africa was explained to the French people by linking France's

14 See Dominique Moisi, "Intervention in French Foreign Policy," in Bull, Intervention, op. cit., p.72.

role in Africa with the continuation of its status as a great power. However, the doctrine lacked any real political content: it was, rather, the idea that France belonged in Africa. It was an important concept because it was not only accepted, but promoted by African leaders.

III. Methods of French Influence

French post-colonial relations with Africa, despite being highly structured, have been adaptable and flexible. The bilateral agreements have been occasionally re negotiated to fit the specific conditions in a given state. French policy has also been modified to fit political crises (in Mali, Chad, Mauritania) or France's own reappraisals (such as the strategic doctrine of "couverture à distance") without seriously jeopardizing its long-term effectiveness or continuity.

France exerts influence in its former African colonies in four basic areas which are - for the most part - welcomed by the indigenous populations: culture and education, politics, economics, and the military. France, for instance, maintains a

cultural presence in Africa.¹⁵ The expansion of French language remained a crucial element of foreign policy, and the African continent is one of the few regions of the world where the use of the French is expanding.¹⁶ Moreover, France is the largest educator in Africa.¹⁷

Politically, Franco-African relations are promoted not only through official visits and exchanges, but also biennial summit meetings. Started in 1973 as an informal gathering for France and its former colonies, it is now viewed by all parties as an effective forum for furthering political and other cooperation. The success of the meetings can be seen by how they compare to other African forums: for example, the 15th meeting, which was held 16 December 1988, drew delegations from 34 African countries, including 16 former French colonies, 8 former British colonies, and all the former African colonies of Belgium, Portugal, and

15 See Edward M. Corbett, The French Presence in Black Africa (Washington, DC: Black Orpheus, 1972), pp.11-48.

16 For example, in two countries, Portuguese-speaking Guinea-Bissau and Spanish-speaking Equatorial Guinea, linguists predict that French could easily become the dominant language within two generations, particularly as language courses are subsidized by the French Government; see James Brooke, "The French in Africa: Old Ecole Ties," the New York Times, 25 December 1988.

17 In 1986, for example, 75,162 Africans studied at French universities - twice the number at American schools and seven times the number at British universities; see *ibid.*

Spain; by contrast, only nine African leaders attended the May 1988 25th anniversary meeting of the Organization of African Unity.¹⁸

In addition, France has been a supporter and champion of Third World causes. When Jose Eduardo dos Santos, President of Angola, visited Paris, for instance, he praised France as a "model" for cooperation between the developed and developing nations.¹⁹ Another method of political influence has been the nurturing by the French government of francophone elites. Both Senghor and Houphouet-Boigny, for instance, held positions in the French government before their countries' independence. These close personal links explain the willingness of the African governments not to sever ties with the metropole.²⁰

Economically, France maintains extensive ties with Africa, particularly with its former colonies. Although France downplays the economic significance of such ties, and projects the image of a policy governed by humanitarian concerns and moral obligation, it remains the largest trading partner and aid donor to Africa. Economic influence is maintained through various methods, including the

18 See Brooke, op. cit..

19 See James Brooke, "Gabon Keeps Strong Links With France," the New York Times, 23 February 1988.

20 See Moisi, op. cit., p.70.

"Franc zone", in which the African franc is the legal tender, and can be exchanged only after conversion into the French franc. Moreover, zone membership provides incentive for the purchase of French goods by the African states. While commercial links with African members of the zone represent only a small portion of France's total external trade, the importance of France as a trading partner for each of the countries is great.²¹ Furthermore, where certain vital resources are concerned, France receives preferential access through bilateral agreements which exclude other foreign investors.

Finally, France retains a powerful military presence in Africa. Not only does France have military bases and agreements with its former colonies, but it has also been willing to intervene to safeguard, ostensibly, its allies' interests. To a large extent this strategy has been successful for, contrary to the situation of other colonial powers, French decolonization never meant the end of a military presence; rather, "an adjustment".²² The primary purpose of the French government in concluding the military agreements was to maintain

21 See Bustin, op. cit., pp.17-18.

22 See Pierre Lellouche and Dominique Moisi, "Foreign Policy in Africa: A Lonely Battle Against De stabilization," International Security (Spring 1971), p.111.

its influence in Africa, while preserving its ultimate freedom of action. The bilateral nature of many of these agreements and arrangements also assured France exclusive action in the region.²³

The French hope was that the indigenous African leaders would carry the responsibility of ensuring their own political survival by whatever means they deemed appropriate. Every defense agreement, nevertheless, included an "insurance" clause promising French military support not only against external aggression, but also against domestic upheaval. In addition, the French President reserved the right to intervene or to take whatever action necessary.²⁴ In the period of the early 1960s, for instance, France intervened in Africa several times for a variety of reasons: in Cameroon to reestablish order (1960); in Congo Brazzaville to end tribal warfare (1960); and in Niger to quell a military uprising against President Hamani Diori (1963).²⁵

However, the presence or absence of defense agreements did not always play a part in the French

23 See John Chipman, French Military Policy and African Security, Adelphi Paper #210 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1985), p.6.

24 Ibid.

25 For a comprehensive list of interventions during this period, see Lellouche and Moisi, op. cit., p.117.

policy of intervention. Cameroon, for example, had no defense agreements with France, but this did not prevent French troops from intervening in 1960. Furthermore, just as intervention was a French option, so was the policy of nonintervention. France's nonintervention was most often a form of intervention: passivity represented a conscious choice to abandon a disappointing leader. The French, for example, voluntarily refrained from rescuing threatened regimes, such as that of Diiori in 1974. France's "insurance policy", therefore, depended upon French willingness to honor its guarantee.

IV. Changing French Policy?

Although French influence in Africa is likely to continue, it may become more modified or increasingly undermined by the activities of other powers, such as the United States.²⁶

²⁶ While France and the United States often cooperate in the region, sometimes their respective interests or actions conflict. For example, while in the past the US presence in French West Africa was composed of a Peace Corps contingent and small embassy, since 1973 (in the wake of severe drought conditions) US presence and interests have grown; see Scott Kraft, "US Expanding Role on French Turf in West Africa,"

Within France itself a debate has grown, particularly in light of developments in Eastern Europe in late 1989, over French policy in the region. With signs of democracy appearing in parts of Africa, questions have arisen over the traditional role of France, the types of governments that it supports, and the quantity and recipients of aid. Critics of past and present French policy towards Africa have complained that the government has sustained dictators and one-party states, in addition to the condoning of embezzlement of development aid by officials of some countries. They also argue that despite "guidance" from France, the countries most dependent on French support are seriously impoverished, whether by mismanagement, corruption or by low commodity prices.²⁷

In private government officials acknowledge that, with democracy increasing in Latin America and Eastern Europe, pressure for change will continue to grow in Africa. In public President Francois Mitterand has responded indirectly to this issue. At the 1990 Franco-African summit, he told the delegates that aid might have once been distributed "without control", but not since he took office in 1981. The French prime minister added that the

the Los Angeles Times, 17 November 1986.

²⁷ See the New York Times, 17 June 1990.

African allies had to change their dictatorial ways in order to qualify for economic assistance: there could be "no development without democracy and no democracy without development".²⁸ Mitterand also emphasized that French troops would continue to help countries facing external threats, "but our role is not to intervene in internal conflicts."²⁹ The French leader also praised the African governments which had announced plans to create multiparty states, and said France would "link its effort of contribution to those efforts to move toward greater liberty."³⁰

France, therefore, may not abandon Africa, but will have to be prepared to modify its policies.

28 See The Economist, July 6, 1991, pp.39-40.

29 See the New York Times, 22 June 1990.

30 Ibid.

United States and Latin America

The United States views itself and Latin America as distinctly different from the "Old World". The US intended that the Western Hemisphere would be free of the power politics that symbolized Europe, and underscored the common history and values that tied the countries of the "New World" together. When most of the Latin American countries were gaining independence in the early 19th century, the Monroe Doctrine was declared by the United States to warn the European states to stay out of the region. The exclusion of European involvement in Latin America, however, did not preclude US presence and activity in the area. Latin America, particularly Central America, came to be seen as an integral part of US security interests. In addition, the United States believed that it was its responsibility and "Manifest Destiny" to protect the Western Hemisphere from undesirable outside influences. After the Second World War, the specter of "international communism" replaced the threat of European interference. While the principle of nonintervention was adopted officially by the United States, the use of force was justified during various crises in the name of protecting or defending "democracy".

I. Origins of US Interest in Latin America

The origins of US interest in Latin America can be found in the concepts of the "Western Hemisphere Idea" and "Manifest Destiny", as well as the Monroe Doctrine. From its emergence in the late 18th century, the "Western Hemisphere Idea" represented the notion that "the peoples of this Hemisphere stand in a special relationship to one another which sets them apart from the rest of the world."³¹ This concept consisted of: the appearance of geographical unity; the common experiences of adaptation to a New World environment; the struggle for independence from Europe; and, the sharing of common institutions and ideas. John Foster Dulles reiterated the idea of the separateness of the two "Worlds" when he stated in 1917 that "there exists among the American States some sentiment of solidarity, which sets them apart from the other nations of the world ..."³²

In addition to the Western Hemisphere Idea, there has been a conviction, associated with the concept of "Manifest Destiny", that the United States possesses a natural right to predominate in US-Latin

31 See Arthur P. Whitaker, The Western Hemisphere Idea: Its Rise and Decline (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1954), p.1.

32 Second Pan American Scientific Congress, Proceedings, Vol.VII (Washington, DC, 1917), pp.687-92.

American affairs. This right derives not only from American political, economic and military superiority over Latin America, but also from an assumed moral responsibility. The United States, therefore, has appointed itself as Latin America's protector, whether by peaceful or military means:

The United States ... occupy of necessity a prominent position on this continent which they neither can nor should abdicate, which entitles them to a leading voice, and which imposes on them duties of right and honor regarding American questions ...³³

The adoption of these attitudes by the United States toward Latin America was exemplified in the "Monroe Doctrine". The major elements of the doctrine were: any attempt by European powers to extend their political power into the Western Hemisphere would be considered a threat to the peace and security of the United States; and, any intervention aimed at oppressing or controlling governments that have already obtained their independence would be considered as an unfriendly act towards the United States. The doctrine was

33 Secretary of State Hamilton Fish in a report to President Ulysses S. Grant in 1870; see J. B. Lockey, "The Meaning of Pan Americanism," American Journal of International Law, Vol. XIX (1925), pp. 104-17, at pp. 106-07.

enunciated in a "State of the Nation" message by President James Monroe on 2 December 1823:

With the movements in this Hemisphere we are of necessity more immediately connected ... The political system of the allied [European] powers, is essentially different in this respect from that of America. This difference proceeds from that, which exists in their respective Governments, and to the defense of our own, which has been achieved by the loss of so much blood and treasure ... We owe it therefore to candor, and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers, to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portions of this Hemisphere, as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing Colonies or dependencies of any European power, we have not interfered, and shall not interfere. But with the Governments who have declared their Independence, and maintained it, and whose Independence we have, on great consideration, and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner, their destiny, by any European power, in any other light, than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States.³⁴

The President's statement was perceived internationally as a unilateral declaration claiming

34 For the text of the Monroe Doctrine, see Samuel Flagg Bemis, The Latin American Policy of the United States: An Historical Interpretation (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1943), pp. 63-64.

a sphere of influence. Although Monroe's message did not contain the term, what was said of the relationship between the United States and Latin America, together with the subsequent practice of the United States, suitably described a sphere of influence. Moreover, the doctrine's unilateral nature meant that, from 1823 to the present, the US has remained the doctrine's sole interpreter. It has had innumerable applications, reinterpretations, and "corollaries", resulting in genuine ambiguity concerning what the Monroe Doctrine has come to mean and its precise role in contemporary American foreign policy.

While the Monroe Doctrine meant the exclusion of European powers from the Western Hemisphere, it also represented (in American eyes) hemispheric solidarity. The doctrine was at first welcomed in Latin America because it was viewed as benefiting small powers, protecting them from encroachment by European "imperialism". R. A. Jones argues that the Monroe Doctrine in this sense was actually "noninterventionist".³⁵

Some historians believe that Monroe did not envision his message becoming a major doctrine for

35 See R. A. Jones, The Soviet Concept of "Limited Sovereignty" from Lenin to Gorbachev: The Brezhnev Doctrine (New York: St. Martin's, 1990), pp.215-17.

US policy. The President did not use the term "doctrine" in his speech, nor was there any evidence that he foresaw his set of foreign policy principles in such terms. One scholar, Ernest May, argues that the President's statement was essentially a function of domestic politics in 1823 - of Monroe's struggle to protect his political position - and not a result of a clearly thought-out strategy for dealing with Latin America.³⁶ Monroe's speech was largely forgotten until the 1850s and was, in Gordon Connell-Smith's words, "vastly more important for what it was to become than for what Monroe actually said".³⁷

Although the proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine appeared to be a "tough stance" by the United States against Europe, there were a number of factors which modify this view. In retrospect, it was a bold move by the US since its defense of Latin America could not be enforced with any degree of certainty: the United States was in no position at the time to back up its threats with a credible naval or military show of force, or to protect each Latin American country from re colonization efforts or other forms

36 See Ernest R. May, The Making of the Monroe Doctrine (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975).

37 Gordon Connell-Smith, The United States and Latin America: An Historical Analysis of Inter-American Relations (London: Heinemann, 1974), p.62.

of intervention.³⁸ In addition, some historians, such as Dexter Perkins, argue that the Holy Alliance had no designs against the New World in 1823. Indeed, two months prior to Monroe's statement, Britain and France issued the Polignac Memorandum, in which the latter denied any intention of intervening in Latin America. The British also discouraged the re colonization of the hemisphere as, with their large navy, open access to the New World would only benefit free trade. Finally, although there was no direct re colonization of Latin America, the Monroe Doctrine did not prevent outside interference during the 19th century: there were, for example, at least sixteen instances of direct European intervention.³⁹

Some American statesmen and analysts have, at times, attempted to ascribe to the Monroe Doctrine the status of international law.⁴⁰ The doctrine,

38 Moreover, the discussions in Monroe's Cabinet in 1823 and the exchanges with the Latin American governments from 1823-26 showed that no American statesman was prepared to go to war to defend a Latin American state against European intervention; see Bemis, *op. cit.*, pp.99-100.

39 These ranged from a British and French naval blockade of Buenos Aires in 1843 to a series of actions taken by the Germans, Italians, Spanish, and French (from 1869 to 1897) to collect debts and settle economic and boundary issues in Venezuela, Colombia, and Haiti; see Harold E. Davis, John F. Finan, and Taylor F. Peck, Latin American Diplomatic History (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 1977).

40 For this debate, see Keal, Unspoken Rules, *op. cit.*, pp.179-81.

asserted President Grover Cleveland in 1895, "finds its recognition in those principles of international law which are based upon the theory that every nation shall have its rights protected and its just claims enforced".⁴¹ Similarly, Elihu Root wrote in 1914 that the Monroe Doctrine "is not international law but it rests upon the right of self-protection and that right is recognized by international law. The right is a necessary corollary of independent sovereignty."⁴²

In addition, the United States attempted to legitimize the Monroe Doctrine in international legal documents. In the Covenant of the League of Nations, Article 21, for example, the United States incorporated American preponderance over Latin America into the legal framework. The Article stated:

Nothing in this Covenant shall be deemed to affect the validity of international engagements, such as treaties of arbitration or regional understandings like the Monroe Doctrine, for securing the maintenance of peace.⁴³

41 Message to Congress of 17 December 1895, in Messages and Papers of the Presidents, Vol. IX, p.655.

42 Elihu Root, "The Real Monroe Doctrine," American Journal of International Law, Vol. VIII, No.3 (July 1914), p.432; Root, a Secretary of State, was not in office at the time.

43 The text of the Covenant can be found in D. F. Fleming, The United States and the League of Nations, 1918-1920 (New

The inclusion of the Monroe Doctrine in the League Covenant reflected the tradition of international politics of the time. Prior to the Second World War, the equality and sovereignty of states was not common thinking: the world was seen as divided into spheres of influence. Therefore, the "blessing" of the Monroe Doctrine did not appear so unusual for its time. Even idealists during that era tended to see the world in dominant/subordinate terms. Norman Angell, for example, envisioned a world commonwealth, with one organization dictating to others.⁴⁴ The acknowledgment of the doctrine and other regional arrangements was believed among most statesmen to foster stability and peace by delineating limits for other states to respect. Although the Monroe Doctrine has never been accepted by the international community as a doctrine of international law, it has remained in many American minds tantamount to a kind of legal or

York: Russell & Russell, 1968), pp.567-76.

European acquiescence to the incorporation of what was essentially American hegemony in the Western Hemisphere was achieved, however, only with a certain degree of bargaining. Reservations by the participating states, however, were effectively squelched in the face of American intransigence on the issue; for a more detailed account, see *ibid*, pp.184-89.

44 Norman Angell, The Political Conditions of Allied Success (London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1918).

constitutional edict.

II. Evolution of US Policy

There has been much debate as to whether there were two Monroe Doctrines, the original formulated in 1823, and the distorted doctrine of the "corollaries". These amendments, authored by James Polk and Theodore Roosevelt, it is argued, transformed Monroe's message into an offensive doctrine, justifying US intervention regardless of whether or not there existed a tangible "foreign threat". According to Perkins, the corollaries altered the original doctrine in two ways: first, they introduced the idea of "preemptive" action in order to prevent foreign intervention; and, second, they expanded the doctrine to include intra-hemispheric threats.⁴⁵ Whatever Monroe's original intentions, subsequent American leaders have offered their own interpretations. Consequently, the Monroe Doctrine became increasingly unpopular in Latin America as it was viewed as synonymous with US intervention in the region.

45 See Dexter Perkins, The Monroe Doctrine, 1867-1907 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1937).

The "corollaries"

The Monroe Doctrine was revived and amended in December 1845 by President Polk when he saw signs of British and French interest in Texas as a threat to US security. The resulting "Polk Corollary" expanded the doctrine by warning not only against forcible intervention, but also against European diplomatic intrigue in the relations between American states. In addition, no future European colony or "dominion" would be permitted to be established in the North American continent whether by voluntary cession or otherwise.⁴⁶

By the end of the 19th century, the United States embarked on a new wave of expansionism. US strategic interests sought control of the isthmus and the islands of the Pacific and Caribbean that controlled maritime approaches. The American economy was growing, foreign trade was increasingly important, and expanding industry was looking to foreign as well as domestic markets. Moreover, the idea that national greatness required overseas colonies and politically protected markets was growing in popularity. Admiral Alfred Thayer

⁴⁶ For the complete text, see J. Reuben Clark, Memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine, Department of State Publication 37 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office [GPO]), 1930).

Mahan's book, The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783, argued that the United States would soon be engaged not only with rival European states, but also the Oriental powers. He underlined the crucial importance of strategic bases in the Pacific and Caribbean areas, and urged the creation of a powerful navy.

Between 1900 and 1914, therefore, US policy toward Latin America witnessed intervention and the establishment of protectorates in the region.⁴⁷ The Roosevelt Corollary was issued which justified intervention on the grounds of protecting US interests. A 1904 Hague Court ruling (which legalized armed intervention for the collection of debts) raised the prospect of European military action to redeem funds from certain Latin American countries. Theodore Roosevelt, fearing a challenge to American exclusivity in the region, declared that the United States was willing to act as a global "policeman" to maintain order and force local governments to repay their debts:

Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which

⁴⁷ American interventions in Latin America were justified in terms: of treaty obligations, such as the Platt Amendment; a duty to protect the lives and property of its citizens; to maintain order; and, to promote good government. See Herbert L. Mathews (ed), The United States and Latin America (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963), pp.126-30.

results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power We would interfere with them only in the last resort, and then only if it became evident that their inability or unwillingness to do justice at home and abroad had violated the rights of the United States or had invited foreign aggression to the detriment of the entire body of American nations.⁴⁸

The "Good Neighbor" approach

Under Franklin Roosevelt, a new policy was adopted toward Latin America. The suspension of all corollaries and additions to the Monroe Doctrine by the Clark Memorandum of 1928 led to a policy of nonintervention by the US which, in turn, lead to improved relations with Latin America.⁴⁹ US

48 "Annual Message from President Theodore Roosevelt to the United States Congress," 6 December 1904.

49 The publication in 1930 of a "Memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine", prepared in 1928 by Under Secretary of State J. Reuben Clark, repudiated the former "corollaries" to the doctrine: "The [Monroe] doctrine states a case of United States vs. Latin-America. Such arrangements as the United States had made, for example, with Cuba, Santo Domingo, Haiti, and Nicaragua, are not within the Doctrine as it was

ratification of later the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS) Charters also constituted implicit refutations of the corollaries.⁵⁰ In his speeches, FDR emphasized political solidarity over military threats, promising that the United States would be a "Good Neighbor" to the southern republics:

announced by Monroe."

However, the Clark Memorandum did not repudiate the right of the United States to intervene in the affairs of neighboring states when its interests were endangered: it denied that such right found any basis in the Monroe Doctrine.

50 The OAS Charter of 1948 expressed: the obligation to settle disputes by peaceful means; assistance to each other in the event of external aggression; and the importance of "representative democracy" to the "solidarity of the American states". For the text of the OAS Charter, see "Reports of the Ninth International Conference of American States," Annals of the OAS, Vol.1 (Washington, DC, 1949), pp.76-86.

the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others - the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with a world of neighbors.⁵¹

More significant was his declaration on 28 December 1933 that "the definite policy of the United States from now on is one opposed to armed intervention."⁵²

Roosevelt's strategy involved three ideas: the abandonment of intervention; the return to a just and objective recognition policy; and the establishment of a new Pan Americanism of hemispheric solidarity, cooperation, and peace. It was not until 1936, at the Buenos Aires conference, however, that the United States reaffirmed and strengthened its commitment to nonintervention.⁵³ Although the US had begun to modify its interventionist policies prior to FDR's presidency, it was Roosevelt who gave the policy a name and dramatized the changes.

The rule of nonintervention in regard to Latin America (with exceptions justifying collective action) was formally expressed in the Inter-American

51 Speech on 4 March 1933; see the New York Times, 5 March 1933.

52 29 December 1933, the New York Times.

53 US Department of State, Report of the United States to the Inter-American Conference to the Maintenance of Peace (Washington, DC, 1937).

Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance of 1947 or the "Rio Treaty". According to the treaty, any armed attack against an American state was to be considered an attack against all. This agreement laid out measures to enforce collective security, define the framework to be adopted, and the means to be used against an aggressor - ranging from the temporary withdrawal of diplomatic representation to the employment of force. Although each state was to assist in meeting the attack, the nature of this aid - which was to be collectively given - was not stated, nor was the response automatic. The provisions of the Rio Treaty have been used by the United States to justify its actions against certain Latin American states.

Defending against "international communism"

In the cold war period, the Monroe Doctrine was used not only against the Soviet Union in order to prevent its "expansionism", but also against "communism" as an ideology which was considered to be contrary to the "democratic principles" of the Western Hemisphere. Ultimately, the threat and existence of a local communist movement became

sufficient justification for the application of the doctrine.

The official reaction of the United States to the perceived threat of "international communism" in the Americas was spelled out by Assistant Secretary of State Miller in 1950.⁵⁴ Any such attempt at extension in any portion of the hemisphere, Miller said, would be considered as undermining the security of the United States: "The Monroe Doctrine has not lost its meaning with the passage of a century and a quarter, for today we consider any attempt to extend the Communist system to any portion of this Hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." The difference in 1950 was that the objective would be pursued jointly, not by the US alone. Such a collective action would not be a violation of the policy of nonintervention, but rather the "corollary" of nonintervention.

Miller's statement was generalized into an Inter-American doctrine and incorporated into Article 6 of the Rio Treaty at the Tenth Inter-American Conference at Caracas in 1954. At the meeting, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles succeeded in having a resolution passed condemning communist penetration in principle:

⁵⁴ See Address of 26 April 1950, US Department of State, Bulletin (DSB), Vol.XXII, No.567 (15 May 1950), pp.768-70.

the domination or control of the political institutions of any American State by the international Communist movement, extending to this hemisphere the political system of an extra-continental power, would constitute a threat to the sovereignty and political independence of the American States.⁵⁵

The first test of the US effort to defend the Americas from "international communism" was in Guatemala 1954. The United States was alarmed by the nationalization by the government of Jacobo Arbenz Gunzman of American properties (especially holdings of the United Fruit Company), hospitality to communist organizations, and receipt of arms from Eastern Europe. Moreover, Guatemala's strategic location, bordering Mexico and near the sea routes to the Panama Canal, was considered too important to allow even the semblance of communism to become established.

The Central American country posed a quandary for US foreign policy because for more than a century the Monroe Doctrine had rested on the principle that its purpose was to protect the Americas from outside forces; the danger in Guatemala, however, was not

55 "In Declaration of Solidarity for the Preservation of the Political Integrity of the American States Against International Communist Intervention"; see W. G. Bowdler, "Report on the Tenth Inter-American Conference," DSB, Vol. XXX, No. 744 (26 April 1954), pp. 638-39.

external, but from within the hemisphere. The United States, therefore, represented the Guatemalan affair as a civil war in which Guatemalan "patriots" arose to challenge the communist leadership.⁵⁶ This rationale avoided for the US the need to invoke the Caracas Declaration. However, in reality the United States had broken its commitment because it had undertaken a unilateral action in support of the Monroe Doctrine. The Guatemalan intervention, therefore, demonstrated US willingness to act unilaterally against what it perceived or defined as "undesirable" governments or "international communism".

The United States next applied this precedent to Cuba. In American eyes, Fidel Castro's democratic revolution of 1959 had been "betrayed" to the communists, US property had been expropriated, and political and economic ties were being forged with the Soviet Union. By the time John F. Kennedy became President a plan was launched to overturn the Soviet "satellite". In the resulting Bay of Pigs invasion, Kennedy stated that unilateral American intervention was against the traditions and international obligations of the United States. But, he continued, the restraint of the United

⁵⁶ Henry Cabot Lodge, in the Security Council of the United Nations, argued that it was "clearly a civil war."

States was not inexhaustible:

Should it ever appear that the inter-American doctrine of non-interference merely conceals or excuses a policy of non-action - if the nations of this hemisphere should fail to meet their commitments against outside Communist penetration - then I want it clearly understood that this Government will not hesitate in meeting its primary obligations, which are the security of our nation.⁵⁷

Though the Bay of Pigs invasion of 1961 failed where the invasion of Guatemala had succeeded, the United States government supported both for the same reason. The independence and freedom of action of any of the American republics was to be subordinated to the interests of the United States whenever it perceived a threat to its security. The United States reserved for itself the right, therefore, to determine what constituted a threat to the security of the hemisphere, or an acceptable form of government in each of the American states.

The United States once again reasserted its dominance in the Western Hemisphere during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. Kennedy warned that not only US security interests were threatened, but that of the entire American community: not only could the

57 DSB, Vol.XLIV, No.1141 (8 May 1961), pp.659-61.

Soviet missiles in Cuba reach Washington, but they could also attack Mexico City and Panama. The Soviet buildup, he stated, was "deliberately provocative in an area well-known to have a special and historical relationship to the United States and the nations of the Western Hemisphere."⁵⁸ In the resulting negotiations, the US pledged not to invade Cuba if the missiles were removed.⁵⁹ Although the US declared an intent not to invade at the time, it did little to constrain any future decision to take such action.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ DSB, Vol.47 (12 November 1962), pp.715-16.

⁵⁹ See "The President's News Conference of November 20, 1962," Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: John F. Kennedy, 1962 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1963), p.831.

In January 1991 government records of the 1962 crisis bl were made public for the first time. They suggested, however, that the US. did not give Moscow any ironclad assurance that it would refrain from invading Cuba. In a letter to Khrushchev dated December 14, 1962, Kennedy wrote that the US. needed to be assured that all offensive weapons would be removed and not reintroduced. At the same time, the president warned that Cuba should pledge not to commit "aggressive acts against any of the nations of the Western Hemisphere." According to one academic, the vague definition of "aggressive" was to serve as a loophole for US. military action if necessary. See the New York Times, January 7, 1991.

⁶⁰ See Raymond L. Garthoff, Reflections on the Cuban Missile Crisis (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1989), pp.125-29. The US also ensured that previous American obligations and rights under any other existing treaties would not be diminished, including the Rio Treaty and the Platt Amendment granting the United States its base in Guantanamo Bay.

Castro still feared the possibility of future American intervention. During a speech in the wake of the 1968

The American intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965 demonstrated once again US willingness to use military force against the threat of "international communism". This time, however, the United States tried to give the appearance of collective action. When leftist forces threatened to take over the Dominican Republic, Lyndon Johnson, foreseeing another Cuba, sent an Inter-American Force (comprised largely of US Marines) to defend the government.

The United States first defended its action on humanitarian grounds: US citizens had to be rescued and the action was in compliance with a request from the Dominican Republic to restore law and order.⁶¹ The American administration then developed an ideological justification in terms of a responsibility to protect democracy against the threat of tyranny. Johnson asserted that revolution in any country was a matter for that country to deal with and that the form and nature of the free Dominican government was solely a matter for the Dominican people. But when the object of revolution

Soviet intervention of Czechoslovakia, the Cuban leader wondered whether Moscow would feel obligated to save Cuba in the same way: "Will they send divisions of the Warsaw Pact if Yankee imperialists attack our country?" See "Speech by Major Fidel Castro on Havana TV and Radio," 24 August 1968.
⁶¹ DSB, No.52 (1965), pp.744-48.

was the establishment of a communist dictatorship, the form of government became a matter for hemispheric action.⁶² The resulting "Johnson Doctrine" stated: "the American nations cannot, must not, and will not permit the establishment of another communist government in the Western Hemisphere."⁶³

In the 1980s the focus of US interest was on the "communist threat" in Central America and the Caribbean. Two general strategies were followed to bolster non-communist governments in these areas: first, to expand the use of American economic power - such as investment, technology transfers, trade, and training along with increasing economic assistance - to draw Latin America closer to the United States; and, second, to pursue a policy of "offensive" containment. From a number of statements made by President Ronald Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz, a "Reagan Doctrine" emerged. The major elements of the

62 Ibid, pp.746-47.

63 The "Johnson Doctrine" was stated and reiterated in the President's speeches in late April 1965; see text in Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965, op. cit., Vol.II (1966), pp.461-74.

The OAS supported the intervention on humanitarian grounds, but refused to endorse the Johnson Doctrine; several Latin American states condemned the intervention as a contravention of the OAS Charter. The Soviet Union stated that it was a blatant violation of the UN Charter.

doctrine were: support (in varying forms) of freedom fighters against Marxist rule; a determination to identify the nation behind violent attacks and to hold it accountable for its aggression; and, an assertion of American rights under international law to use force unilaterally in self-defense.⁶⁴

The first "testing ground" for Reagan's strategy occurred in Grenada, a "socialist-oriented" country which appeared (to the administration) to be moving toward full membership in the world socialist system. In 1983, the socialist prime minister of Grenada, Maurice Bishop, was replaced by forces pledged to develop even closer ties to Cuba and the Soviet Union. Bishop sought to regain power, but was murdered.

In October 1983, a meeting of the Organization of East Caribbean States requested the United Kingdom, the United States, Trinidad, Jamaica, and Barbados to participate in an invasion to overthrow the Grenadian government (the United Kingdom declined). A few days later Reagan sent a US force (along with token contingents from several Caribbean states) to invade Grenada. The resulting intervention was justified by the US on several grounds: humanitarian

64 See William R. Bode, "The Reagan Doctrine in Outline," in Walter F. Hahn (ed), Central America and the Reagan Doctrine (Lanham: University Press of America, 1987), pp.247-63.

(to protect the lives of US nationals); restoration of order; and legitimate self-defense against a threat to US security interests posed by the communist regime. The Reagan administration used the invasion to send a message to other Marxist governments at the time, such as that of Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua, that military force was now a part of the US containment strategy.

III. Methods of US Influence

Although the United States does exercise dominance over Latin America, there is a large school of thought which asserts that there has been an actual decline of US preponderance since the Second World War.⁶⁵ Amid the constants of US-Latin American policy - economic cooperation and US security concerns - there is a realization that the old ways no longer apply. Whereas in the past the United States thought little of directing the

⁶⁵ See Abraham F. Lowenthal, Partners in Conflict: The United States and Latin America (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), pp.33-47. They cite, for example, the increase in Soviet diplomatic representation in the Western Hemisphere and the expansion of Japanese, West German, French, and Spanish involvement.

internal economic and political development of Latin American countries, today these states resist attempts at outside intervention and on occasion have openly criticized the United States.

The US exerts influence in Latin America in four basic areas which are not always welcomed by the indigenous populations: cultural, political, economic, and military. One method promoted by the United States has been the cultural penetration of Latin America. The basic task of the US Information Agency, for example, has been to project the most favorable image of the United States and the "American way of life". It has also helped to promote the idea of an essential harmony of interests between the United States and Latin America through such channels as Radio Marti.

In addition, the United States has considerable political interests in Latin America and a number of instruments at its disposal to achieve its objectives. First, the US has used its recognition policy both to subvert governments of which it does not approve, and to force acceptance of certain commitments from others as the price of recognition. The withholding of recognition by the United States, such as that of Manuel Noriega in February 1988 as the president of Panama, often has been a positive encouragement to the opponents of certain regimes to

overthrow them, even when the United States has not been directly involved in the subversive operations. This leaves few alternatives for weak governments, which have little option but to cooperate with "El Norte".

A second political instrument which the United States can use is the invocation of international law: it can stress the international obligations of Latin American governments and the sanctity of treaties. The "perpetual" treaties under which it maintains its base at Guantanamo, and exercises quasi-sovereignty over the Panama Canal Zone, are examples of international law favoring the United States. Neither treaty can be modified without the consent of both parties; therefore, any resolution depends on US acquiescence. A third political instrument is economic aid programs. The granting or withholding of aid can be as significant as the cost of recognition: for instance, economic assistance was allocated to El Salvador in order to uphold the democratic government of Napoleon Duarte. The granting of aid can also form a dependence by that country on the United States.

Although the US exercises political influence in the region, the states of Latin America do not follow all the dictates of "El Norte". The hemisphere's presumed international solidarity with

the United States is not always assured because of divisions in opinion on international issues. On various North-South issues, according to Abraham Lowenthal, Latin American states have acted like other developing countries, uniting more often against, than with, Washington.⁶⁶ Differences also arise because of economic factors: for example, because Brazil is dependent on Middle Eastern petroleum, it has often distanced itself from the US on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Regional solidarity has also broken down during times of crises, such as the 1982 Falklands War.⁶⁷ Moreover, the United States has not always been successful in having the countries of Latin America follow its lead: for instance, President Jimmy Carter was unable to secure significant cooperation regarding the Soviet grain embargo. All these trends reflect and reinforce the growing tendency of Latin America to pursue its own interests, even in opposition to Washington's preferences. It is also visible in the increasingly frequent Latin American cooperative

⁶⁶ Ibid, pp.51-55.

⁶⁷ The Falklands War affected US-Latin American relations by undermining the validity of the Rio Treaty. The treaty had committed the United States and its Latin American neighbors to the defense of the hemisphere. The war between Great Britain and Argentina, however, placed this pledge in jeopardy because US commitment to mutual defense was no longer a certainty.

efforts that exclude the United States, such as the Contadora Initiative, to seek diplomatic settlements in Central America.

The United States also has considerable economic interests in Latin America, involving foreign trade and private and public investment. Although the American economic commitment has expanded in recent years, its character has changed. The relative significance of direct US investment in Latin America has declined, while the financial stake of the United States in the region has increased. Although a smaller share of US imports have come from Latin America, the area has become a more important market for US exports.⁶⁸ At the same time, since the 1970s foreign investment by Europe and Japan has risen throughout Latin America.

Probably the greatest factor in shaping US policy toward Latin America has been security concerns: military relations with the region, therefore, have always been given large priority. The US motivations in the hemisphere have been to prevent the establishment of any bases under the control of a hostile power. Although US traditional security concerns have retained some validity, the nature and degree of the possible risks involved have changed

⁶⁸ See Lowenthal, *op. cit.*, pp.33-35.

considerably. No direct military attack on the territory of the United States, for example, is likely from the Western Hemisphere. Moreover, the symbolic presence of Soviet troops in Cuba does not pose a major threat as any attack by Cuba anywhere in the Western Hemisphere could be repelled with conventional force.

While unrestricted access to the Panama Canal remains an important US interest, its strategic importance has diminished over the years. The share of US foreign commerce passing through the area has declined considerably, and American aircraft carriers (around which naval forces are organized) are too large for passage through the canal. Although the continued unhampered shipping through the Caribbean's sea lanes is of vital interest, a blockade would likely occur only in the case of a worldwide military confrontation, and probably only after passage in the North Atlantic would be blocked.⁶⁹

The United States also has various security arrangements with the countries of the region. It has agreements regarding the supply of weapons, training facilities, and military advisers. The US is, for example, the dominant supplier of arms to

69 Ibid, pp.51-55.

Latin America, accounting for approximately 65 percent of sales in the region.⁷⁰ However, the number and variety of suppliers has increased: the Soviet Union, France, Israel, and even Brazil have become arms suppliers in the area.

Conclusion

After examining France and the United States as hegemonic states, a number of conclusions can be drawn. First, both states sought to control their spheres of influence primarily to prevent other great powers from establishing dominance in the areas. Their policies of domination were pursued in the name of a higher principle, whether a "civilizing mission" (France) or "Manifest Destiny" (US). Both France and the US see their respective spheres as vital to their status as great powers, and believe their domination contributes to peace in the region as well as international stability.

Second, both countries dominate their spheres through cultural, political, economic, and military

⁷⁰ See Rice, "Military," op. cit., p.247.

means, although not as exclusively as in the past. In addition, both France and the United States have historical precedents for involvement in their regions. Interference has not only been explicit - such as military intervention and economic sanctions - but also implicit - such as political coercion. Their policies have not remained constant or rigid, but have evolved or loosened over a period of time.

Third, both France and the United States have developed specific doctrines justifying their hegemony over the subordinate areas. The functions of both "Eurafrigue" and the Monroe Doctrine have been to unify the interests of the "community" with the dominant power, as well as to justify any interference by invoking a higher, ideological principle. While the Monroe Doctrine and its various "corollaries" have been an ever-present feature of US-Latin American policy, "Eurafrigue" is more a political notion of mutual benefit. In addition, France and the US are the sole interpreters of how their respective doctrines are defined.

Fourth, both France and the United States share with their spheres of influence certain common interests, values, and institutions, whether it is French "culture" or American-style "democracy", the Franc Zone or the Organization of American States

(OAS). In this way, the subordinate areas glean some benefits, whether economic aid or prestige, from the dominant power.

Both France and the United States are constrained in certain ways in their behavior toward their respective spheres. Both powers have used military force, but it has not been habitual and uninhibited; rather, occasional and reluctant. In this way, France and the US appear to be aware of the high political cost of military intervention. Moreover, both states have attempted to legitimize their interventions by gaining the assent from surrounding states or regional organizations, but not always with complete success. In addition, France and the United States are also constrained by the amount of force that they can employ, i.e. both have nuclear capabilities, but use only conventional weapons. Both states are aware of the risks of being too domineering towards their spheres, fearing the prospects of revolutionary movements or civil wars; they realize, therefore, that hegemony cannot be exercised without impunity. Moreover, in whatever policy is pursued, France and the United States have to answer to their domestic audiences.

Finally, the dominance of the two states in their respective areas is declining and/or taking on a different character. Relations, for example,

between France and its former African colonies are more likely to be affected by disputes between them than by outside pressure. Although traditional ties between the dominant power and subordinate states may loosen or change, there does not appear on the part of either francophone Africa or Latin America a desire to break ties with France or the United States.

CHAPTER IV

ORIGINS OF THE SOVIET INTERVENTIONIST DOCTRINE

The origins of the Soviet interventionist doctrine can be found in both ideology and military history. The concept of proletarian internationalism, in which the interests of the working class in an individual country are subordinated to the interests of the entire proletarian movement, provided the framework upon which relations between socialist countries were based. Historically, Eastern Europe served as an invasion route to the USSR: therefore, the presence of friendly and allied regimes in the region was considered vital for the Soviet Union. This chapter will examine:

(i) the meaning of the term "Soviet interventionist doctrine";

(ii) the influence of ideology and domestic factors on Soviet foreign policy;

(iii) the theoretical evolution of the Soviet interventionist doctrine, from Lenin's proletarian internationalism to Khrushchev's concept of a "socialist commonwealth";

(iv) the historic importance of Eastern Europe to Russia in the pre-1917 period and to the Soviet Union after the Second World War;

(v) and the development and maintenance of the socialist "bloc" from 1943 to 1956.

I. The Soviet Interventionist Doctrine

The Soviet interventionist doctrine was dubbed the "Brezhnev Doctrine" after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. The intervention was perceived not only as an unwarranted act of aggression, but also as a challenge to the concept of sovereignty within the international state system. The Soviet government justified its intervention by intimating that among socialist states international law must be subordinated to the laws of class struggle.¹ Moreover, it was inferred that the gains of socialism were irreversible. Moscow

¹ According to S. Kovalev - whose two articles in Pravda in September 1968 spelled out the principles of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" - "Those who speak of the 'illegality' of the allied socialist countries' actions in Czechoslovakia forget that in a class society there is and can be no such thing as nonclass law. Laws and the norms of law are subordinated to the laws of the class struggle and the laws of social development"; S. Kovalev, "Sovereignty and the Internationalist Obligations of Socialist Countries," Pravda, 26 September 1968.

reserved the right to intervene militarily or otherwise if developments in any given socialist country inflicted damage on socialism within that country, or to the basic interests of other socialist countries. This group of ideas came to be referred to in the West as the "Brezhnev Doctrine".

In the minds of many people, the doctrine was first elaborated in two major articles by S. Kovalev in Pravda, "On Peaceful and Non peaceful Counterrevolution" (11 September 1968) and "Sovereignty and the Internationalist Obligations of Socialist Countries" (26 September 1968); however, it was only after Brezhnev's speech in November 1968, in which he reiterated the main points that Kovalev made, that the term "Brezhnev Doctrine" came to be widely used in the West.

At the Fifth Polish United Workers' Party Congress, Brezhnev called the military intervention an "extraordinary measure born of necessity":

[I]t is vitally necessary that the communists of socialist countries raise high the banner of socialist internationalism and constantly strengthen the unity and solidarity of the socialist countries ... the C.P.S.U. has always advocated that each socialist country determine the concrete forms of its development along the path of socialism by taking into account the specific nature of their national conditions. But it is well known, comrades, that there are common natural laws of socialist construction, deviation from

which could lead to deviation from socialism as such. And when external and internal forces hostile to socialism try to turn the development of a given socialist country ... this is no longer merely a problem for that country's people, but a common problem, the concern of all socialist countries.²

All of the main elements of the "Brezhnev Doctrine", however, had been articulated before the invasion in the "Warsaw Letter" of July 1968: the primacy of the doctrine of democratic centralism and the right of the Soviet Union to defend it if necessary; the common interests of all socialist states manifested in the idea of a socialist commonwealth, with proletarian internationalism dictating the importance of the supreme good; the obligation of socialist states to the Soviet Union for the "blood shed" during liberation; and, the gains of socialism were irreversible.³

The Soviet Union at the time denied the existence of the "Brezhnev Doctrine", referring to it instead as a "machination" of Western thinking. Brezhnev in 1971, for example, at a banquet given by the Yugoslav leader Tito in

2 Pravda, 13 November 1968; text of speech included in Boris Meissner, The Brezhnev Doctrine (Kansas City: Governmental Research Bureau, 1970), pp.54-59.

3 "Letter from Five Communist and Worker Parties, united in Warsaw, to the Central Committee of Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 15 July 1968"; for the text, see Philip Windsor and Adam Roberts, Czechoslovakia 1968: Reform, Repression and Resistance (London: Chatto & Windus, 1969), pp.150-56.

Belgrade, denied that there had ever been such a doctrine:

You and I are well aware that there exist in the world various forces ... which are striving to inflate any differences and are trying to drive a wedge between us. It was they who put into circulation the fable about a so-called "doctrine of limited sovereignty".⁴

Some analysts in the West believed that the "Brezhnev Doctrine" was a new theoretical phenomenon of Soviet foreign policy. The basic argument, which could be found in newspapers, magazines, journals, and books, was that the Soviet intervention signified a new, hard-line approach to bloc relations, particularly against deviation. In addition, Soviet rationalization for the invasion was viewed as a quickly engineered justification.⁵ In various newspapers, references were made to "the new 'commonwealth' doctrine, under which Moscow assumes the right to interfere anywhere within the 'socialist' world".⁶ In one particular article it was

4 Leonid Brezhnev, speech at a dinner in Belgrade, 22 September 1971.

5 See, for instance, Oton Ambroz, "The Doctrine of Limited Sovereignty: Its Impact on East Europe," East Europe, Vol. XVIII, No. 5 (May 1969), pp. 19-24.

6 See, for example, the New York Times of 15 and 24 November 1968. See also other articles, such as in the Washington Post, 14 November 1968, calling the doctrine "the new Soviet doctrine asserting Moscow's right to intervene in Communist countries" .

stated that the doctrine had at long last emerged from the "murky shadows of the Kremlin. Until now, the doctrine had only been presented somewhat inconclusively in Soviet press articles trying to justify the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Now Leonid Brezhnev himself ... has proclaimed the precise terms of the doctrine."⁷ In a Time magazine article the authorship of Brezhnev was confirmed: "In a speech in Warsaw, Soviet Party Boss Leonid Brezhnev defiantly reasserted the new doctrine that has come to bear his name."⁸

US Senator Henry M. Jackson (at the time Chairman, Subcommittee on National Security and International Operations) wrote that a new doctrine existed which haunted the socialist - as well as - the international community:

President Tito has spoken of a new ghost that has appeared; he means the Brezhnev theory of limited sovereignty, which has emerged as the official Russian justification for the invasion and occupation of Czechoslovakia ... This specter now haunts the communist movement, and it haunts as well the rest of Europe and the free world.⁹

⁷ The Washington Post, 13 November 1968.

⁸ Time, 22 November 1968, p.19. See also *ibid*, 29 November 1968, p.36.

⁹ Czechoslovakia and the Brezhnev Doctrine, prepared by the Subcommittee on National Security and International Operations, United States Senate, 91st Congress (Washington, DC: GPO, 4 June 1969), p.1.

Other commentators stated that the theory of limited sovereignty "was not merely an **expost facto** attempt to justify the Soviet aggression against Czechoslovakia, but it was a statement of **new** legal principles governing relations".¹⁰

There were, however, other analysts - such as Boris Meissner, Karen Dawisha, and R.A. Jones - who argued that the "Brezhnev Doctrine" was only an "official" reaffirmation of previous principles. Meissner, for example, stated that the theory of limited sovereignty "does not represent a completely new 'Moscow Doctrine,' as has variously been stated in the West, but rather a return to the principle of 'proletarian socialist internationalism'".¹¹ According to Dawisha, the "Brezhnev Doctrine" was not an expost facto justification for an invasion which "had failed to be legitimized by other means" as "all the substantive elements of the doctrine had in fact appeared before Soviet and allied troops entered Prague."¹² R. A. Jones writes that although the "Brezhnev Doctrine" was viewed by many Western

10 See Christian Duevel, "'Pravda' Proclaims 'Doctrine of Intervention' in Socialist Countries," Radio Liberty Research (30 September 1968), p.1 (original emphasis).

11 Meissner, op. cit., p.7.

12 See "The Continuing Validity of the Brezhnev Doctrine" in Karen Dawisha and Philip Hanson (eds). Soviet-East European Dilemmas: Coercion, Competition, and Consent (London: Heinemann, 1981), p.19.

commentators as a "striking" and original contribution to Soviet justifications of the invasion, it was really "a rehash of the ideas of ... other Soviet polemicists."¹³

Furthermore, there is evidence that various statements and declarations were issued, similar in wording or concept to the "Brezhnev Doctrine", during three major crises in Soviet-East European relations - Poland and Hungary 1956 and Czechoslovakia 1968 - to warn and deter the process of liberalization and defection from the bloc. Terms and expressions such as "internationalist duties", "fraternal obligations", the threat of "counterrevolution", defending the "historic gains of socialism", the fear of "hostile forces leading to deviation from the socialist path" or "endangering the leading role of the party", in addition to "anti-socialist or revisionist elements" which "threaten the common interests of other socialist states", among others, can be found in various statements, articles, speeches, and declarations made during such crises.

During the Polish crisis of 1956, for example, N.A. Bulganin, a member of the Soviet Politburo, declared that the Soviet regime would not countenance "an attempt to weaken the international ties of the socialist camp under

13 Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., pp.153-55. For additional studies on the origins of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" see, for example, William Korey, "The Comintern and the Genealogy of the 'Brezhnev Doctrine'," Problems of Communism, Vol.18 (May-June 1969), pp.52-58.

the pretext of respecting so-called 'national peculiarities'."14 On the eve of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, the Soviet leadership issued the 30 October declaration "On Friendship and Cooperation Between the Soviet Union and Other Socialist States". The document stated that the USSR was willing to consider withdrawing its troops from the territory of any member of the Warsaw Pact which so desired, but with the following significant stipulation:

the stationing of troops of one member state of the Warsaw Treaty on the territory of another member state of the Warsaw Treaty takes place on the basis of an agreement between all its participants and not only with the agreement of that state, on the territory of which at its request, these troops are stationed or are planned to be stationed.15

Moreover, in the "Warsaw Letter", issued during the Prague Spring, the leaders of the Soviet, Bulgarian, Polish, East German, and Hungarian parties voiced their common concerns over the "revisionist" forces which threatened to liquidate the Czechoslovak party's leading role:

14 Speech in Warsaw on 22 July 1956; see Pravda, 22 July 1956.

15 See Pravda, 31 October 1956.

... we cannot assent to hostile forces pushing your country off the path of socialism and creating the threat that Czechoslovakia may break away from the socialist commonwealth. This is no longer your affair alone. It is the common affair of all Communist and Workers' Parties and states that are united by alliance, cooperation and friendship.

The "Brezhnev Doctrine", therefore, was not a new departure from Soviet policy, but a reaffirmation of a previous doctrine.

II. Relationship Between Ideology and Foreign Policy

In the West there was a great deal of debate about the relationship between Marxist-Leninist ideology and Soviet foreign policy. Views differed as to the degree of importance that ideology played in Moscow's policy, as well as whether other factors, such as national interest, had a role in its formulation.

It is important to define first what is exactly meant by the terms "ideology", "doctrine", and "policy".¹⁶ Ideology may be described as "a system of collectively held normative and reputedly factual ideas and beliefs and

¹⁶ The purpose of this section is not to examine in detail the various definitions of these terms, but to provide a basis for discussion.

attitudes advocating a particular pattern of social relationships and arrangements, and/or aimed at justifying a particular pattern of conduct, which its proponents seek to promote, realise, pursue, or maintain."¹⁷ Zbigniew Brzezinski defines ideology as "essentially an action program derived from certain doctrinal assumptions about the nature of reality."¹⁸

Ideology is a flexible concept which reflected the varying impact of groups, institutions and individuals within the Soviet system.¹⁹ Seweryn Bialer, for example, viewed Soviet ideology as "tendencies and patterns of thought and belief" rather than as a set of rigid dogmas which dictated Soviet actions.²⁰ In addition, public statements by the leadership and other officials were seen as ideology since they contributed to the process of ideological interpretation and served a political purpose.²¹ Ideology, therefore, provided the Soviet

17 See Malcolm B. Hamilton, "The Elements of the Concept of Ideology," Political Studies, Vol.35, No.1 (March 1987), p.38.

18 Zbigniew Brzezinski, Ideology and Power in Soviet Politics (New York: Praeger, 1962), p.5.

19 See Stephen White and Alex Pravda (eds), Ideology and Soviet Politics (London: Macmillan, 1988).

20 Seweryn Bailer, "The Soviet Union and the West in the 1980s: Détente, Containment, or Confrontation?", Orbis, Vol.27, No.1 (1983), p.41.

21 Jonathan C. Valdez, Internationalism and the Ideology of Soviet Influence in Eastern Europe (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.14. Alfred G. Meyer had stated this view earlier: "every public official in the USSR is 'ex officio' an ideologist"; see Alfred G. Meyer, "The Functions

leadership with a framework for interpreting political developments; it set limits on the available options; it defined immediate priorities and longer-range goals; and, it shaped the methods through which problems were approached.²² Ideology was also used to justify policy.²³ Moreover, the use of ideology was more prominent in domestic affairs than foreign policy.²⁴

According to one theorist, there were three components to ideology: general philosophical assumptions, such as democratic centralism; doctrinal elements, which provided the general direction of policy, such as the dictatorship of the proletariat; and, "action programs" or policies, tied to particular historical conditions, such as Stalin's "socialism in one country".²⁵ These three aspects were not exclusive and often overlapped. The philosophical component consisted of fundamental Marxist-Leninist values that "define and underpin the socialist order and its consummatory goal of communism."²⁶ One such value, for

of Ideology in the Soviet Political System," Soviet Studies, Vol.17, No.3 (January 1966), p.278.

22 Zbigniew Brzezinski and Samuel P. Huntington, Political Power: USA/USSR (New York: Viking, 1964), p.56.

23 Graeme Gill, "Ideology and System-Building: the Experience under Lenin and Stalin," in White and Pravda, op. cit., pp.74-75.

24 See Alex Pravda, "Ideology and the Policy Process," in White and Pravda, op. cit., p.241.

25 See A. Ross Johnson, The Transformation of Communist Ideology: The Yugoslav Case, 1945-1953 (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1972), p.2.

26 A. Pravda, op. cit., p.227.

instance, was the "eventual victory of socialism over capitalism". The philosophical component was least subject to change and was essentially "dogmatic".²⁷

Doctrine can be defined as "the core beliefs, or foundations of the ideology, which include fundamental beliefs concerning the nature of capitalism and socialism".²⁸ Bialer viewed doctrine as a "set of highly general and internally consistent theoretical propositions."²⁹ For Ray Taras, doctrine referred to fundamental principles (Marxism-Leninism) and the ideology to the application of these principles.³⁰ Brzezinski argued "Without the doctrine, ideology would be equivalent to mere pragmatism; relying on doctrine alone, ideology would be just a static dogma ... Doctrine is thus the politically crucial link between dogmatic assumptions and pragmatic action."³¹

Doctrine was essentially unchanging and was based primarily on the writings of Marx and Lenin. Revisions to ideology were explained as "creative adaptations" and did not involve any basic departure from the doctrinal part of the ideology. If there were changes in doctrine, they

27 Ibid.

28 Jones, op. cit., p.100.

29 Seweryn Bialer, The Soviet Paradox: External Expansion, Internal Decline (New York: Vintage, 1986), p.264.

30 See Ray Taras, Ideology in a Socialist State: Poland 1956-1983 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p.27.

31 Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit., p.489-90.

usually emerged as a response to policy that "departed" from ideological prescriptions.³² Moreover, since there were various interpretations of Marxism-Leninism, political leaders often used different ideological elements and the flexibility of certain doctrines to support their political views.³³ However, Alex Pravda notes that not all theoretical statements which explained and justified policy were doctrine.³⁴ In addition, doctrine was more likely to figure in routine affairs than in crisis decisions. In cases where ideology served as a "policing" or "control mechanism", doctrine affected "form and style" rather than "content of policy".³⁵

"Action programs" or policy were often revised according to the leadership in power, and such changes were viewed as desirable; in this sense they were "dynamic".³⁶ They differed from Western policies in that they were derived from and justified in terms of the doctrinal and the philosophical elements of the ideology.³⁷

Ideology served a number of important functions for Soviet leaders: as "legitimation"; as a "mask" for real intentions; as a guide to analysis/action; as coded

32 See A. Pravda, op. cit., p.241.

33 Ibid, p.232.

34 For details, see ibid, pp.227-28.

35 Ibid, p.241.

36 Brzezinski and Huntington, op. cit., p.21.

37 Ibid, pp.10-11.

language; and, as socialization.³⁸ By "legitimation" it is meant justifying the regime and its policies: "to convince the citizenry that the party and its leaders have a legitimate claim to rule".³⁹ Soviet control in Eastern Europe, for example, was justified in security and ideological terms. Daniel Bell notes that ideology's role as a legitimizing device was particularly important when a group claimed "justification by some transcendent morality (for instance, history)" or "some specific set of interests".⁴⁰

Second, the repetition of ideological slogans served to "mask" or disguise the differences between official interpretation and the real world. Socialist internationalism, for instance, described relations between members of the socialist community as equal, when in reality the Soviet Union's interests were primary. Moreover, ideology itself contained fundamental principles which at times contradicted one another. The Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia, for example, was justified in the name of socialist internationalism; however, this doctrine contained - in addition to the defense of socialist gains - non-interference in internal affairs and respect for sovereignty. There was, therefore as Alfred

38 See Jones, op. cit., pp.101-05.

39 Meyer, op. cit., p.279.

40 Daniel Bell, "Ideology and Soviet Politics," Slavic Review, Vol.24, No.4 (December 1965), footnote p.595 and p.593.

G. Meyers argued, a "dialectic" of rigidity and flexibility in communist ideology.⁴¹

Third, ideology served as a guide to analysis and as a guide to action. These two aspects were closely related: since ideology was a means of perceiving the world, it was likely to affect how policy makers behaved. The guide to analysis function provided a framework for Soviet leaders by which to judge domestic or external events. According to Iu. Krasin, it enabled policy makers to categorize and compare events, thereby providing a means of assessing the "correlation of forces" in the international arena.⁴² The formation of the people's democracies was evidence of the influence of ideology on Soviet policy, as Moscow could have imposed its hegemony upon Eastern Europe without the ideological aspect. The guide to action function provided options for the Soviet leadership to pursue; it was, however, "nothing so all-encompassing as a 'blueprint'."⁴³ It accepted, for example, tactical policy shifts for pragmatic reasons, such as signing agreements with non-socialist states.⁴⁴

Fourth, the choice of language used by Moscow served several functions: as a signaling device; as a means of legitimizing ideas by using official phrases; and, as a

41 Meyer, op. cit., pp.274-75.

42 Iu. Krasin, The Contemporary Revolutionary Process (Moscow: Progress, 1981), p.144.

43 Valdez, op. cit., p.13.

44 Jones, op. cit., pp.103-04.

method of masking conflicting views by the use of vague terminology. In private meetings, (such as during the Czechoslovak crisis) however, Soviet leaders did also use language reflecting power and security interests rather than ideological considerations. Finally, the Soviet Union used the process of "socialization" (imposing various aspects of socialism) to subjugate the East European states. A network of inter-party and inter-state relations was established so that the East European political elites would share common values and interests with, as well as loyalty to, the Soviet Union.

In the West there are basically two schools of thought regarding the role of ideology in Soviet foreign policy: one which discounted the importance of ideology, seeing it primarily as an ex post facto rationalization for Soviet actions; the other, which argued that ideology was not irrelevant and played a certain role. Assessments of the relationship between ideology and foreign policy varied corresponding to changes in the Soviet Union.⁴⁵ Up to the time of Stalin's death in 1953, academics tended to view ideology as the key to foreign policy.⁴⁶ After Stalin's death, however, the importance of ideology was discounted. Khrushchev initiated with his "secret speech" and the "many roads to socialism" concept an ideological revision

45 See A. Pravda, op. cit., pp.225-26.

46 See, for example, N. Leites, The Operational Code of the Soviet Politburo (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1951).

and openness of political debate. Western theorists began to argue, therefore, that ideology was a justification for policy. The focus of explanation began to shift from ideology to Russian nationalism.⁴⁷

The proponents of the "ex post facto justification" school believed that more practical concerns than Marxism-Leninism guided Soviet behavior. The Polish philosopher Leszek Kolakowski, for example, believed that Marxism had become "a rhetorical dressing for the Realpolitik of the Soviet empire."⁴⁸ Ferenc Vali argued that Soviet national interests and expansionism prevailed over ideology and cited Hungary 1956 as an example.⁴⁹ Samuel Sharp argued that the Soviet leaders' right to rule rested on their perpetuation of ideology and their insistence on orthodoxy: "they have no choice but to continue paying lip service to the doctrine, even if it is no longer operative."⁵⁰ William Zimmerman stressed that, with the exception of Eastern Europe, the USSR seldom followed the

47 See, for instance, Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The Soviet Union: Her Aims, Problems, and Challenges to the West," in Robbin F. Laird and Eric P. Hoffmann (eds), Soviet Foreign Policy in a Changing World (New York: Aldine, 1986), pp.3-15.

48 Leszek Kolakowski, Main Currents of Marxism: Its Origins, Growth and Dissolution, Vol.3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p.105.

49 Ferenc Vali, Rift and Revolt in Hungary: Nationalism Versus Communism (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), pp.10-13.

50 Samuel L. Sharp, "National Interest:; Key to Soviet Politics," in Jan F. Triska and David Finley, Soviet Foreign Policy (New York: Macmillan, 1968), p.53.

principles of its ideology."⁵¹

The proponents of the "ideology is not irrelevant" school, on the other hand, argued that although ideology alone was not the main determinant of Soviet foreign policy, it nevertheless played an important role. Vernon Aspaturian argued, for example, that to assume that Soviet foreign policy was merely Russian imperialism in "new garb" would have been a "catastrophic mistake".⁵² Hannes Adomeit viewed rationalization and motivation as being mutually reinforcing.⁵³ R. N. Carew Hunt saw no contradiction between commitment to fundamental principles and Realpolitik, because it was necessary to translate principles into action.⁵⁴ D. D. Comey noted that some Soviet policy decisions could only be understood by reference to ideological motivations, such as the "Sovietization" of Eastern Europe and collectivization of Soviet agriculture.⁵⁵ Moreover, Leopold Labedz argued that those who said that ideology was nothing but

51 See William Zimmerman, "Soviet Foreign Policy in the 1970s," Survey, Vol.19, No.2 (Spring 1973), pp.193-94.

52 Vernon V. Aspaturian, Process and Power in Soviet Foreign Policy (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971), p.331.

53 Hannes Adomeit, "Ideology in the Soviet View of International Affairs," in Christopher Betram (ed), Prospects of Soviet Power in the 1980s (London: Macmillan, 1980), p.103.

54 R. N. Carew Hunt, "The Importance of Doctrine," in Alexander Dallin (ed), Soviet Conduct in World Affairs (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), p.46.

55 D. D. Comey, "Marxist-Leninist Ideology and Soviet Policy," Studies in Soviet Thought, No.4 (1962), pp.317-18.

rationalization did not ask what role rationalization performed in the maintenance of ideology; or why there was a need for rationalization rather than the abandonment of ideology.⁵⁶

Brzezinski in addition offered two arguments why it was wrong to dismiss ideology as irrelevant.⁵⁷ Many of the Soviet leaders, he noted, suffered in the name of their ideological commitments, and once in power, they tended to view the world, and make decisions shaped by, that ideology. Moreover, if a leader was to question the importance of his ideology, he would have run the risk of undermining his own power. Stalin's power, for instance, revolved around his special position as the sole interpreter of Marxism-Leninism; for him to have denounced that ideology would have meant to deny himself an important source of strength.⁵⁸

Other theorists have argued that Soviet foreign policy was a "fusion" between national interest - such as security - and ideology.⁵⁹ Bromke attributed this fusion

56 See Leopold Labedz, "Ideology and Soviet Foreign Policy," in Bertram, op. cit., p.23.

57 Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit., pp.490-92.

58 Ibid.

59 See, for example, Hugh Seton-Watson, "The Historical Roots," in Curtis Keeble (ed), The Soviet State: The Domestic Roots of Soviet Foreign Policy (London: Gower, 1986), pp.9-24. For a more detailed discussion, see Adam Bromke, "Ideology and National Interest in Soviet Foreign Policy," in International Journal, Vol.XXII, No,4 (Autumn 1967), pp.547-62.

to the fact that Marxism-Leninism became embedded in the Russian nationalist tradition.⁶⁰ Moreover, Hugh Seton-Watson saw Soviet policy as both "expansionist" and "defensive": "Obsession with protection of frontiers and of strategic positions leads to expansion, and each successful expansion creates new positions to defend."⁶¹ R. A. Jones notes, however, that there are general problems with the above views as there are various interpretations as to the definitions of ideology and national interest. Moreover, it is difficult to determine the precise degree or extent to which ideological factors influence Soviet foreign policy.⁶²

Some analysts point to the Soviet Union's greater emphasis on the ideological dimension after various East European crises as proof of the importance of ideology.⁶³ Pravda argues, however, that ideology generally plays a "marginal role" in foreign policy: "Marxism-Leninism has done little to shape critical decisions regarding the region."⁶⁴ Doctrine played a part in Stalin's creating a socialist community in the region; moreover, it served to justify Soviet control of the bloc. Doctrinal concerns, on the other hand, were of lesser importance, for example, in the decision to invade Czechoslovakia; security

60 Bromke, op. cit., pp.552-53.

61 Seton-Watson, op. cit., p.23.

62 Jones, op. cit., p.99.

63 Ibid, p.101.

64 A. Pravda, op. cit., p.240.

interests and political appointments appeared to be the determining factors.

From the above discussion it can be deduced that: ideology provided the Soviet leadership with a framework for interpreting political developments; ideology affected the general direction of policy, which was based on doctrine - the fundamental beliefs which for the most part were unchanging; and, although over the years ideology played a decreasing role in Soviet foreign policy, it nevertheless served a function. "...[A]n evolutionary process has taken place. The original ideological fervour (the utopian, revolutionary or missionary aspects of ideology) and the humanistic, emancipatory content of Marxism have given way in the Soviet Union to a greater emphasis on legitimacy. To that extent, there has been a transformation in the functions of ideology. What it does not mean, however, is that ideology no longer matters in Soviet foreign policy.⁶⁵

III. Domestic Influence on Soviet Foreign Policy

Another element which had an influence on Soviet

⁶⁵ Hannes Adomeit, "Soviet Decision-Making and Western Europe," in Edwina Moreton and Gerald Segal (eds), Soviet Strategy Toward Western Europe (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), p.47.

foreign policy and the interventionist doctrine was domestic affairs. As in the case of ideology, the degree to which domestic factors influenced Moscow's foreign policy was difficult to determine. As James Rosenau put it, "The dilemma is that the links between the domestic sources and the resulting behavior - foreign policy - are not easily observed and are thus especially resistant to coherent analysis."⁶⁶

Dallin suggested that five domestic factors had a bearing on Soviet foreign policy.⁶⁷ The first was "unwitting" elements, such as continuities in political culture and the projection of domestic experience onto external relations. Dallin cited as an example the Russian tradition of strong central authority in the state. A second influence was the perceptions and assumptions of policy-makers regarding popular attitudes at home: these included, for instance, the expected stress to which loyalty and compliance would be subjected under

⁶⁶ See James Rosenau, "Introduction," in James Rosenau (ed), Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy (New York: Free Press, 1967), p.2. For a more detailed examination of the domestic impact on Soviet foreign policy issues see, for instance, Seweryn Bialer (ed), The Domestic Context of Soviet Foreign Policy (Boulder: Westview, 1981); and Morton Schwartz, The Foreign Policy of the USSR: Domestic Factors (Encino: Dickenson, 1975).

⁶⁷ For further discussion of these five factors, see Alexander Dallin, "Soviet Foreign Policy and Domestic Politics: A Framework for Analysis," in Erik P. Hoffmann and Frederic J. Fleron (eds), The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy (New York: Aldine, 1980), pp.36-49.

crisis conditions or the reaction to particular foreign policy moves.

A third factor was elite cleavages and policy conflicts. Stephen Cohen argued that the amount of diversity of opinion in the Soviet system was "probably equal to that in any 'open' society ...variations of this diversity exist within the political establishment and ... inside the ruling Communist Party."⁶⁸ These divisions included: policy disputes and differences within the bureaucracy over foreign policy; conflicts in other areas which impacted on foreign policy; and, divisions within the elite due to power struggles, factionalism, and personality conflicts. These leadership divisions and policy conflicts were further complicated by the apparent absence of a succession mechanism and procedural rules for collective leadership.⁶⁹ The Khrushchev/Malenkov dispute in 1955, for instance, contained these various aspects: conflicts over domestic and foreign policies, differences in ideological formulations, and the struggle for power.

A fourth factor was the attempts by individuals and groups outside the circle of policy-makers to be consulted before decisions were made. A difference existed between those groups that were officially requested to participate - such as academics, military officials, and scientists -

68 See Stephen Cohen, "Soviet Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy," in Laird and Hoffmann, op. cit., p.69.

69 See Schwartz, op. cit., pp.139-41.

and those which volunteered their advice - such as the Soviet equivalent of interest groups and dissidents. A final factor was that the broadening base of participation could have, in theory, extended to public opinion, at least to those who were considered "politically relevant".

These five factors influenced foreign policy to varying degrees, with certain aspects having greater impact than others. The changing nature of the Soviet political system has also affected its attitudes and approaches towards foreign policy. During the early years, Soviet leaders were compelled to place priority on resolving problems on the "domestic front" rather than pursuing "the revolutionary mission" abroad. After the Second World War, however, Soviet elites - spurred on by their desire for security - established a socialist bloc in Eastern Europe.

Another domestic factor which had an important influence on Soviet international behavior was the issue of security. Repeated invasions - particularly from the West - motivated Moscow to create a satellite buffer zone. In addition, the Soviet Union was an empire composed of various republics, with numerous tensions existing between the "center" and the "periphery". Any external threat, particularly from Eastern Europe, was feared primarily because of its "spillover" effect on the USSR. For this reason security was a "far more complex and sensitive"

domestic political issue than for other states.⁷⁰ During the 1968 Prague Spring and the 1980/81 Solidarity movement, for example, Moscow feared "reformist" contagion to Ukraine and the Baltic States, and was willing to use force to prevent its spread.⁷¹ Poland, in particular, not only bordered Ukraine, but also had extensive ties with that republic.⁷² Moreover, the western part of Ukraine had been annexed from Poland in 1939 and contained high nationalist sentiment and dissident activity.⁷³

70 See Alex Pravda, "The Politics of Foreign Policy.," in Stephen White, Alex Pravda, and Zvi Gitelman (eds), Developments in Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1993), p.251. For a more descriptive look at the nationalities issue see, for example, Jeremy Azrael, "The 'Nationality Problem' in the USSR: Domestic Pressures and Foreign Policy Constraints," in Seweryn Bialer (ed), The Domestic Context of Soviet Foreign Policy (Boulder: Westview, 1981), pp.139-53; Gail W. Lapidus, Victor Zaslavsky, with Philip Goldman (eds), From Union to Commonwealth: Nationalism and Separatism in the Soviet Republics (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); and Bohdan Nahaylo and Victor Swoboda, Soviet Disunion: A History of the Nationalities Problem in the USSR (New York: Free Press, 1989). For a brief survey of Soviet leaders' policies on the nationality issue from Lenin to Gorbachev see Graham Smith (ed), The Nationalities Question in the Soviet Union (New York: Longman, 1990). For the impact of East European events on the Soviet republics see Roman Szporluk (ed), The Influence of East Europe and the Soviet West on the USSR (New York: Praeger, 1975); and V. Stanley Vardys, "Polish Echoes in the Baltic," Problems of Communism, No.4 (July-August 1983), pp.21-34.

71 The contagion issue in various East European crises will be briefly examined in the following chapters.

72 See Peter J. Potichnyj (ed), Ukraine and Poland: Past and Present (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1980).

73 See Alexander J. Motyl, Will The Non-Russians Rebel?

Therefore, "the stability of the 'inner empire' of republics played a part in prompting direct or indirect Soviet action in the 'outer empire' of Eastern Europe."⁷⁴

The security issue affected not only Moscow's policy toward Eastern Europe and the Soviet republics, but also the domestic military sector. Pravda argued that the USSR's superpower status depended heavily on its military capability. Moscow's relative economic weakness and military commitments in Eastern Europe convinced the Soviet leaders that security policy had to play a large role in domestic priorities.⁷⁵

Ideology was also a crucial factor in maintaining stability among the different nationalities. Stalin maintained that ethnic identity was to be subordinated to "Soviet" nationalism. "It is the reinforcing combination of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine and great power nationalism which constitutes the kernel of the Soviet ideology as a legitimizing and motivating force of elite action and popular support."⁷⁶ The abandonment of these doctrinal beliefs was believed to endanger the philosophical underpinnings of Soviet political power. According to Daniel Matuszewski, if the Soviet Union were

State, Ethnicity, and Stability in the USSR (Ithaca: Cornell, 1987), p.144.

74 A. Pravda, "Politics of Foreign Policy," op. cit., p.252.

75 Ibid, p.252.

76 See Seweryn Bialer, Stalin's Successors: Leadership, Stability, and Change in the Soviet Union (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p.208.

"suddenly to divest itself of the messianic mantle of revolution, it would overnight become simply a traditional great power - with little claim ... to the maintenance of Russian dominance of the numerous minority peoples of the USSR."⁷⁷ Morton Schwartz argued that in this sense the Soviet leaders were the victims of their own ideology.⁷⁸ In addition, the ideological component of foreign policy linked regime performance and legitimacy at home with Moscow's performance abroad. "Success and setbacks in the progress of socialism throughout the world were seen to redound on the image and even legitimacy of the domestic regime."⁷⁹

IV. Theoretical Underpinnings of the Soviet Interventionist

Doctrine: Proletarian Internationalism

The doctrines on which the Soviet state was based provided some basis for justifying interventionism. They were, in fact, used in this way at various times in the

77 See Daniel C. Matuszewski, "Empire, Nationalities, Borders: Soviet Assets and Liabilities," in S. Enders Wimbush, Soviet Nationalities in Strategic Perspective (London: Croom Helm, 1988), p.76. For further examination of this issue, see Schwartz, op. cit., pp138-50.

78 See Schwartz, op. cit., p.143.

79 A. Pravda, "Politics and Foreign Policy," op. cit., p.253.

Soviet Union's history. Of central importance were the ideas that class divisions were more fundamental and important than national ones; and, that the Soviet state could assist the cause of "proletarian internationalism". It is important to note, however, that not all elements in Soviet doctrine pointed towards interventionism: the various Soviet attempts to encompass the concept of national self-determination, for instance, illustrated the complexity of the various strands that formed part of Soviet thinking on intervention.

The two guiding principles of Soviet foreign policy were peaceful coexistence, which defined the relationship between the Soviet Union and states of different social systems, and proletarian internationalism, which described the relations between socialist parties and within the socialist commonwealth. Peaceful coexistence was viewed as supplementing proletarian internationalism, to which it was subordinated.⁸⁰

The doctrine of peaceful coexistence was not a static concept and it underwent certain modifications, particularly under Khrushchev.⁸¹ Under Lenin, it was

⁸⁰ See V. Kubalkova and A. A. Cruickshank, Marxism and International Relations (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), pp.92-94.

In the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, however, the Soviet Union appeared to commit ideological heresy by subscribing to "peaceful coexistence" as a policy for relations between all states, "**irrespective** of their political, economic or social systems". [emphasis mine]

⁸¹ See Margot Light, The Soviet Theory of International Relations (New York: St. Martin's, 1988), pp.25-53.

viewed as a tactical means by which the Soviet state could survive until international revolution occurred: it would enable the USSR to conduct business and trade with countries of differing systems, which was deemed vital for the rebuilding of the Soviet economy. While Lenin viewed peaceful coexistence as a short-term tactic, Stalin used the concept during the 1930s as a means of convincing other countries that the Soviet Union was a reliable ally.

Khrushchev's announcement at the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU that Soviet policy toward states of varying social systems was to be based on peaceful coexistence had, according to Light, a profound effect on Soviet foreign relations.⁸² The concept expanded in meaning from business relations to something which was more than just peace or the absence of war. On the one hand peaceful coexistence implied cooperation, noninterference in domestic affairs and mutual respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence; on the other, while excluding military aggression, it included economic competition and ideological struggle. The doctrine was explained as a particular manifestation of the class struggle and was in accordance with the furthering of international revolution.⁸³ Peaceful coexistence, however, raised a number of theoretical problems concerning relations between states of the same social

82 Ibid, p.44.

83 Ibid, pp.25-72.

system, which became difficult to reconcile.

Proletarian internationalism demanded that "the interests of the proletarian struggle in any one country should be subordinated to the interests of the struggle on a world-wide scale". Moreover, "a nation which is achieving victory over the bourgeoisie should be able and willing to make the greatest national sacrifices for the overthrow of international capital."⁸⁴

The idea of proletarian internationalism was first put forward by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, who believed that it was an alternative principle for the organization of mankind, superior to that on which the state-system was based. In The Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels described the unique international character possessed by communists:

The communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only: (1) In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the forefront the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality; (2) In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Lenin, Collected Works, Vol.31, op. cit., p.148.

⁸⁵ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, The Communist Manifesto (London: Penguin, 1980), p.95.

They warned that to ignore this characteristic of the international workers' movement was a grave mistake: "The neglect of this fraternal alliance ... causes the penalty of a general defeat of their isolated efforts."⁸⁶ Marx and Engels, however, did not foresee the application of "internationalism" to relations between socialist states: they envisioned only a world based on the division of class, not nationality.

With the victory of the 1917 Revolution, there existed a base upon which the principles of proletarian internationalism could be applied and promoted. Internationalism was first espoused in the Communist International (Comintern), created in March 1919, which was designed to act as an international communist party; a unified set of rules was set forth in the Twenty-One Conditions (1920). The founding of the Comintern seemed a step in preparation for the coming together of the revolutionary parties, and the eventual merger with Western Europe after widespread revolution.

In the years following the Russian Revolution, certain Soviet theorists believed that the members of the socialist movement had the moral right to engage in military intervention in the furtherance of proletarian internationalism. For Grigori Zinoviev, chairman of the

⁸⁶ Marx, Engels and Lenin on Proletarian Internationalism, A Collection of Articles in Russian (Moscow: Gospolitzdat, 1957), p.41.

Comintern, the preparation of the Red Army to take the "offensive with the bayonet" was an essential ingredient in the strategy of world revolution.⁸⁷ The Soviet-Polish War of 1920 was to be an important example of proletarian internationalism in action or "revolution by conquest".⁸⁸

It had been a canon of Marxist politics that revolution could not be carried on the "points of bayonets" into foreign countries. The Bolsheviks and Trotsky had said that the Red Army might intervene in a neighboring country, but only as the auxiliary of actual popular revolution, not as an independent, decisive agent.⁸⁹ A war in Poland, however, provided the opportunity to eliminate the "bastard of Versailles" as well as to ensure Soviet security on its western border. Moreover, the war occurred at a time when Lenin still believed that an international revolution was imminent: he thought that a proletarian regime in Poland would serve as a bridge between the Russian Revolution and the workers' movement in Germany. Either way, the Soviet Union would achieve,

87 See Grigori Zinoviev, Die Welt revolution und die III Kommunistische Internationale (Hamburg, 1920), p.47.

88 For details on the Soviet-Polish War of 1920, see Norman Davies, White Eagle, Red Star: The Polish-Soviet War 1919-20 (London: Orbis, 1983); and Isaac Deutscher, The Prophet Armed: Trotsky, 1879-1921 (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp.458-77.

89 The Red Army had, for instance, intervened in Finland and Latvia to assist actual Soviet revolutions which enjoyed popular backing, and which were defeated primarily by foreign intervention. In none of these cases, however, did the Red Army carry the revolution abroad.

if victorious, a pro-Soviet system which would not only enhance its security, but also the strength of its propaganda for the spread of socialism.⁹⁰ The Soviet-Polish War revealed that the USSR was prepared to act as a new kind of great power, although ostensibly the aim was the promotion of international proletarian brotherhood.

One contradiction raised by proletarian internationalism, however, was that it appeared incompatible with Russian nationalism: for true internationalism meant not only the elimination of all forms of capitalism, but also the dissolution of national boundaries and governments. Before the 1917 Revolution Lenin argued that although national self-determination was a bourgeois phenomenon, it should be supported as it would give the socialists "the strength to accomplish the socialist revolution and overthrow the bourgeoisie"; however, once the "amalgamation of all nations" was achieved, national self-determination would no longer serve any relevant purpose.⁹¹

At the All-Russian Conference of the Russian Social Democratic Labor (later Communist) Party, held shortly

90 Lenin's goal of a Soviet-imposed communist regime in Poland was evident in the fact that a provisional Polish communist government had been established to follow the expected victory of the Red Army; see Bialer, Soviet Paradox, op. cit., p.178.

91 Lenin, "The Discussion on Self-determination Summed Up," Collected Works, Vol.22 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1964), p.336.

before the revolution, the following statement was included in its "Resolution on the National Question":

The question of the right of nations freely to secede must not be confused with the question of whether it would be expedient for any given nation to secede at any given moment. This latter question must be settled by the Party of the proletariat in each particular case independently, from the point of view of the interests of the social development as a whole and the class struggle of the proletariat for socialism.⁹²

Stalin reiterated this view at the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets in January 1918, when he stated that the "principle of self-determination must be an instrument in the struggle for socialism and must be subordinated to the principles of socialism."⁹³

By 1920, however, Lenin admitted that such an amalgamation would take longer than originally envisioned. Contradictions between nationalism and internationalism were, therefore, rationalized in various ways: for example, Point Fourteen of the Twenty-one Conditions emphasized the importance of the Soviet state, by making it obligatory for the world proletariat to render every

⁹² See J. V. Stalin, Marxism and the National and Colonial Question (New York: International, 1942), p.269.

⁹³ Stalin, Sochineniya, Vol.4 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1954), pp.31-32; for further discussion, see Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., pp.39-44.

kind of assistance to that republic which had already achieved state power.⁹⁴

This "assistance" also included military aid. Moscow's struggle against foreign intervention during the Civil War gave credence to Soviet arguments which demanded sacrifices on the part of non-Russian proletarian movements for the sake of the Soviet "fatherland". Criticism was eliminated by identifying the interests of Russian nationalism with that of the international proletariat. In 1927 Stalin wrote:

An internationalist is one who is ready to defend the USSR without reservation, without wavering, unconditionally; for the USSR is the base of the world revolutionary movement, and this revolutionary movement cannot be defended and promoted unless the USSR is defended.⁹⁵

Soviet interests were, therefore, inseparable from those of proletarian internationalism.

After the Second World War, the Soviet Union was no longer the only "base" of socialist revolution: it was now surrounded by states in which socialism could be imposed.⁹⁶ Stalin extended the concept of proletarian

94 "Usloviia Priema v. Kommunisticheskii Internazional," 19 July-7 August 1920; in Kun, op. cit., p.103.

95 Sochineniya, Vol.10, op. cit., pp.53-54.

96 The Soviet Union was the only socialist state up to this period, with the exception of the Mongolian People's Republic, which was established in July 1921. This was the first true Soviet satellite state, adhering strictly to the

internationalism to "socialist internationalism", which defined relations between socialist states. Like proletarian internationalism, socialist internationalism was to be a transitional stage until communism was realized on a global scale. During this transitional stage, it was argued, relations among the "fraternal countries" would be governed by the principles of mutual assistance, voluntary participation, respect for state sovereignty and independence, complete equality, noninterference in internal affairs, and international solidarity.⁹⁷

V. Importance of Eastern Europe for the Soviet Union

Eastern Europe was considered a vital region for Soviet influence, particularly as it had historically served as an invasion route. For both Russia in the 19th century and the Soviet Union under Stalin, the importance of the area for the "motherland's" security was considered

Soviet line in foreign policy, though it was permitted more moderate internal policies. In 1932 and 1934 Soviet troops helped suppress internal rebellions, and some analysts argue that it set a precedent for later interventions in Eastern Europe.

⁹⁷ See, for example, B. Ldygin, "Socialist Internationalism: Fraternity and Cooperation," International Affairs (Moscow), No. 6 (1973).

incontestable. Therefore, Soviet domination or control over Eastern Europe was seen as both protection and guarantee of Moscow's borders.

Soviet interest in Eastern Europe can be seen in Tsar Peter the Great's (1682-1725) desire to "open a window" to the West. The security system established by the Congress of Vienna in 1815 first recognized the Russian presence in Eastern Europe.⁹⁸ At the Congress, Tsar Alexander pursued an expansionist policy: he justified his interest in the Polish territories as a "moral duty", that the issue involved "the happiness of the Poles". Since, he argued, his policies were guided by a sense of obligation and duty, and not security interests, the other great powers could not see his actions as a threat to peace.⁹⁹ Indeed, Alexander defended his Polish plan as a contribution to European security and peace.

Russian interest in Eastern Europe was again evident during the revolutions of 1848-1849: in this instance it led to direct military intervention. Russia feared that Polish involvement in the Hungarian revolt would result in the spread of unrest to its western provinces. The Russian Government made an offer of assistance to Austria

98 For details, see Henry A. Kissinger, A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace 1812-1822 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987); and Harold Nicolson, The Congress of Vienna (London: Cassell, 1989).

99 See Castlereagh to Liverpool, 14 October 1814; in Charles Webster (ed), British Diplomacy, 1813-1815 (London, 1921), p.201.

in a letter dated 27 April 1849 which stated:

The insurrection in Hungary has of late made so much progress that Russia cannot possibly remain inactive ... His Majesty reserved to himself his full liberty of action in case the reaction of revolutions near him should tend to endanger his own safety or the political equilibrium on the frontiers of his empire.

The letter continued that any attack by the insurgents "against the existence and the unity of the Austrian monarchy would also be an attack upon those territorial possessions which His Majesty, according to the spirit and letter of the treaties, deems necessary for the equilibrium of Europe and the safety of his own States."¹⁰⁰ Although the purpose of the Russian military intervention of 1849 was to preserve the status quo and Russian interests, it was justified in terms of lending support to the Habsburgs.¹⁰¹

In the 19th century there was, therefore, evidence of Russian security interests in Eastern Europe as well as concerns to limit the degree of Western influence in the region; in addition, there was historical precedent for

¹⁰⁰ See Annual Register, 1849, London, pp.333.

¹⁰¹ For details of the 1849 Russian intervention, see L. Teleki, De l'Intervention russe (Paris, 1849); and Ian W. Roberts, Nicholas I and the Russian Intervention in Hungary (New York: St. Martin's, 1991).

the use of military intervention. This Russian tradition of influence or predominance in Eastern Europe, along with military intervention as a policy, continued into the twentieth century and became particularly evident under Stalin.

In the latter half of the 20th century, Soviet security and ideological interests merged and became identified with control over Eastern Europe. Dominance over the region was considered by Stalin as vital for the protection of the USSR from external threats. It also provided a unifying element within the Soviet Union with proof that socialism was indeed an international system. Stalin, therefore, created a pattern for future Soviet rule by combining security and ideological concerns as a justification for Soviet control of Eastern Europe.

The catastrophic near defeat for the Soviet Union in 1941 left in the memory of Stalin a need for an overwhelming defense. He, therefore, created a "cult of military strength" which was perpetuated by successive Soviet leaders.¹⁰² Stalin sought in Eastern Europe some type of buffer against German "revanchism" and Western "imperialism".¹⁰³ The presence of the Red Army in Poland,

102 See Vojtech Mastny, Russia's Road to the Cold War (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979). Some observers, like Mastny, have argued that this cult developed a momentum beyond the Soviet leaders' ability to control, and exceeded any reasonable security requirements.

103 The emasculation of Germany after the Second World War by its defeat and division should have, however, reduced the

Germany, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary, and Bulgaria enabled the Soviet leader to extend Moscow's power and ideology. In addition, the Soviet Union wanted to ensure that the states of Eastern Europe were to be governed only by regimes "friendly" to the USSR; and only communist regimes were considered as dependably "friendly". The area was also to serve as an ideological buffer which protected the Soviet Union from subversive Western influence.

The Soviet takeover of Eastern Europe also served to suppress all the overt and latent conflicts in the region between states, nationalities, ethnic groups and religions, all of which had entangled and regularly engulfed Russia into war. Therefore, Soviet presence would act as a stabilizer ensuring that local rivalries could not be used by the West, or escalate independently to threaten the security of either the Soviet Union's borders or its political system. Although these rivalries, such as Romanian-Hungarian antagonism, still exist they were muted under socialism. This "relative calm" was, according to Robert McNeal, better attributed, however, to Soviet hegemony than to "a triumph of 'fraternal' Communist spirit".¹⁰⁴

As argued above, security concerns were not the only

value of Eastern Europe to Soviet security interests.

104 Robert H. McNeal (ed), International Relations Among Communists (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1967), p.32.

reason for domination of Eastern Europe: considerations of security alone did not require the high level of Soviet control over social and political developments in the region.¹⁰⁵ In practice, security motivations tended to be merged together with ideological objectives. The continuing domination of East European countries confirmed the basic ideological proposition that the establishment of communist rule was irreversible. Moreover, Moscow's domination of Eastern Europe, and the preservation there of a system basically similar to its own, provided one of the ideological justifications for communist party rule within the Soviet Union. In addition, loss of control over individual Eastern European countries or the entire bloc was long seen as likely to strengthen tendencies toward greater autonomy or separatism within the Soviet Union.¹⁰⁶

Eastern Europe also provided the nucleus of an international bloc of political and diplomatic support in world politics. In J. F. Brown's view, this aspect of domination was particularly important, especially as Moscow wanted to be viewed by world opinion as having the same superpower status as that of the United States.¹⁰⁷

105 See, for example, Jiri Valenta, "Military Interventions: Doctrines, Motivations, Goals, and Outcomes," in Triska, Dominant Powers, op cit., pp.276-77.

106 See J. F. Brown, Eastern Europe and Communist Rule (Durham: Duke University Press, 1988), p.31.

107 See Brown, op. cit., p.31.

In addition, Eastern Europe (at least initially) was viewed by Stalin as a suitable area for economic exploitation; Moscow hoped to benefit economically vis-a-vis reparations and confiscation of German assets, and the establishment of joint-stock companies in terms favorable to the Soviet Union.¹⁰⁸ However, Soviet "exploitation" of Eastern Europe was not as clear cut as it appeared. The region did not prove to be the economic benefit which the USSR envisioned.¹⁰⁹ Security and ideological interests were more important than economic benefits, and the Soviet Union may have been willing to suffer economic losses for them.¹¹⁰

In analyzing Soviet objectives in Eastern Europe, it is difficult to distinguish and separate the various concerns rooted in military history and ideology. Stalin himself reiterated this idea to a Yugoslav official, Milovan Djilas, in April 1945: "This war is not as in the past; whoever occupies a territory imposes on it his own social system. Everyone imposes his own system as far as his

108 For an examination of Soviet-East European economic relations in this period see Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit., pp.125-29.

109 In fact, there were disadvantages in trade relations for both, so the accusation of outright exploitation by the Soviet Union is incorrect, particularly as the Soviet Union (unlike other hegemonies) had a lower standard of living than the East European states.

110 See J. F. Brown and A. Ross Johnson, Challenges to Soviet Control in Eastern Europe: An Overview (Santa Monica: Rand, 1984), pp.3-4. For a general survey of economic relations see Brown, Communist Rule, op. cit., pp. 113-57.

army can reach. It cannot be otherwise."¹¹¹ Therefore, Eastern Europe provided two interdependent criteria for the Soviet Union: protection by way of a cordon sanitaire against invasion, particularly by German revanchism and American imperialism; and legitimization and vindication of ideology through the establishment of a community of friendly, neighboring states which shared the same ideology.

VI. Building of the Satellite System: Teheran, Moscow, and Yalta

After the Second World War, therefore, the establishment and maintenance of the Soviet position in Eastern Europe was the most important goal of Soviet foreign policy. The importance of the region to the USSR was voiced by Brezhnev following the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. In Moscow the Czechoslovak leadership was forced to sign a formal protocol setting out measures for "normalization". According to Zdenek Mlynar, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Party at the time, the Soviet leader stressed the nonnegotiable nature of Eastern Europe:

¹¹¹ Milovan Djilas, Conversations with Stalin (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1962), p.105.

Brezhnev spoke at length about the sacrifices of the Soviet Union in the Second World War: ... At such a cost, the Soviet Union had gained security, and the guarantee of that security was the postwar division of Europe ... "For us," Brezhnev went on, "the results of the Second World War are inviolable, and we will defend them even at the cost of risking war."¹¹²

Although millions of East Europeans had also perished during the war, the Soviet Union emphasized that it had suffered the most in human terms, a loss of twenty million people.¹¹³ Moscow, therefore, considered that the East Europeans should be eternally indebted to the Soviet Union for their liberation. This was amply demonstrated in

¹¹² Zdenek Mlynar, Night Frost in Prague: The End of Humane Socialism (London: C. Hurst, 1980), pp.239-41.

In the postwar period the states of Eastern Europe were often referred to as "satellites." When using the term "satellite" I am referring to a subordinate state that is overwhelmingly dominated by a great power. This term has particularly been used to represent the status of Eastern Europe under Stalin - of a galaxy of states closely revolving around the center.

¹¹³ There has been some debate as to whether this Soviet figure of war dead is correct. Some argue that the number may be somewhat inflated and might include some purge victims. In May 1990, the Soviet Union officially released the figure of 27 million deaths; see the New York Times, 10 May 1990. Immediately after the war Stalin might have disclosed a lower figure for his own reasons.

official statements issued over the years by the Soviet leadership to mark the anniversary of the end of the Second World War, including the Joint Party and Government Declaration on the 40th anniversary. It contained the following passage: "The war forced on the Soviet Union the loss of twenty-million of its sons and daughters. No family remained unsinged by the flames of war ... The harsh and instructive lessons of the war cannot be forgotten."¹¹⁴

The framework for future Soviet control over Eastern Europe was established during the wartime Allied conferences at Teheran, Moscow, and Yalta. Stalin justified his interest in the region by stressing the strategic importance of Eastern Europe to Soviet security. At each meeting, he repeatedly emphasized that a "friendly" Eastern Europe was vital to the future well-being of the Soviet Union.

The Teheran Conference of November 1943 essentially divided Europe into two exclusive zones of operation, with the Anglo-American forces in the West and the Soviet army in the East.¹¹⁵ The conference also exposed the lack of a

¹¹⁴ See Pravda, 10 May 1985.

¹¹⁵ For a more detailed examination of the Teheran Conference see Paul D. Mayle, Eureka Summit: Agreement in Principle and the Big Three at Teheran, 1943 (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1987); and Robert Beitzell (ed), Tehran, Yalta, Potsdam: The Soviet Protocols (Hattiesburg: Academic International, 1970). For a personal account of the wartime conferences, see Winston S. Churchill, The Second World War (Boston: Houghton Mifflin,

united Allied policy regarding a realistic compromise between the USSR's security concerns and the legitimate interests of the East European states. The question as to the fate of Poland, for example, was a major topic of Allied discord.¹¹⁶ There was a long-standing animosity between the Poles and the Russians, which was further aggravated by the secret Nazi-Soviet agreement of 1939 partitioning Poland, the Soviet invasion and annexation of eastern Poland, and the debate over the position of the Polish-Soviet frontier.¹¹⁷ At the same time, the United States and Great Britain essentially lacked the power to deny Stalin his goals; indeed, they believed that the Soviet Union had grounds for its security concerns - as Poland had previously been used as an invasion route - and was owed some type of guarantee.¹¹⁸

1985), particularly Vols.V, VI; and Martin Gilbert, Winston S. Churchill (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1986), particularly Vol.VII.

116 For relations between Poland and the Allies during the Second World War, see Jan Karski, The Great Powers & Poland, 1919-1945: From Versailles to Yalta (New York: University Press of America, 1985).

117 The animosity dated particularly from the repeated partitions of Poland in the late 18th century and the forceful suppression of past uprisings.

For the text of the 1939 agreement see the New York Times, 25 August 1988. Russia revealed the originals of this treaty in October 1992; see Rzeczpospolita, 30 October 1992.

118 See John Lewis Gaddis, The United States and the Origins of the Cold War: 1941-1947 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), pp.137-38.

Moreover, the US and Great Britain needed Soviet military strength to conduct the war and appeared willing to pay a

The decisions made at Teheran, therefore, had a special significance for Eastern Europe, particularly Poland whose frontier was moved westward. The Western Allies had made territorial concessions to the Soviet Union which they believed met Moscow's legitimate security concerns; however, these decisions created a Poland which became dependent on the Soviet Union for its security against Germany.

With Soviet predominance in Eastern Europe becoming increasingly apparent by the middle of 1944, Roosevelt and Churchill sought to reach an accommodation with Stalin. In Moscow on 9 October 1944 Stalin and Churchill reached a secret understanding which essentially allocated spheres of influence. Churchill argued that the "percentages" agreement was the best possible deal he could achieve as most of Eastern Europe was in Soviet hands.¹¹⁹ While Stalin quickly agreed to these terms, there was no proof suggesting that he had expected such an outcome.

price in Eastern Europe to keep Soviet involvement. According to Lord Cadogan, former British Foreign Secretary, the task of defeating Germany remained "so immediate and burdensome", that the allies were forced to cooperate, although such accommodation was expected to be short-lived; see David Dilks (ed), The Diaries of Alexander Cadogan (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1971), p.561.

¹¹⁹ See Churchill, The Second World War, Vol.6 (New York: Bantam, 1962), pp.196-97. When pressed in a conversation with Milovan Djilas about the "percentages" arrangement, Churchill defended himself by stating that the agreement "had to do not with territory but with influence"; see Milovan Djilas, Wartime (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977), p.422.

The Yalta Conference of February 1945 was an attempt to redress some of the decisions made at Teheran and Moscow. In the end, Yalta became more notorious because it produced written documents which seemed to prove the "betrayal" of Poland and a deal with Stalin over Eastern Europe; however, the conference ratified much that had been already accepted. In addition, by the time of Yalta, Soviet influence was well established in Bulgaria and Romania and, to a lesser degree, in Hungary and Poland.¹²⁰

The Yalta agreements committed the three Allied governments to a particular type of political future for Eastern Europe. Although Stalin was already in the region, the Western Allies hoped that the East European countries would be able to decide their own fate. To guarantee this objective, the Allies formulated the "Declaration On Liberated Europe", a document which stated that the three Allies would assist the peoples of liberated Europe.¹²¹

There are differing views regarding the decisions made at Yalta, whether the Western Allies "gave away" Eastern

120 For an analysis of Yalta, see Diane Shaver Clemens, Yalta (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970); and John L. Snell (ed), The Meaning of Yalta: Big Three Diplomacy and the New Balance of Power (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1956).

121 For the text of this and other Yalta documents, see the Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers: The Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945, pp.968-84. These statements represented democratic principles which were largely implemented in 1989.

Europe to Stalin or whether the agreements were made in good faith, but were violated by the Soviet leader.¹²² Some argue that the general principles of Yalta, such as the Declaration On Liberated Europe, held no hint of a partition among the great powers and indeed endorsed the principles of democracy. Others viewed the acceptance of these precepts by Stalin in the face of the occupation of Eastern Europe by the Red Army as a Western victory: therefore, it was Stalin's violation of these principles that led to the Cold War, not the agreements themselves.¹²³ Still others blamed the West for not insisting on the freedom of Eastern Europe and forcing Stalin to comply: Yalta gave the Soviet Union what it wanted and the Western Allies received nothing in return.¹²⁴

The French criticized the decisions made at Yalta because they believed it divided Europe into blocs and represented cynical great power domination of Europe (their criticism might have been attributed to their

122 For a brief survey of these views see Jason DeParle, "The Bitter Legacy of Yalta: Four Decades of What-Ifs," the New York Times, 23 November 1989; and Arthur Schlesinger, "West European Scholars Absolve Yalta," the Wall Street Journal, 16 June 1987.

123 See, for example, Ronald Steel, "Why Yalta Isn't a Dirty Word," the New York Times, 1 December 1989.

124 During a conference in 1988 a Soviet delegation recognized that the Kremlin had violated the Yalta agreement's promise of free elections in East Europe, and that Stalin had imposed communist hegemony on the region; see the Los Angeles Times, July 10, 1988.

exclusion from the conference). Before Yalta, according to the French view, the Western Allies could have tempered the Soviet Union by reaffirming the principles of democracy, self-determination, and human rights while maintaining silence on certain issues such as predominant influence in Eastern Europe. If this French view of Yalta dividing Europe into spheres of influence was correct, then the Soviet interventionist doctrine should not have raised as much objection as it did as a method to ensure the maintenance of this division. The postwar uprisings in Poland and Hungary showed that, although the lines of demarcation had been drawn at Yalta, the Soviet Union lacked confidence that the West would not intervene. In this ambiguity, therefore, the "Brezhnev Doctrine" served to protect Soviet interests in Eastern Europe.

The most likely explanation was that Yalta failed mainly because the agreement rested on the assumption that Stalin and the Western leaders could give the same meaning to words like democracy, sovereignty, or independence.¹²⁵

What Yalta and the earlier agreements demonstrated was that the East European states were considered weak in the arena of international politics. Decisions as to their status were, therefore, left to the great powers. The vulnerability of these states was evident in the

¹²⁵ See, for instance, Jacques Rupnik, The Other Europe (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989), pp.63-108; and W. Averell Harriman and Elie Abel, Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin 1941-1946 (London: Hutchinson, 1976), pp.405-15.

settlement of Versailles.¹²⁶ In the postwar period, the weakness of Eastern Europe again invited great power involvement. Most had to be liberated from Hitler by the Soviet Union: they were politically divided and devastated by war. The East European states lacked self-confidence, and different factions within these countries looked outside for help. Although Eastern Europe belonged to the Soviet sphere of influence, the weakness of the region necessitated military intervention to protect the socialist regimes from "counterrevolution" or outside interference. The Soviet Union could and had to employ, therefore, the "Brezhnev Doctrine" in Eastern Europe because these states were considered weak.

126 For a history of Eastern Europe in the interwar period, see Antony Polonsky, The Little Dictators: The History of Eastern Europe Since 1918 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975); and E. Garrison Walters, The Other Europe: Eastern Europe to 1945 (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1988). Many of the states that emerged asserted their legitimacy by the principle of national self-determination, a vague concept often leading to conflict. In addition, many were endowed with democratic constitutions which were unlikely to be successful in countries with highly divided parliaments. Finally, the Versailles settlement created in these states a reliance on international guarantees.

VII. Maintaining Uniformity in the Satellite System

People's democracies

From the moment that the Red Army started moving across Eastern Europe in 1944, the Soviet leadership was confronted with the problem of defining relations between the USSR and other socialist states. Although Stalin initially might not have envisioned a region of socialist states, he underestimated the opposition he would face from these countries. He saw socialism as the only way of maintaining strict loyalty.

Some scholars, such as Margot Light, argue that although Stalin revealed his desires at the Yalta and Potsdam conferences for a "friendly" Eastern Europe, he did not appear to have had a clear blueprint for the future political systems of those countries. Stalin appeared not to have had doubts about the subordination of the East European countries; there were, however, different methods.¹²⁷ This theory conflicts with Djilas's account of Stalin's views, which stated that the Second World War was different than past conflicts for "whoever occupies territory imposed on it his own social system." This statement implied that Stalin all along intended to socialize Eastern Europe.

¹²⁷ See Light, op. cit., p.159.

Stalin most probably had not foreseen the fortuitous (for the USSR) Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe. Although he may have believed in the eventual spread of socialism, Stalin did not have this immediately in mind. When he stated to Djilas his plans for socialization, Stalin may have been speaking as one "comrade" to another. Or the Soviet leader may have wanted the Yugoslav communists to remain loyal to him. But when control of Eastern Europe became a reality, Stalin may have believed that the only way to subdue the region was to impose a socialist political system.

One alternative pattern which the Soviet Union could have chosen to structure relations was the "Finnish model". The small, non-communist state was tolerated as an independent neighbor despite the fact that its transformation into a satellite might - at certain moments - have seemed possible. During the Soviet-Finnish war of 1939-40, for example, the Soviet Union had taken over large parts of Finnish territory, and Finnish commissars (exiled in the USSR) had formed a new Leninist government. Strong Finnish military resistance, plus the existence of more inviting regions for Russian expansion, went far to explain Russian "restraint". Strategically, control of Finland was less significant to the Soviet Union: since 1945 Germany had ceased to be Russia's great rival in the Baltic and, therefore, the sea was now Soviet-dominated. Second, although communist ideology favored the

acquisition of a new member of the "socialist camp", strategic considerations were not as weighty in the Finnish case as in Poland, Czechoslovakia, or the Balkan States. Finally, the transformation of Finland into a "people's democracy" could have been followed by Sweden's joining the Western alliance, the Marshall Plan, and later NATO, and by its own rapid rearming.¹²⁸

During the 1945-48 period, all the East European states (except East Germany) enjoyed at least a pretense of democracy. The East European communists geared their tactics to national conditions. They proceeded cautiously to establish bases for political control. While there were "Muscovites" (communists who had spent the war in the Soviet Union preparing for the takeover of Eastern Europe) who followed Stalin's dictates, there existed those who hoped to adjust communism to their own national conditions, such as Wladyslaw Gomulka of Poland. For Stalin, however, diversity could be only a transitional state of affairs as it would deprive the Soviet Union of its control over Eastern Europe. What characterized these national communists was not any independent behavior toward the Soviet Union, but what Moscow perceived as a

128 Post-Soviet revelations from Moscow archives emphasized Finnish military resistance as the major reason for its avoidance of satellization; see, for example, John Lukacs, "Finland Vindicated," in Foreign Affairs, Vol. 71, No. 4 (Fall 1992), pp. 50-63. See also Nigel Stephenson, "Eastern Bloc Unrest Casts Different Light on Finland's '39 Winter War with Russia," the Los Angeles Times, 26 November 1989.

preoccupation with the affairs of their own countries.¹²⁹

Until 1948 Soviet theorists searched for a definition to explain the political and economic structures of the countries of Eastern Europe. The theory of "people's democracy" provided the ideological justification for an Eastern Europe which pursue social and economic policies different from the Soviet Union. In Marxist terminology a "people's democracy" had cast off bourgeois rule, thus permitting the beginning of popular reform, but had not yet established the "dictatorship of the proletariat".¹³⁰ Formally, the people's democracies were to be based on mutual recognition of the principles of sovereignty, equality, and noninterference in domestic affairs; in reality, they were at a less advanced stage in the building of communism than the Soviet Union, giving the latter an ideological excuse for the control of the former.¹³¹

By the spring of 1948, however, Stalin began to reassess Soviet relations with Eastern Europe. There was increasing tension between the United States and the Soviet Union. One reason was the Truman Doctrine of 1947, which promised US support for populations resisting subjugation. Although Truman had Turkey and Greece in

129 See Brown, Communist Rule, op. cit., p.5.

130 See J. L. Nogee and R. H. Donaldson, Soviet Foreign Policy Since World War II (New York: Pergamon, 1982), pp.194-95.

131 See Vincent, Nonintervention, op. cit., p.162.

mind, Stalin may not have been certain whether the guarantee also applied to Eastern Europe. Moreover, in the same year the United States offered Eastern Europe participation in the Marshall Plan. According to new evidence, the Marshall Plan caused a comprehensive shift in Soviet strategy: it was viewed as an offensive threat. Stalin believed that the West was trying to encircle the Soviet Union by creating a hostile bloc in Western Europe; and, that Eastern Europe would be open to Western exploitation.¹³² Stalin termed the Marshall Plan a form of Western manipulation, and prevented the satellite states from participating.¹³³

All of these factors influenced Stalin to take a tough stance towards Eastern Europe. Each state was declared a "people's democracy" and the local Communist Party (some of which had evolved before the Second World War their own national character) was effectively "bolshevized". A Stalinist pattern of organization was imposed with collectivization, nationalization of industry, and the introduction of centralized economic control and planning.¹³⁴

132 See Scott D. Parrish and Mikhail M. Narinsky, New Evidence on the Soviet Rejection of the Marshall Plan, 1947: Two Reports, Cold War International History Project (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, March 1994).

133 For details on the communication between the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe on this issue, see *ibid*, pp.41-51.

134 For details, see Rupnik, *op. cit.*, pp.109-28; and Brzezinski, , Soviet Bloc, *op. cit.*, pp.3-64.

Stalin at the same time made certain that the primacy of the Soviet Union remained unchallenged. Moscow's dominant role was stressed repeatedly. Control over the local parties was considered by Stalin one of the prerequisites for maintaining control over the Soviet party.¹³⁵ An independent communist party might have inspired factions in other East European countries to seek independence for their parties. This process may have inspired factions within the CPSU. It also may have led to questions regarding the proper relationship of national Communist Parties to each other, including those between the Soviet republics.

Cominform and the CMEA

The danger of uncontrollable forms of national communism (and possible rivals to Stalin as the leader of the world communist movement) led to the establishment in 1947 of the Communist Information Agency (Cominform). For Stalin, the increasing diversity within the socialist camp had indicated the need for a new organization which would unify the various parties' programs. Such a body would

¹³⁵ See Christopher D. Jones, Soviet Influence in Eastern Europe: Political Autonomy and the Warsaw Pact (New York: Praeger, 1981), p.4.

eliminate excessive commitment to national interest as well as delineating a common ideological approach to theory and practice.¹³⁶ Moreover, the Cominform was to consolidate Soviet control over Eastern Europe and to mobilize resistance to the Marshall Plan in Western Europe.¹³⁷

At its formal inauguration, Andrei Zhdanov - then the Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee assigned to work with foreign communists - outlined his famous "two camp doctrine". He asserted that the world was divided into the imperialist, anti-democratic camp and the anti-fascist camp. The imperialist camp, led by the United States, was conspiring for world supremacy and dividing mankind into different blocs. The anti-fascist camp, led by the Soviet Union, had to fight this threat through "mutual consultation and voluntary coordination of action".¹³⁸ The statements by Zhdanov implied a doctrinal view of Eastern Europe: the bloc countries belonged in a different category from other states; and, they had a messianic duty to defend international communism against "imperialist" encroachments. Stalin's personal prestige and power, and

136 See Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit., pp.58-59.

137 New material from the CPSU archives reveals that both Stalin and Andrei Zhdanov organized the Cominform primarily as a response to the perceived threat presented by the Plan; see Parrish and Narinsky, op. cit., pp.32-38.

138 Andrei Zhdanov, "The International Situation," For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy, No.1 (10 November 1947), pp.2-4.

the presence of Soviet forces in many East European countries reduced the need for a doctrine justifying intervention.

Another method of maintaining ideological unity was the creation of the Council of Economic Mutual Assistance (CMEA). It was formed in Moscow in January 1949 as a response to the Marshall Plan, as well as the defection of Yugoslavia in 1948. For almost a decade after the war the economies of the satellite states remained under the tight control of the Soviet Union. The East European countries were discouraged from developing economic links among themselves. Most major business transactions had to be cleared through Moscow. In addition, the ruble was introduced as the standard currency for transactions within the bloc; Moscow was the ultimate arbiter of the rates of exchange. The CMEA, however, did not assume during Stalin's lifetime a major role in the direct management or planning of the economic life of the region.¹³⁹

Bilateral treaties

Uniformity and compliance were also maintained through

¹³⁹ Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit., pp.128-29.

bilateral treaties.¹⁴⁰ These political agreements usually took the form of "Agreements on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance". The treaties fell into two categories: the treaties which linked the East European states to the Soviet Union; and those between the various countries themselves.

The treaty agreements contained various features. First, they provided not only for cooperation and consultation on all important international questions of mutual concern, but also defensive alliances committing the signatories to come to the aid of the attacked party. Second, all of the treaties emphasized the determination of the signatories to assist each other in case of external attack by a rearmed Germany or its ally. This anti-German orientation of the defense treaties effectively played on the vivid memories of the East Europeans who had suffered under German occupation and supplied one of the very few popular aspects of the treaties. This was particularly the case with the Soviet-Polish treaty, which gave formal protection to the Oder-Neisse line. Moreover, the Soviet bloc was to be based on bilateral agreements only: signatories were prohibited

140 For the texts, see US State Department, Documents and State Papers, Vol.1, No.4 (Washington, DC: GPO, April 1948), nos.12,13 (1949); for their significance, see Piotr S. Wandycz, "The Soviet System of Alliances in East Central Europe," Journal of Central European Affairs, Vol.XVI, No.2 (July 1956), pp.177-84.

from entering into other alliances opposed by either party (with the exception of the United Nations).

Nothing in the agreements, however, sanctioned either Soviet leadership or direct Soviet interference in the domestic affairs of the allied states; indeed, the treaties stressed conformity to the principles of the United Nations. In addition, all the agreements mentioned noninterference in the internal affairs of the signatories. Moreover, while the treaties espoused respect for state sovereignty, there was no mention of other principles - such as socialist internationalism - which were equal to or indicated a higher status than "sovereignty".

Political purges and show trials

Stalin sought to eliminate the "revisionists" within the East European Communist Parties. The defection of Yugoslavia precipitated a search for national deviationists throughout the region, culminating in the late 1940s and early 1950s in a number of show trials. The people involved in these purges were largely communists who had preferred to remain in their native countries during the war. Their crime, in Stalin's eyes,

was that they were not entirely under his control.¹⁴¹

The purges resulted in the separation of the East European elites from their populations. They created within those countries permanent sources of tension and instability.

Tito's challenge to bloc unity

One of the main reasons for the initiation of uniformity was the Soviet-Yugoslav "split". According to Brown, while the Cominform was to halt "domesticism" in the Eastern bloc, the break with Tito moved Stalin "from persuasion to compulsion."¹⁴² Ironically, Yugoslavia - the first party-state to be established outside the USSR - was also the first to break away from the Soviet orbit. The "split" shattered the myth of communist unity almost before the socialist bloc itself had been established, setting both a precedent and a level of aspiration for other states.¹⁴³

A tenet of Stalin's thinking had been that no second

141 See Jiri Pelikan (ed), The Czechoslovak Political Trials 1950-1954: The Suppressed Report of the Dubcek Government's Commission of Inquiry, 1968 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1971). An account of Wladyslaw Gomulka's removal from power with new evidence from Moscow archives can be found in an article by Andrzej Paczkowski, "Unified and Purified," Gazeta Wyborcza, 18-19 December 1993.

142 Brown, Communist Rule, op. cit., p.5.

143 See *ibid*, p.6.

socialist power of equal rank with the Soviet Union was to be tolerated. There were several interrelated reasons why Stalin acted against Tito. First, the Soviet leader was concerned that one or more independent East European parties could revive the possibility of factionalism within the CPSU. Stalin also feared that other East European elites could attempt to follow Tito's example. The Yugoslav leader's success could have demonstrated that if a communist party wanted to rule as an independent party, it would have to come to power by its own military means. (The Yugoslav communists, unlike their counterparts in many other countries, could plausibly claim that they had won power at the end of the war largely by their own exertions, and with relatively little help from the Soviet Union.)¹⁴⁴ In addition, the Yugoslav communists viewed their task as that of constructing a socialist society in Yugoslavia. They were no longer willing to cede control to Moscow.¹⁴⁵

Tito's independent approach set him apart from the other East European leaders. His actions reflected Yugoslav self-confidence. Ironically, prior to his

144 See Adam B. Ulam, Titoism and the Cominform (Westport: Greenwood, 1971), pp.34-35.

145 Stalin feared that other countries of the region could imitate Tito and develop, for example, their own defensive doctrines; see Adam Roberts, Nations in Arms: The Theory and Practice of Territorial Defence (London: Macmillan, 1988), pp.137-217; and Jones, Soviet Influence, op. cit., pp. 79-83.

"excommunication", Tito and the Yugoslav Communist Party (CPY) did not pursue policies distinct from the Soviet line. Indeed, Yugoslavia had, in Brzezinski's words, "the most orthodox, the most Stalinist, the most Soviet type of regime in East Europe."¹⁴⁶ Tito's transgression was that he was more Stalinist than Stalin himself; he was seen by the Soviet leader as a rival.¹⁴⁷

Accusations against the CPY had been made in private (in three letters from the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party of 27 March, 4 May and 22 May 1948), and then publicly in the Cominform communiqué of 28 June 1948: it announced the expulsion of the Yugoslav Communist Party.¹⁴⁸ The language used in the communiqué contained elements similar in content to the Soviet interventionist doctrine:

The Information Bureau unanimously concludes that by their anti-Party, and anti-Soviet views, incompatible with Marxism-Leninism, by their whole attitude and their refusal to attend the meeting of the Information Bureau, the leaders of the Communist Party of

¹⁴⁶ Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit., p.55.

¹⁴⁷ Tensions between Stalin and Tito had been evident during the Second World War. In the early years, for example, the Soviet leader offered little support to the partisans and was displeased that they had proceeded to establish new forms of authority against his will; see Dedijer, op. cit., pp.170-71.

¹⁴⁸ See the text of Cominform Resolution of June 1948 in Robert V. Daniels (ed), A Documentary History of Communism, Vol.2 (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1987), pp.156-58.

Yugoslavia have placed themselves in opposition to the Communist Parties affiliated to the Information Bureau, have taken the path of seceding from the united Socialist front against imperialism, have taken the path of betraying the cause of international solidarity of the working people, and have taken up a position of nationalism.¹⁴⁹

Stalin also pursued several policies and practices associated with the doctrine. He tried to overthrow Tito and waged an intensive propaganda campaign. Soviet agents also attempted to establish a Stalinist group within the Yugoslav Party, while other socialist parties were ordered to isolate Tito.¹⁵⁰ Military tactics were also used, although no outright intervention was employed. Bulgaria and Albania provoked border incidents, and in 1949 nine Soviet divisions coalesced on the Yugoslav border.¹⁵¹

Stalin, however, underestimated the broad basis of Tito's support or the force of Yugoslav nationalism. Moreover, from 1949 on Yugoslavia secured various kinds of

149 Ibid, p.157.

150 See Ulam, op. cit., pp.117-25.

151 See Vladimir Dedijer, The Battle Stalin Lost: Memoirs of Yugoslavia 1948-1953 (New York: Viking, 1970), pp.212-14.

Intervention, however, was unlikely as the Soviet Union could have concluded that Tito appeared to have the means and intent to resist Soviet military action. In addition, Stalin might have been unwilling to incur the cost of major fighting and casualties, the prospect of serious long-term resistance, and the risk that the United States would airlift military aid to Yugoslavia (the West had recently defeated the Berlin blockade, and in April 1949 the North Atlantic Treaty had been signed).

support from the West.¹⁵² These agreements showed the success of an independent socialist country in pursuing and developing military and economic ties with non-socialist countries. They conveyed the message that if a socialist state left the Soviet bloc, it could develop military and economic ties with other states. This impression, therefore, made the Soviet interventionist doctrine all the more important: it would prevent other socialist countries from imitating Tito.

VIII. Evolution of the Socialist Bloc: Death of Stalin, "Reintroduction" of Tito, De-Stalinization

The imposed unity in the satellite bloc was maintained until the period between 1953 and 1956, when a number of events challenged the cohesion of the bloc: the death of Stalin, the apparent "reintroduction" of Tito into the socialist bloc, and Khrushchev's "secret speech" to the Twentieth Congress.

Under Stalin Soviet-satellite relations were to have

¹⁵² Economic aid from the British, French and American governments was due mostly to the Cominform economic embargo which compelled it to trade with capitalist states. In addition, in May 1951 the first shipment of American arms went to Yugoslavia; see Peter Calvocoressi, Survey of International Affairs, 1951 (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp.240-52.

been based on socialist internationalism; in reality, however, the Soviet Union dominated the region. Although Stalin's death did not lead to the immediate disintegration of the bloc, it did deprive the people's democracies with what Brzezinski has called "the crucial psychological ingredient of terror".¹⁵³

Initially, the new Soviet leadership sought to maintain continuity with the past. At the same time, they attempted to develop solutions to a variety of domestic and external problems. Through Malenkov's New Course Moscow hoped to resolve economic problems of the bloc without disrupting its political structure; however, increased economic liberalization stimulated a desire for political freedom. Economic reforms exposed the fallibility of communist party leaders who could make serious policy errors and be held responsible for them. Soviet responses in the initial period, therefore, reflected reactions to the instability caused by Stalin's death, rather than an indication of a new formula for Soviet-East European relations.

Another contributing factor to the erosion of the Stalinist system was the apparent "re-introduction" of Tito into the socialist community, followed shortly thereafter by the dissolution of the Cominform. In the Belgrade Declaration of 2 June 1955 the Soviet Union and

¹⁵³ Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit., p.155.

Yugoslavia agreed to observe "respect for sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, and for equality between the states in their mutual relations and in relations with other states", as well as "Mutual respect and non-interference in internal affairs for any reason."¹⁵⁴ Significantly, the rapprochement with Tito of June 1955 occurred just after the conclusion of the Warsaw Treaty. The conclusion of the treaty appeared to suggest that Yugoslavia, not being a party to the agreement, had a unique status within the socialist community. Yugoslavia was not reintroduced into the socialist community: it was a Soviet-Yugoslav rapprochement.

One year later in the Moscow Declaration of 20 June 1956, the two parties affirmed the principle of different roads to socialism. Khrushchev, in his address before the Twentieth Party Congress in February 1956, endorsed the idea of "many roads to socialism".¹⁵⁵ These events demonstrated Soviet tolerance of Tito's road to socialism and, in effect, renounced the USSR's claim to infallibility.

A third cause was the campaign of de-Stalinization introduced by Khrushchev at the Twentieth Party Congress.

¹⁵⁴ Full text in Stephen Clissold (ed) Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, 1939-1973: A Documentary Survey (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp.254-57.

¹⁵⁵ N. S. Khrushchev, Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the 20th Party Congress (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1956), pp.41-42.

He questioned how the "cult of Stalin's personality" became a source of "exceedingly serious and grave perversions" of party principles.¹⁵⁶

There has been much speculation over Khrushchev's purpose for the secret speech and the enunciation of "many roads to socialism" as it would inevitably lead to a certain degree of upheaval and confusion in the socialist world. One explanation was that Khrushchev wanted to strengthen his leadership within the party. Brzezinski attributes Khrushchev's denunciation to his desire "to shake the Stalinist orientation prevailing among many party members at home and abroad" and to "destroy the myth of Stalin's infallibility."¹⁵⁷ Khrushchev, therefore, would be able to be selective in deciding which aspects of Stalin's legacy should be retained from those that represented a "moribund past".¹⁵⁸

Khrushchev, however, had underestimated the impact on the "commonwealth" of his secret speech. There was a profound loss of faith in both Marxism-Leninism and within the CPSU, which reverberated throughout the world socialist community. Khrushchev lost for himself and the

156 "Speech of Khrushchev at the Twentieth Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union," 25 February 1956; English translation in Current Soviet Policies, II, pp.36-38.

157 Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit., p.182.

158 For Khrushchev's explanation of the speech, see Strobe Talbott (ed), Khrushchev Remembers (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1970), pp.342-53.

CPSU much of the moral authority which had previously been accorded.¹⁵⁹ In addition, particularly in countries with Stalinist leaders, Khrushchev's revelations posed a major threat: the East European elites had ruled their countries according to Stalin's dictates.¹⁶⁰

Khrushchev devised a policy in which greater national diversity would be permitted within the realm of ideological unification. The Soviet leader was, however, willing to use force if the satellite countries (particularly those of vital strategic importance) took their "ideological sovereignty" too seriously. The Warsaw Treaty Organization, as will be discussed below, was to be the necessary instrument of control. Khrushchev was not proposing to abandon Soviet primacy, but to base it upon a more acceptable and, hence, durable basis.

The Soviet leader also pursued policies of what Brown has termed "viability" and "cohesion".¹⁶¹ Viability meant a degree of confidence, credibility, and efficiency that would increasingly legitimize communist rule in the East European states and, consequently, reduce the need for Soviet preoccupation with the area. Cohesion, on the other hand, allowed for some degree of diversity caused by

159 See Light, op. cit., p.174.

160 See R. A. Remington, The Warsaw Pact: Case Studies in Communist Conflict Resolution (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1971), p.29.

161 See J. F. Brown, Relations Between the Soviet Union and its Eastern European Allies: A Survey (Santa Monica: Rand, 1975), pp.10-15 and 42-43.

differing local conditions; however, general conformity remained in both domestic and foreign policy.

IX. Institutional and Ideological Instruments of Soviet Control

Institutional ties:

the Warsaw Treaty Organization and CMEA

The most important organ binding the East European states together was the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO). When the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was created in 1949, the Soviet Union made no immediate effort to create a formal military alliance. In terms of military security the Soviet Union was able to match the conventional military capability of NATO. It exercised a high degree of control in Eastern Europe, particularly through the bilateral treaties. The Warsaw Pact was created in response to plans to rearm and incorporate the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) into the Western Alliance. The preamble to the Warsaw Treaty cited as "casus foederis" the existence of a "remilitarized Western Germany" and its integration into the "north Atlantic bloc".¹⁶²

¹⁶² Text in New Times, Vol.21, (21 May 1955).

The Warsaw Pact's dual purpose was: to establish a legal framework for the stationing of Soviet troops on members' territory; and, to prevent the participants from joining other military alliances. These stipulations were particularly significant in light of other developments within that short time period of 1955: the incorporation of West Germany as a member of NATO (5 May); the formation of the Warsaw Pact (14 May); the signing of the Austrian State Treaty (15 May); and, the convening of the Geneva Four Power Summit (18-23 July) outlining the postwar order. For the Soviet Union these events helped to clarify the boundaries of Eastern Europe. Significantly, the Belgrade Declaration of 2 June was signed two weeks after the creation of the Warsaw Pact. This appeared to suggest that Yugoslavia was considered outside Moscow's military interests. It also conveyed to other East European countries that they were not like Yugoslavia and could not defect. At the time the West paid little attention to this development as Eastern Europe was viewed as a monolithic unit.

The signing of the WTO provided for the continued presence of Soviet troops in Hungary and Romania. The conclusion of the Austrian State Treaty would have obligated the Soviet Union to withdraw its troops from Austria, thereby eliminating the justification for troops presence on the grounds of protection of Soviet supply

lines to Austria.¹⁶³ Moscow, therefore, needed an agreement to ensure its military presence in Hungary and Romania. Some observers have argued that the Warsaw Treaty was signed one day before the Austrian State Treaty for this reason.¹⁶⁴

In addition, the Warsaw Pact was to create an impression of equality with NATO: indeed, the treaty was designed after the Western model. In the preamble to the Treaty, for example, the Contracting Parties desired the "further promoting and developing friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance in accordance with the principles of respect for the independence and sovereignty of states and of noninterference in their internal affairs". Moreover, Article 1 stated that the Contracting Parties "undertake, in accordance with the UN Charter, to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force".¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³ Text in United States Treaties and Other International Agreements 1955, Vol.6 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1956), p.2417.

¹⁶⁴ See, for example, Bela Kiraly, "Why the Soviets Need the Warsaw Pact," East Europe No.4 (1969), pp.8-9. In addition, further agreements between the USSR and the East European countries, such as the 1957 Soviet-Hungarian Treaty, were signed legalizing the stationing of Soviet troops. The latter, however, was an ex post facto agreement as Soviet troops were already in Hungary; nevertheless, the document might have been signed to further emphasize Soviet army presence after the 1956 uprising. Text of the Soviet-Hungarian Treaty in the United Nations Treaty Series (UNTS), No.407, p.155.

¹⁶⁵ For the complete text, see Remington, op. cit., pp.201-06.

Though the treaty provided for Soviet fraternal help against outside aggression, there was no mention of aid to preserve the internal status quo (such as in Hungary and Czechoslovakia). Moreover, it did not contain any hints or foretaste of the Soviet interventionist doctrine. Key phrases of the doctrine, such as "socialist internationalism", "fraternal obligations", or defense against the "threat of counterrevolution" were not found in the text.

The Treaty came to be used as a significant instrument of control and coordination. During the 1956 Hungarian crisis, for example, the Soviet Union used Nagy's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact as a pretext for intervening unilaterally. In the 1968 Prague Spring the members of the Warsaw Pact played a more active role, issuing the "Warsaw Letter" and participating in an invasion.

A second organ for maintaining unity was the CMEA, which facilitated the economic integration of Eastern Europe. Originally, Stalin had used the organization as a symbolic facade to parallel the Marshall Plan as well as an instrument of boycott against Yugoslavia. Under Khrushchev in the late 1950s the CMEA was revitalized and underwent a period of gradual upgrading. Economic and technical cooperation between the member countries was deepened, the national plans coordinated, and the

international division of labor improved.¹⁶⁶

Ideological cohesion:

the "Commonwealth of Socialist States"

The lack of ideological unity and the process of de-Stalinization culminated in the collapse of cohesion within the bloc. The "Octobers of 1956" were partially the result of an ideological void. Through the concept of a "Commonwealth of Socialist States", Khrushchev attempted to combine ideological unity with limited national diversity and independence. In Soviet terms, the "Commonwealth of Socialist States" indicated an association of friendship.¹⁶⁷ Foreign and defense policies were relegated to Moscow's discretion with the "dominions" given a degree of domestic autonomy. Moreover, the socialist commonwealth was viewed as an international entity to which general international law did not apply. It was a genuine mutual benefit association, founded on the five principles of socialist internationalism - complete equality, respect for

¹⁶⁶ For further discussion, see Brown, Communist Rule, op. cit., pp.145-47.

¹⁶⁷ See Kurt L. London, "The Socialist Commonwealth of Nations: Pattern for Communist World Organization," Orbis, Vol.III, No.4 (Winter 1960).

territorial integrity, state independence and sovereignty, and noninterference in one another's affairs. Membership in the commonwealth was compulsory despite explicit Soviet references to the voluntariness of the union.

The CPSU declared in 1955:

A new, socialist type of international relations arose with the formation of the commonwealth of socialist states. These are relations of fully equal rights, genuine friendship, fraternal co-operation in the sphere of politics, economics and culture, and mutual assistance in the building of a new life. These relations are determined by the nature of the social-economic system of the countries of the socialist camp; by the unity of their fundamental interests and ultimate great aim, the building of communism; and by the single Marxist-Leninist world view of the communist and workers parties.¹⁶⁸

The 30 October 1956 Declaration provided a definition of the socialist commonwealth.¹⁶⁹ Although there was no direct reference to Soviet primacy, there were allusions to the Soviet Union as being "primus inter pares". In an editorial in Kommunist, for example, the domestic construction of socialism in the USSR was inherently linked with the general problem of the socialist commonwealth, "headed by the Soviet Union", since it involved a continuous search for theoretical formulations

¹⁶⁸ Kommunist, No.14 (1955).

¹⁶⁹ Pravda, 31 October 1956.

to guide the patterns of development and to bind the socialist states in true proletarian internationalism.¹⁷⁰ Khrushchev did not abandon Soviet primacy, but attempted to place it on a new and firm basis.

The world socialist system, therefore, was to be a united bloc where individual interests were subordinated to the whole. "The world camp of socialism," one Soviet theorist explained in 1958, "is a monolithic commonwealth of free and sovereign states with common interests and purposes, in which there is not and cannot be antagonism."¹⁷¹ According to E. Korovin, "the participants in the great commonwealth of socialist nations" through "consolidation and unity of the socialist countries" can best guarantee "their national independence and sovereignty."¹⁷²

There were, however, deficiencies and problems evident in this concept. The Hungarian crisis, in particular, demonstrated what Khrushchev meant by a socialist commonwealth: national roads to communism within limits; maintenance of Soviet primacy; ideological unity; and, the subordination of independent state interests to that of the entire bloc.

¹⁷⁰ Kommunist, No.14 (1955), p.127.

¹⁷¹ S. Sanakoyev, "The Basis of Relations Between the Socialist Countries," International Affairs (Moscow), No.7 (1958), p.27.

¹⁷² E. Korovin, "Proletarian Internationalism in World Relations" International Affairs (Moscow), No.2 (1958), pp.26-28.

X. Diversity in Eastern Europe

The countries of socialist Eastern Europe were diverse: they varied according to nationality, culture, religion, and historical experience. Moreover, the Soviet Union did not view or treat them in a uniform manner. For example, certain East European countries were historically sympathetic toward the Soviet Union (Bulgaria), some felt no particular animosity (Czechoslovakia), few depended on Moscow for their very existence (East Germany), while others were often antagonistic (Poland). Certain East European states were "loyalty" or obedient to the Soviet Union (East Germany and Bulgaria). One state - Poland - was strategically important to the USSR, but a challenge to subdue. Another country - Romania - exhibited maverick behavior toward Moscow, but was of lesser strategic importance than Czechoslovakia.

Of all the countries in the region, Poland was treated by successive Soviet leaders as a special case. Historically, Russia - and later the Soviet Union - played a role in the partitions of Poland in 1772, 1793, 1795, and 1939; it was invaded by or through Poland in 1610, 1709, 1812, and 1941. Strategically, Polish roads and railroads carried military and commercial traffic between the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union. Poland had the largest territory of all the East European states, and was the most populous with 37 million. Its

armed forces were second only in size to those of the Soviet Union. Politically, Poland was the first bloc country to create its own national communism (with the exception of Yugoslavia), to de-collectivized agriculture, and to permit the Catholic Church to play a prominent role. Most importantly, Poland had avoided Soviet armed intervention during various crises: in 1956, 1970, 1976, 1980, and eventually 1989. On each occasion the Polish party leadership was able to convince Moscow of its control over its domestic problems. "In terms of consistent, sustained rejection by the great part of Polish society of Communist attempts at domination over the years, a period during which this rejection has spilled over into violence several times, there is no record elsewhere in East Europe to match that of Poland."¹⁷³ The combination of all of these factors enabled Poland to have greater bargaining leverage than other East European states.

There were several factors which the Soviet Union appeared to take into consideration during a crisis. The strategic importance of a country appeared to make intervention more likely. Hungary and Czechoslovakia, for instance, were considered strategically important states and were invaded: but their military importance was only

¹⁷³ See J. F. Brown, "The Significance of Poland," in Lawrence L. Whetten (ed), The Present State of Communist Internationalism (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1983), p.130.

one element in that decision. Poland, on the other hand, was also considered strategically important, but it avoided a military intervention. Another factor was the reliability and determination of an East European political leadership to resolve the crisis on its own.

Different crises, therefore, required different responses from Moscow. These responses were generally influenced by historic relations, strategic importance, political reliability, and ideological commitment.

The communist elites of Eastern Europe were not a homogenous group with uniform methods of governing. They represented diverse interests and employed different methods of rule. Ultimately they had to remain loyal to Moscow and the preservation of a socialist system. Moreover, the "autonomy" of the elites depended to a certain degree on the attitudes of the Soviet leadership. Under Stalin the local elites were kept under tight control; with Khrushchev, however, that grip was relaxed and national communism was permitted within limits. If an East European party maintained control, some "deviation" was possible, especially if linked to the continuation of domestic stability.

The East European elites were subject to pressures from above and from below: they faced a constant dilemma of choosing either to follow Moscow's guidelines or placating their populations. Most regimes attempted to do both: follow Soviet guidance in political and economic structure

and foreign policy, while appeasing the masses by raising living standards - such as Edward Gierek's consumerism in the 1970s or Kadar's "ghoulash communism". Moreover, the leaders chosen by Moscow generally were more dependent on their patron than others because of their lack of domestic support.¹⁷⁴ Maintaining an equilibrium between nationalism and allegiance to Moscow resulted in the regimes encountering frequent crises of legitimacy.¹⁷⁵

The East European elites, however, also had some bargaining power. The Soviet Union had a vested interest in these countries remaining socialist: the region was important for defensive purposes; and, instability in one country could infect the rest of the bloc. Valerie Bunce argued that the weaker the elites in regard to their own societies, the greater their bargaining power with the USSR over economic subsidies, freedom of religious practice, and autonomy for small-scale independent farmers or artisans.¹⁷⁶ The Soviet Union, therefore, had to pay a price for political stability.¹⁷⁷ In addition,

174 See Bialer, Soviet Paradox, op. cit., p.199.

175 See Joni Lovenduski and Jean Woodall, Politics and Society in Eastern Europe (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), pp.173-204.

176 See Valerie Bunce, "The Empire Strikes Back: The Evolution of the Eastern Bloc from a Soviet Liability," International Organization, Vol.39, No.1 (Winter 1985), p.11.

177 It helped finance increases in public consumption, provided relatively cheap primary products, allowed some deterioration in Soviet terms of trade, and extended emergency and non-repayable aid. See Paul Marer, "The

"subservient" elites, such as Todor Zhivkov, gained concessions in return for their loyalty.

East European elites who faced crises could request help from the Soviet leadership, claiming that local dissent could infect Ukraine or the Baltic States.¹⁷⁸ Or an East European leader could force Moscow to choose between concession or the use of military power (as in the case of Gomulka in 1956). A regime could also increase its involvement with a Western power to gain a degree of independence (as in the case of Czechoslovakia and the Federal Republic of Germany in 1968), or take advantage of Soviet preoccupation with domestic matters (such as during 1988-89). Moscow, on the other hand, could replace a satellite leader that no longer was effective, whether by supporting a rival leader or faction. Sometimes the threat of intervention put enough pressure on a local party to change its leadership. Or the Kremlin's unwillingness to intervene to save a leader could seal his fate, as Gomulka learned in 1970.

Therefore, in the relationship between the Soviet Union and the East European political elites there was a degree of "push and pull". Both sides were constrained in dealing with each other. Both feared that events would

Political Economy of Soviet Relations with Eastern Europe," in Steven J. Rosen and James R. Kurth (eds), Testing Theories of Economic Imperialism (Lexington: Heath, 1974), pp.231-60.

¹⁷⁸ Bunce, op. cit., p.12.

push them into situations of crisis mutually undesired. Moscow wanted the socialist regimes to be viable; however, such viability depended on popular support. When such support was missing, then both Moscow and the local elites faced tension and difficult choices.¹⁷⁹

XI. Conclusion

The Soviet interventionist doctrine evolved in a number of stages. The origins were found in traditional Russian interest in Eastern Europe as well as Lenin's theory of proletarian internationalism. In the second phase, Stalin oversaw the creation of a socialist bloc, and the promotion of the Soviet Union as the only legitimate ideological model. Satellite compliance was maintained through terror and the threat of military force.

The third stage was marked by a sense of uncertainty, resulting from the death of Stalin, the process of de-Stalinization, and Khrushchev's secret speech. During this time, the certainty of military intervention by the Kremlin to prevent satellite divergence began to be questioned. The fourth phase saw Khrushchev's realization

179 See John C. Campbell, "Soviet Policy in Eastern Europe: An Overview," in Sarah Meiklejohn Terry (ed), Soviet Policy in Eastern Europe (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), pp.24-26.

of the need to build viable relations while at the same time maintaining unity. Along with the concept of a "socialist commonwealth", he initiated institutional ties to curtail deviation; however, the Soviet leader soon discovered, particularly with the events in Poland and Hungary, the need to delineate the limits of liberalization.

The evolution of the Soviet interventionist doctrine seemed to reflect uncertainty and tension within the bloc, rather than confidence and strength. As Moscow's grip on the region loosened, dissent increased as well as nationalist tendencies. The Kremlin's varied responses to these developments - from verbal warnings to military intervention - revealed Soviet concerns and insecurity over how to dominate Eastern Europe.

Soviet foreign policy toward Eastern Europe, including the Soviet interventionist doctrine, was influenced by a number of factors. First, ideology played a role. The importance of ideology was evident under Stalin when he occupied Eastern Europe and insisted that it be "socialized". After his death, Khrushchev introduced the concept of a socialist commonwealth to unify the bloc and retain Soviet control.

Second, domestic factors - such as nationality problems and leadership struggles - affected how Moscow reacted to crises within the bloc. Third, the countries of Eastern Europe were not a homogenous group treated uniformly by

Moscow; rather, certain countries were viewed as strategically more important, historically more obedient, or politically more reliable than others. This perception was particularly important in times of crisis, and for the Soviet interventionist doctrine. Yugoslavia appeared to be categorized as being "outside" the socialist commonwealth: it had "broken" away from the bloc and had not been included in the Warsaw Pact.

Fourth, the "push and pull" relationship between the Soviet state and the East European elites also affected Soviet foreign policy. The Kremlin desired a stable and viable socialist bloc where the local elites resolved crises on their own. The East European political leaders, on the other hand, needed Moscow's political, economic, and military support, particularly when "nationalist" aspirations spun out of control. Both Moscow and the East European elites realized, therefore, that their interests were bound with each other.

Finally, the major issue influencing foreign policy under Stalin and successive Soviet leaders was security. Eastern Europe was "sovietized" to serve as a buffer against invasion. Moreover, there was fear that any crisis in the bloc could spread to the border republics of the Soviet Union, thus threatening its cohesion. Furthermore, any Soviet policy failure in Eastern Europe - such as the successful separation of a bloc country - could undermine the CPSU's right to rule within the

"socialist community" and the USSR. The security of the Soviet Union, therefore, rested on the continuation of a cohesive socialist bloc in Eastern Europe.

There were certain similarities and differences between Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe and that of France and the United States in their respective spheres. The Soviet Union sought Eastern Europe primarily to prevent other hegemonies from establishing predominance; moreover, it wanted to prevent other powers from using the region as an invasion route. Like France and the US, the USSR dominated Eastern Europe in the name of a higher principle, that of "socialism". Moscow saw the bloc also as vital to its status as a great power. The Soviet Union also dominated its sphere of influence through political, economic, and military means. It had, like France and the US, historic precedents for involvement in its region. Moscow's interference was both explicit and implicit; its policies were not constant or rigid, but evolved or loosened over time.

The Soviet Union also had developed a specific doctrine - the Soviet interventionist doctrine - to unify, maintain, and justify its hegemony. Moreover, it was the sole interpreter of how the doctrine was defined and utilized. Finally, like France and the US, the Soviet state was constrained in its behavior toward Eastern Europe. As will be seen in the following chapters, military force was employed during crises, but it was not

habitual. It was implemented occasionally, and then with reluctance. Moreover, Moscow also was constrained in the amount of force that it could employ: it had a nuclear capability, but used only conventional weaponry. The Kremlin appeared to be aware of the high political cost of military intervention. It attempted to legitimize its interventions by gaining the collective assent of the East European states.

There were, however, important differences between the three hegemons. The Soviet Union, for example, gave domestic considerations less attention when making decisions than France or the United States. Eastern Europe was strategically more important to the Soviet Union than Latin America to the US or Africa to France: the latter two had not historically been invaded through their spheres.

In addition, francophone Africa and Latin America looked to France and the United States for guidance regarding "democracy". The countries of Eastern Europe, on the other hand, viewed themselves as culturally superior to the Soviet Union. "Eurafrique" and the Monroe Doctrine were originally visionary concepts, rather than doctrines of "fraternal assistance". While the Monroe Doctrine excluded other great powers, the Soviet interventionist doctrine was designed to control the domestic policies of Eastern Europe. Moreover, the Monroe Doctrine and "Eurafrique" applied to specific areas; the

"Brezhnev Doctrine's" scope was - in theory - unlimited.

The following chapters will examine the development of the Soviet interventionist doctrine and its role during four crises in Eastern Europe: East Germany 1953, Poland and Hungary 1956, and Czechoslovakia 1968. The concluding chapters examine the decline of the doctrine under Brezhnev, and its ultimate demise under Gorbachev.

CHAPTER V

THE EAST GERMAN UPRISING OF 1953

The East German Uprising of June 1953 was one of the first major crises in Eastern Europe and a precursor to the events of 1956.¹ The death of Stalin in March 1953 created uncertainty, both within the USSR and the Eastern bloc, regarding the future course of socialism. A different approach was initiated by Moscow under the "New Course". It, however, exacerbated the existing confusion and inadvertently triggered the East German Uprising. The resulting demonstrations reflected workers' grievances over government policies, but did not develop into a political protest against the Soviet Union. The Uprising did, however, draw the Kremlin's attention to the need for change in Soviet policy toward the region.

This chapter will briefly examine:

- (i) the factors which led to the East German Uprising;

¹ German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, speaking on the 40th anniversary of the revolt, hailed it as the first step to freedom in Communist Eastern Europe; see the International Herald Tribune, 18 June 1993.

(ii) whether there was evidence of the Soviet interventionist doctrine;

(iii) and, the effect of the crisis on Moscow's policy toward the region.

I. Stalinization of the German Democratic Republic

The division of Germany after the Second World War and the establishment of a German socialist state was considered by the Soviet Union as a major coup. It represented the emasculation of German power, a goal which satisfied one of the most basic historical security ambitions of Russia.² Although both East and West viewed the division of Germany as an imperfect solution, it was seen as an effective means of maintaining the status quo in Europe. For the leadership of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), the division of Germany led to the creation of a state which so lacked legitimacy that it was more dependent on the Soviet Union than its East European counterparts. While Poland and Hungary were nations in their own right, the GDR was

² See J. F. Brown, Soviet Relations with the Northern Tier in East Europe (Marina del Rey: European American Institute for Security Research, 1985), pp. 5-9.

essentially the "other" part of Germany whose existence was based solely on its "socialist" nature and Soviet protection.

For Moscow, East Germany served several important functions. Strategically, the GDR was a vital buffer state. Moreover, it provided both ideological and institutional legitimacy for the Soviet political system: it represented the "victorious march" of socialism as a model for the future, as well as a functioning policy adopted by a community of states.³

The process of "Stalinization" was initiated slowly in the German Democratic Republic. In the initial postwar years (up to 1948) Stalin concentrated on a policy of reparations and the laying of a firm foundation for future socialist development. This policy, however, was reversed in 1948-49. The USSR quickly transformed what had been their occupation zone into a people's democracy.⁴ Although there were no show trials in the GDR (as in Hungary and Czechoslovakia), a purge of the party

3 See Angela Stent, "Soviet Policy Toward the German Democratic Republic," in Sarah Meiklejohn Terry (ed) Soviet Policy in Eastern Europe (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), pp. 33-34.

4 One reason for this change was the foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany in September 1949 (the GDR was declared a state one month later in October 1949). With the "settlement" of the German issue Stalin might have felt he had a free hand to consolidate socialism in the GDR.

was begun after the Third Party Congress in July 1950. The Socialist Unity Party of East Germany (SED) was transformed into a party of a "new type".⁵

The height of the Stalinization process was reached at the Second SED Party Conference in July 1952. The meeting was convened after: the West's rejection of the Soviet proposal for German reunification; and, the signing of both the German Treaty and the European Defence Community Treaty of May 1952.⁶ At the conference Walter Ulbricht,

5 Protokoll des III Parteitages, Band 1, p. 21; new party statutes, Band 2, pp.3 07-21. The main focus of the purges was to eliminate those who had emigrated to the West during the Hitler period or who had family in the West; see Carola Stern, Portrat Einer Bolschewistischen Partei (Cologne: Verlag for Politik und Wirtschaft, 1957), pp.118-19; and Ann L. Phillips, Soviet Policy Toward East Germany Reconsidered: The Postwar Decade (Westport: Greenwood, 1986), p.127. In the 1960s, Walter Ulbricht reminisced that there were no political trials in East Germany because the SED "observed Leninist norms of behaviour" and "Beria's people were not allowed into the GDR"; see Irina Shcherbakova, "When Soviet tanks poured into Berlin again: Two days in June 1953," Moscow News, No. 27 (5-12 July 1992). Another reason was that the trials would have been difficult to carry out because of the open border with the West; *ibid.*

6 Stalin had sent a note in March 1952 calling for a united neutral Germany. This appeared to be an attempt by the Soviet leader to prevent the rearming of West Germany and the integration of the latter into the European defense alliance. When the West refused his offer Stalin consolidated his position in the GDR to preclude the possibility of a reunited Germany in an anti-Soviet alliance; see Phillips, *op. cit.*, pp.135-36. Valentin Falin claimed in 1990 (at that time head of the International Department of the CPSU) that the Soviet Union was always opposed to the division of Germany, having "never withdrawn"

Secretary-General of the SED Central Committee, announced that the "antifascist democratic system" was being superseded by "socialist construction" and the establishment of a people's democratic order in East Germany.⁷ One element of this "socialist construction" was an "intensification of the class struggle" against the middle classes, the church, and private industry; it also included the collectivization of agriculture and forced socialization of industry. In addition, the establishment of armed forces was stipulated to defend socialist achievements.

the proposal for a neutral Germany from the 1950s. He blamed Truman for pushing this division so as to create in the Western portion a "front-line bastion in the struggle against communism." See Valentin Falin, "The Collapse of Eastern Europe: Moscow's View," New Perspectives Quarterly, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Spring 1990), p. 24

7 Previously the GDR leadership had maintained that there was no "democratic people's revolution" taking place in East Germany (as in Eastern Europe), but only the establishment of an "anti-Fascist democratic order". This ideological self-restraint was dictated by Stalin, who might have wanted to keep developments, at least nominally, within the framework of the Potsdam Agreement (the accord confirmed the division of Germany into zones of occupation and also provided for joint responsibility for the whole of Germany, envisaging the formation of centralized German institutions). It was only after the rejection by the Western Allies of Stalin's 1952 note that the GDR's leadership felt able to bring the situation it had created into line with its ideological goal of "socialist construction"; see Hans-Joachim Spanger, The GDR in East-West Relations, Adelphi Paper #240 (London: International Institute of Strategic Studies, 1989), pp.6-9.

The effects of these measures on the population and, ultimately, for the regime were disastrous. Peasants who refused to collectivize were persecuted; private businesses were expropriated. Moreover, the formation of an army raised considerable opposition as the memory of war and German militarism was recent. The security police increased their terror tactics, which led to a rise in political prisoners and refugees.⁸ Added to the above hardships were the continuing reparations to the Soviet Union.⁹

II. Introduction of the New Course

Stalin's death reopened the issue of Germany's

8 Between July 1952 and July 1953, for example, a total of 338,896 persons fled from the GDR to the West; see W. E. Griffith (ed), Communism in Europe: Continuity, Change, and the Sino-Soviet Dispute, Vol.2 (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1966), pp.69-70.

9 The total value of reparations is estimated to have been \$16 billion. See Bundesministerium fur innerdeutsche Beziehungen, DDR-handbuch (Koln: Wissenschaft und Politik, 1985), p.1121; David Childs, The GDR: Moscow's German Ally (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), pp.27-29; and Martin McCauley, The German Democratic Republic Since 1945 (London: Macmillan, 1983), pp.54-59.

future and the status of the GDR. Decision-making in the Kremlin shifted to a collective leadership in which Lavrenti Beria and Georgi Malenkov (as moderates and reformers) struggled for power against the Stalinists (such as Vyacheslav Molotov).¹⁰ The uncertainty of the period and the temporary influence of Beria and Malenkov led the Soviet Union to modify its image both at home and abroad. Externally, the new leaders sought to re-establish diplomatic relations and alleviate conflicts in the international sphere. Through these actions Moscow hoped its prestige would be increased and tensions between the great powers reduced. An improvement in the international climate was believed to lead to a solution to the German problem. Malenkov and Beria appeared to have had a new approach to the German problem. There were indications that - at one point - they might have given serious consideration to the "sacrificing" of the GDR.¹¹

10 The Politburo was composed of Nikolay Bulganin, Anastas Mikoyan, and Lazar Kaganovich in addition to Malenkov, Beria, Khrushchev, and Molotov.

11 After the Twenty-second Congress of the CPSU had approved Malenkov's political internment, for example, the SED Central Committee at its Fourteenth Plenum (1961) condemned the "policy of capitulation to imperialism and the surrender of socialism in the GDR represented by Beria and Malenkov." Moreover, Khrushchev declared (in a March 1963 speech) that Beria and Malenkov had urged the SED "to liquidate the GDR as a socialist state ... and to repudiate the goal of building socialism"; see Martin Jaenicke, Der dritte Weg:

The relaxation of tensions abroad would also provide the new leadership with breathing space to pursue the New Course. East Germany was apparently chosen as the first area for the new policy because of its internal difficulties, primarily the exodus of refugees to West Germany. Moreover, the instability within the GDR raised strategic concerns with the country's long open frontier with the West. Moscow, however, did not foresee that the announcement of such changes shortly after the death of Stalin would be regarded by the population as a sign of weakness.¹²

With the Soviet shift to collective leadership and internal reform, a Stalinist Ulbricht no longer served Kremlin interests. Moreover, there was

Die antistalinistische Opposition gegen Ulbricht seit 1953, Pt. 1 (Koln: Neuer Deutscher Verlag, 1964), pp.34, 228, n.42; and Karl W. Fricke, Selbstbehauptung und Widerstand in der Sowjetischen Besatzungszone Deutschlands, in Bonner Berichte Aus Mittel-und Ostdeutschland (Bonn, 1964), p.117. Recent evidence has indicated that one of the charges made at the 2-7 July 1953 Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU was that Beria advocated the creation of a unified Germany; see Izvestia CC-CPSU: 1991, 1:140-214 & 2:141-208; the English translation in the Cold War International History Project Bulletin (Spring 1992), p.16. Because Beria's suggestion for the liquidation of the GDR was not accepted, he settled for a compromise variant which called for a halt to the intensive building of socialism in East Germany; see Shcherbakova, op. cit..

12 See Karl C. Thalheim, "East Germany," in Stephen D.Kertesz (ed), East Central Europe and the World: Developments in the Post-Stalin Era (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1962), pp.64-65.

opposition to Ulbricht within the SED.¹³ The Soviet leadership considered removing Ulbricht in early June, but the uprising frightened the Kremlin into supporting the SED leader rather than risking the "loss" of East Germany.¹⁴ The unresolved leadership struggle in the Soviet Union, however, enabled Ulbricht to ignore Moscow's dictates: he refused to alter his policies and accelerated socialist construction.¹⁵ One particular measure, which would ultimately haunt the SED, was the government order of May 1953 increasing workers' production norms to help alleviate the economic crisis.

Continuing SED intransigence to the New Course led Moscow to initiate harsh measures. Khrushchev reminisced that when the SED leader visited Moscow in May 1953, "Beria was howling at Comrade Ulbricht and other Germans like mad. We all were embarrassed".¹⁶ The New Course was ordered by the Kremlin as mandatory; a declaration to that effect

13 See Heinz Brandt, The Search for a Third Way (Garden City: Doubleday, 1970), pp.181, 191; and Jaenicke, op. cit., pp.28-39.

14 See Hope M. Harrison, "Inside the SED Archives: A Researcher's Diary," Cold War International History Project Bulletin, Issue 2 (Fall 1992), p.20

15 Ulbricht was supposedly supported in his actions by Molotov; see Arnulf Baring, Uprising in East Germany: June 17, 1953 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), p.20.

16 See Khrushchev's speech to the July 1953 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee; in Shcherbakova, op. cit..

(appearing ostensibly as a decision by the SED Politburo) was published on 11 June in the SED press.¹⁷ In the declaration the SED Politburo admitted that both party and government had made a number of mistakes.¹⁸ The May decree raising work norms, however, was not rescinded.

III. The Uprising and Soviet Intervention

The announcement of the New Course constituted a staggering turnabout. It caused dismay and confusion among the conservative party echelons and functionaries: the SED and the Soviet Union were admitting to "mistakes". In the official Soviet newspaper Taegliche Rundschau of 11 June, the Soviet Control Commission was cited as being "to a certain extent responsible for recent errors".

The impact of the New Course was also felt by the East German population. The workers remained resentful, particularly of the continued high work norms: they were the "spark" which initiated the uprising of 17 June.¹⁹ The first stage of the

17 "Kommunique des Politburos vom 9. Juni 1953," Dokumente der SED, Vol.IV, pp.428ff.

18 Neues Deutschland, 11 June 1953.

19 Strikes broke out in Berlin on 15 June and in other parts

demonstrations was concerned primarily with demands for better economic conditions and the release of political prisoners; the second saw the emergence of political slogans which gradually acquired greater significance, including demands for the resignation of the government and free elections. While during the first stage the demonstrators were mostly workers from the same industrial concern, by the second stage other groups (such as students and intellectuals) had joined: the protest took on a more "revolutionary" character. Only after the demonstration had attracted wide popular support and assumed a distinctly political character did the Soviet leadership decide to use force.²⁰

Ironically, by the time the Soviet tanks arrived on 17 June the revolt had begun to subside, due

of the GDR. The resulting protest strike by construction workers on East Berlin's Stalin Allee on 16 June spread by 17 June to all of East Germany; see Heinz Brandt, Ein Traum, der nicht entfuhrbar ist (Munich, 1967), p.277. The strikes took place in over 270 localities in the GDR and involved between 300,000-372,000 workers, about 5% of the labor force; see Baring, op. cit., p.52. For a more detailed examination of the East German Uprising, see Stefan Brant, The East German Rising: 17th June 1953 (London: Thames and Hudson, 1955); Baring, op. cit.,; Rainer Hildebrandt, The Explosion: Uprising Behind the Iron Curtain (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1955); and Theodor Ebert, "Non-violent Resistance Against Communist Regimes?" in Adam Roberts (ed), The Strategy of Civilian Defence: Non-violent Resistance to Aggression (London: Faber and Faber, 1967).

²⁰ See Baring, op. cit., pp.75-76.

mostly to a lack of leadership and organization. Unlike in the crises in Poland and Hungary, in which there was lively intellectual debate about developments in the Soviet bloc, the GDR was taken completely unawares. It was not yet known how Moscow would react to a change of policy in the GDR. While there were loud denunciations of Ulbricht and others in the SED leadership, and demands for free elections and reunification, there was a notable reluctance to express hostility against the Soviet Union. According to Stefan Brant, the strikers went to great lengths to avoid giving the Red Army any reason to intervene: rather, their anger was directed at the "German quislings".²¹

The SED leadership was baffled by the workers' reaction. According to Heinz Brandt, SED Secretary for agitation and propaganda in Berlin, the party members "were taken by surprise and increasingly paralysed. A monstrous event was occurring before their very eyes: workers were rising against the "worker-peasant state".²² He also stated that there were divisions within the SED: a "numerically

21 Brant, op. cit., p.190.

22 See Heinz Brandt, "Die Tragodie des 17 Juni 1953: Erinnerungen und Erkenntnisse" (1958), p.36; for further SED reactions see, under the same author, "The East German Popular Uprising," The Review, No.2, Imre Nagy Institute for Political Research (Brussels, October 1959).

insignificant group" sided with the workers; and "overwhelming majority, angered and bewildered by the incomprehensible collapse of every principle they had taken for granted" remained "helpless and passive". In addition to these divisions was the Beria-backed group, which sought the removal of Ulbricht.

While there were those within the SED who urged violent countermeasures to quell the uprising, they were restrained by the Soviet Union. According to one source, when on the morning of 16 June Waldemar Schmidt (the Chief of the East Berlin police) asked the Soviet authorities for permission to disperse the demonstrators and arrest the ringleaders, he was forbidden to do so.²³ Moreover, the Soviet authorities in Karlshorst had wanted to avoid bloodshed and prohibited the use of firearms.²⁴

Soviet hesitation regarding direct military intervention may have been the result of a number of factors. The Soviet leadership may not have appreciated the extent of the revolt. In addition, it may not have realized the delay that a transportation of troops would have caused. More likely, the workers' demonstration had not escalated

23 Brandt, Die Tragodie, op. cit., p.39.

24 See Fritz Schenk, Im Vorzimmer der Diktatur: 12 Jahre Pankow (Koln: Kiepenneuer & Witsch, 1962), pp.203-04.

into a popular revolt. The strike leaders declared repeatedly that their action was directed against the SED, not Moscow.²⁵

Soviet military intervention became, however, inevitable in the absence of an effective counteraction by the leadership. The party and government functionaries were disoriented and the leaders preoccupied with the threat to their political survival. In addition, the police and other protective agencies of the regime were unprepared or inadequately equipped. Moscow faced the dilemma of either the use of military force or the retreat and possible loss of East Germany.

IV. Ideological Justification

Subsequently, the SED tried to minimize the importance of the strikes. It blamed the uprising on Western attempts to overthrow the GDR through "fascist provocation". American and German "warmongers" were blamed, apparently distraught over the "great successes" attained by the socialist bloc.²⁶ It was emphasized that the majority of the

25 See Baring for accounts, op. cit., pp.80-81.

26 See, for example, the declaration made by the SED Central Committee, 21 June 1953.

population had rejected the provocateurs. On the afternoon of 17 June, the East German government issued a statement claiming:

Provocations and serious disorders in the democratic sector of Berlin were the reply of fascists and other reactionary elements of West Berlin to the German Democratic Republic government's measures to improve the situation of the people.²⁷

On the evening of 17 June, the government issued another statement, this time on the failure of the "provocateurs":

The excesses culminated in complete failure of the venture, thanks to the fact that they met resistance from the greater part of the population and from the agencies of the government.²⁸

At the same time, however, the SED accepted part of the blame for the demonstrations:

the party of the working class must give serious thought to how it happened that a definite part of the Berlin working class ... was seized with distrust, that this part of the working people did not see how it was being used by fascist forces. Here, unquestionably, lie serious oversights by our

27 Berlin, 17 June 1953 (Tass); complete text in Pravda, 18 June 1953. For additional comments, see also Neues Deutschland, 23 June 1953.

28 Ibid.

party.²⁹

In Poland, the media also denounced the demonstrators as "fascist" provocateurs and "expressed their solidarity with the working class of the German Democratic Republic."³⁰ Romania urged that the "foreign hirelings fascist provocation in Berlin" be branded "with shame".³¹ The USSR printed editorials which described the Soviet peoples' support for the GDR's fight against "fascist provocations". One editorial in Pravda stated:

Meetings of working people devoted to the recent events in Berlin are being held in our country. These events drew the concentrated attention of all Soviet people. The working people of the Soviet Union justly regard the venture of foreign hirelings in Berlin as a new vile attack by the forces of reaction and fascism upon peace and the security of peoples.

The Soviet people "faithful to the banner of proletarian internationalism and the champions of peace and friendship among peoples, express their ardent solidarity with the working people of the many who are fighting the provocations of the

²⁹ Neues Deutschland, 18 June 1953.

³⁰ Warsaw, 29 June 1953 (Tass); complete text in Izvestia, 30 June 1953.

³¹ Bucharest, 29 June 1953 (Tass); complete text in Izvestia, 30 June 1953.

enemies."³²

While these statements did not add up to a formal doctrine justifying military intervention, they did provide a set of comments and implicit justifications which remotely resembled a doctrine supporting the use of force. Expressions such as "fascist provocateurs", "proletarian internationalism", and "solidarity of the working class" appeared to suggest the need for some type of ideological rationalization for the Soviet invasion. Although these ideas were not as fully developed into a doctrine as in Hungary 1956, they appeared to suggest that military intervention was to be accompanied by some higher, ideological principle.

The absence, however, of doctrinal statements may be attributed to a number of factors. First, Germany was considered an enemy state and memories of the war were still recent. Second, the USSR appeared to act at the invitation of the East German government. Moreover, the USSR was not trying to overthrow the party leadership, but to keep it in power. This aspect of maintaining the same Party personnel differed dramatically from the Hungarian and Czechoslovak crises. Also, the Uprising occurred soon after Stalin's death: there was a

³² Pravda, 27 June 1953.

belief that force was an inherent part of Soviet policy.

V. Conclusion

The origins of the East German Uprising can be traced, therefore, to four interrelated factors: the death of Stalin; the leadership struggle within the Kremlin; the introduction of the New Course; and the impact of these developments on the SED and the East German population. The workers' protest was only a symptom of larger political and ideological problems.

The Soviet response was to let the East German authorities re-establish order; and, respond only if they failed. Although there was no doctrine justifying Soviet military intervention, there were statements issued which outlined ideas that defended the use of force.

The military intervention resulted not only in the quelling of the unrest, but also in securing the GDR as a Soviet base in Central Europe.³³ It

33 In both domestic and external affairs the events of 1953 marked a decisive point in the development of East Germany. The Soviet Union subsequently renounced the idea of "sacrificing" the GDR for a neutral, unified Germany and

revealed that Moscow was willing to use force, however reluctantly, to prevent the loss of a satellite from the Soviet orbit. Moreover, the Soviet Union only intervened when it was evident that the SED could not control the crisis. "We must be frank," said Malenkov, "and admit that the current regime in the GDR can collapse without support from the Soviet troops stationed there."³⁴

Ulbricht was able to exploit the leadership struggle in the Soviet Union. He was aided by Soviet tanks to quell the Uprising, and was allowed to remain in power. Although the Soviet Union inadvertently consolidated Ulbricht's position by its intervention, it did not abandon its commitment to the New Course.³⁵ The events in East Germany convinced the Kremlin that a retreat from Stalinist policies in Eastern Europe, as well as in the Soviet

began to push for its recognition and consolidation. In addition, there was a unilateral ending of the state of war through a declaration by the Soviet leadership on 12 January 1955, a granting of the rights of sovereignty to the GDR in 1954-55, and its incorporation into the Warsaw Pact in May 1955; see Spanger, *op. cit.*, pp.9-10.

34 Malenkov speaking to the July 1953 Plenary Meeting; see Shcherbakova, *op. cit.*.

35 Recent archival evidence indicates that the insecurity among the East German leaders deepened after the Uprising: they feared that another such crisis could recur (Ulbricht was particularly concerned about such a possibility). See the minutes of the SED Central Committee Plenums of July and September 1953; partial translation can be found in Harrison, *op. cit.*, p.20.

Union, was necessary to avoid further crises. Khrushchev admitted in his memoirs that Stalinism had to be stripped from the GDR: "As a result of the postwar circumstances which developed in the GDR, we knew we would have to find other ways of establishing East Germany on a solid Marxist-Leninist footing. We knew Stalinism was contrary to Marxism-Leninism, and we knew we would have to strip away the thin coating of Stalinism from our policies".³⁶

36 Strobe Talbott (ed), Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1974), p.193.

CHAPTER VI

THE POLISH OCTOBER OF 1956

The essential task, that of laying the foundations of socialism in Poland, can be carried out only in close alliance and cooperation with the Soviet Union ... Any tendency to weaken the cooperation with the Soviet Union is directed against the very foundations of the People's Democracy ... Anyone who imagines that the people's democratic state can be formed merely as a self-sufficient body, on a national scale, isolated from class struggle on an international scale ... will inevitably sink into a slough of nationalism and treachery.¹

- Jakub Berman (1949)

While the East German Uprising had been the result of workers' grievances over government policies, it did not involve the systemic and ideological challenge to the Stalinist structure that erupted in both Poland and Hungary in 1956. Poland was viewed as the testing ground for Khrushchev's theory of "different roads to socialism". Its success was mistakenly viewed as a

¹ Jakub Berman, "Role of the Soviet Union in Establishing New Democracies," For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy (Bucharest, 15 March 1949).

triumph of polycentrism. Although the Soviet Union did not intervene militarily to resolve the Polish crisis, there were statements issued similar in content to the "Brezhnev Doctrine". Moscow had the option of force, but preferred to influence Polish events differently: statements were issued not only to urge compliance, but also to serve as a justification if military intervention became necessary. The Polish October revealed, therefore, that the options available to the Soviet Union during crises in Eastern Europe included not only force, but less violent measures. The purpose of this study is also to provide a point of comparison with another East European crisis - the Hungarian Revolution - which occurred essentially during the same period.²

This chapter will examine:

- (i) the factors which led to the Polish October;
- (ii) why Gomulka's brand of national communism was deemed acceptable by Moscow;
- (iii) and, if anything resembling a doctrine justifying military intervention could be discerned

² For a more detailed examination of the Polish October, see Flora Lewis, The Polish Volcano (London: Secker and Warburg, 1959); Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit., pp.239-68; Nicholas Bethell, Gomulka, His Poland and His Communism (London: Longmans, 1969); and Konrad Syrop, Spring in October: The Story of the Polish Revolution 1956 (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1957).

in Soviet statements about the Polish events.

I. Poland's Approach to the New Course

The death of Stalin and other Soviet domestic developments - such as the adoption by the CPSU of the principle of collective leadership, the elimination of Beria and the subsequent curbing of police powers, the reconciliation with Tito, and Khrushchev's secret speech - all had a profound effect on Polish socialism. The Polish elites were urged to follow the New Course, to emphasize less coercive methods of rule, and to carry out de-Stalinization. This Soviet-induced process of reform triggered powerful changes which developed a momentum of their own. They challenged the domestic stability which the Polish elites had maintained.³

Brzezinski had called the period in Poland from the death of Stalin until February 1956 "the controlled transition".⁴ The New Course had been initiated in Poland, but its application was more restrained than in the rest of Eastern Europe.

3 Jan B. de Weydenthal, The Communists of Poland: An Historical Outline (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1986), p.73.

4 Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit., p.239.

There were no major political changes in the Polish leadership, with Boleslaw Bierut remaining firmly in control.⁵ The possible reasons for the PUWP's gradualist approach were numerous: the Polish elites may have feared that a quick departure from old norms could have led to a recurrence of Gomulka-type nationalism; they may have been trying to find political alternatives to the New Course; they may have been uncertain as to the direction of Soviet party sentiment; or their attachment to established communist assumptions and practices may have served as an obstruction to change.⁶ Because the reforms were introduced cautiously, they did not command great popularity; nor did they have the immediate effect of "stirring up passions and engulfing loyalties" as in Hungary.⁷

The New Course, however, could not be limited to economic phenomena. Further changes appeared urgent after the death of Beria and the defection and revelations of Lt. Colonel Jozef Swiatlo broadcast into Poland in 1954.⁸ The latter's statements

5 See Weydenthal, op. cit., p.74.

6 See *ibid*, pp.75-77.

7 Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit., p.239.

8 Swiatlo defected to the West in December 1953 and began a series of broadcasts, starting in March 1954, from Munich through Radio Free Europe; the text of his broadcasts was published in English in News from Behind the Iron Curtain (New York), March 1955, pp.3-36.

regarding the fabrication of evidence against Gomulka, the privileges enjoyed by the party elites, and the extent of Soviet control over Poland caused great consternation and confusion amongst the Party and population. There was a rapid increase in press criticism of the regime. Polish writers began to openly question various aspects of the communist political system.⁹ By October 1955 the theoretical journal Nowe Drogi noted "ideological chaos" within the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP).

The Polish government was compelled to launch an extensive program of reform. In late 1954 Gomulka was freed from prison (his release was not announced until 1956). The PUWP no longer regarded Gomulka as heretical. Moreover, imitation of the USSR was condemned for having stifled "independence, creative thought and initiative".¹⁰

⁹ Adam Wazyk's "Poem for Adults", for example, published in Nowa Kultura in August 1955 described the difficulty of everyday life for Poles and urged the population to demand change from the party. The lack of a forceful response by the party to the poem's publication only encouraged further criticism; see Norman Davies, God's Playground: A History of Poland, Vol.2 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981), pp.582-83.

¹⁰ Zycie Warszawy, 19 April 1956.

II. Impact of the Twentieth Party Congress

Khrushchev's secret speech in February 1956 exacerbated the divisions within the Polish Party. Roman Zambroski - a Polish Politburo member in 1956 - wrote of a profound crisis within the power apparatus and security organs, which "became more demoralised as the rehabilitation spread of people who had been unjustly accused and imprisoned."¹¹ Added impetus was given by an International Communists Commission Communique (issued on 18 February) which stated that the official liquidation of the Communist Party of Poland (KPP) in 1938 was "groundless". It had been based on accusations and materials which had been falsified by "provocateurs".¹² These difficulties were further

¹¹ Roman Zambroski, "Dziennik," Krytyka, No.6 (1980), p.45.

¹² See Pravda, 21 February 1956; for the English translation of the statement, see P. E. Zinner (ed), National Communism and Popular Revolt in Eastern Europe: A Selection of Documents on Events in Poland and Hungary, February-November 1956 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956).

Stalin had been suspicious of the KPP during the latter half of the 1930s, particularly because of its strong advocacy of Comintern, as opposed to Soviet, interests. Almost all the members of the Polish Central Committee had been ordered to Moscow where they were arrested and executed. Gomulka had escaped this fate because he was imprisoned at the time; see Davis, op. cit., pp.544-48. Khrushchev in his memoirs commented on the injustice done to the KPP; see Jerrold L. Schecter and Vyacheslav V. Luchkov (eds), Khrushchev Remembers: The Glasnost Tapes (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1990), pp.43-44.

compounded by the unexpected death of Bierut.¹³ The divisions within the Soviet leadership resulted in confusing signals being sent to the PUWP.

Ochab, Bierut's successor, attempted to steer a middle course: he offered some concessions to the population while preserving communist control over the country. At a conference of Warsaw party activists on 6 April, Ochab made a speech in which, while admitting past errors, he condemned "hysterical criticism" of the past party line.¹⁴ He later avowed his loyalty to the Soviet Union by reiterating that "we can assure our Soviet brethren that no machinations of imperialist adventurers, remnants of reaction, will weaken the alliance and eternal friendship between People's Poland and the Soviet Union."¹⁵

13 The timing of his death has been viewed by some observers as convenient for two reasons: first, it removed from the Polish scene the man who symbolized Stalinist policies; and, second, the absence of Bierut eliminated a potential political rival to Gomulka which would have made serious conflict within the party likely.

14 See Trybuna Ludu, 7 April 1956.

15 Radio Warsaw, 21 April 1956; quoted in Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit., p.246.

III. The Poznan Uprising

The uprising of the workers at Poznan on 28 June 1956 was a significant event in Soviet-East European relations for a number of reasons. First, the crisis separated more dramatically the two factions - the "Stalinists" (or Natolin) and the "revisionists" (or Pulawy) - within the Polish Party. While the reformers argued that the uprising indicated the need for a radical shift in Party policies in order to secure popular acceptance of the regime, the Stalinists denied that the workers had legitimate grievances and blamed the trouble on "imperialist provocateurs". Second, the Party eventually admitted faults in its policies which justified the workers' complaints.¹⁶ Finally, the Poznan events further fueled the critics of Communist dogma. According to Brzezinski, "The

¹⁶ According to the PUWP Politburo protocols dated 3 July 1956, the party listed three conclusions regarding the Poznan events. First, the workers' protest arose from the worsening of economic conditions, a lack of response by the bureaucracy to the workers' problems, and administrative and ministerial errors; these were taken advantage of by the "class enemies". Second, errors committed in the politico-ideological area, the bureaucratization of various party apparatus, and the mistaken propaganda line of several newspapers created an atmosphere ripe for "exploitation" by the enemy. Third, the demobilization of the security forces enabled "our enemies to surprise us"; see the text of the protocols 28-30 June, 12 July, and 3 August 1956 in Zycie Warszawy, 27-28 June 1992 (author's translation).

collapse of the infallibility of the individual led to a collapse of the infallibility of the dogma".¹⁷

The reaction of the Polish regime towards the workers' protest did not require direct Soviet backing. The brevity of the Poznan uprising, its limited geographic area, and the Polish armed forces' willingness to intervene all helped stave off a major rebellion. The need for intervention was eliminated, therefore, before it began: the control demonstrated by the PUWP enabled it to resist Moscow's pressure in the future.¹⁸

Moscow viewed the Poznan uprising with apprehension, especially in light of events in Hungary. There were divisions within the Soviet Politburo: Khrushchev had antagonized the Stalinist faction of Molotov and Kaganovich by his secret speech. The Soviet leader had an interest in reform in Eastern Europe because it would put distance

17 Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Communist Ideology and Power: From Unity to Diversity," Journal of Politics (November 1957). For a description of the Poznan uprising, see Lewis, op. cit.; and Richard Hiscocks, Poland: A Bridge for the Abyss: An Interpretation of Developments in Post-War Poland (London: Oxford University Press, 1963). For Ochab's account of the events leading up to and directly after Poznan, see his interview in Teresa Toranska, Oni: Stalin's Polish Puppets (London: Collins Harvill, 1987), pp.59-63.

18 See Francois Fejto, A History of the People's Democracies: Eastern Europe Since Stalin (New York: Praeger, 1971), p.63.

between the Stalinists and himself.¹⁹

By the end of June the Soviet leadership initiated measures designed to limit de-Stalinization in Eastern Europe. First, the CPSU issued a declaration which defined permissible criticism of Stalin.²⁰ Second, a lengthy Pravda statement warned against extensive anti-Stalinist sentiment. While conceding that the "transition to socialism in various countries would not be exactly the same," the paper reminded all communists that ultimately "they are moving toward one goal, toward Communism. It is impossible to move separately or haphazardly toward such a great goal." No one, said Pravda, would succeed in destroying the "unity of the socialist camp".²¹

IV. The Seventh Plenum of the PUWP

The conflict within the PUWP climaxed during the Seventh Plenum and drew a strong reaction from

19 See Michel Tatu, "Intervention in Eastern Europe," in Stephen S. Kaplan (ed), Diplomacy of Power: Soviet Armed Forces as a Political Instrument (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1981), p.210.

20 See Pravda, 2 July 1956.

21 Pravda, 16 July 1956.

Moscow. Nikolai Bulganin and Gregori Zhukov were dispatched to Warsaw on 20 July to assess the domestic situation as well as to signal Moscow's concern. Statements were issued similar in content to the Soviet interventionist doctrine. Bulganin warned the Poles that de-Stalinization was undermining the foundations of the communist political system. He warned against "the enemy that wishes to drive a wedge between us, so as to pick off each socialist country one by one":

[W]e cannot idly bypass attempts that are aimed at weakening the international ties of the socialist camp under the slogan of so-called national characteristics. We cannot bypass in silence attempts which aim at undermining the power of the people's democratic state under the guise of "spreading democracy". By whatever good intentions the people undertake such ventures might be guided, they are acting contrary to the interests of their nations, contrary to the great cause of socialism and democracy.

Every country should go its own way to socialism, but we cannot permit this to be used to break-up the solidarity of the peace camp, and certainly not under the pretext of respecting national peculiarities or extending democracy.²²

22 Pravda, 22 July 1956.

Bulganin reiterated the ties binding Poland to the Soviet Union:

The western frontiers and Silesia are now forever Polish. The guarantee of this will be the friendship of the peoples of our socialist camp, the friendship of the Polish and Soviet peoples.²³

The PUWP demonstrated its ability in evading two terrible alternatives - anti-communist revolution or Soviet intervention - while at the same time appeasing the Polish populace. Although the Seventh Plenum had not clarified Gomulka's position in the Polish Party, the most openly pro-Soviet faction was recommending his inclusion in the regime. Gomulka would give the PUWP a degree of legitimacy, thereby enhancing the viability of the regime and reducing Moscow's need for involvement.

V. The Final Crisis

Between July and September the Polish leadership undertook a series of measures without consulting Moscow, including the re-admission of Gomulka to the

²³ Trybuna Ludu, 26 July 1956.

Polish Party.²⁴ However, plans to include Gomulka in the next Politburo and excluded Marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky (the Red Army officer who had been imposed as Minister of Defense) alarmed the Stalinist faction.²⁵ His planned dismissal was interpreted by the Soviet Union and the Natolins as a challenge to Moscow's right of involvement in Polish affairs. In Khrushchev's words: "It looked to us as though developments in Poland were rushing forward on the crest of a giant anti-Soviet wave ... we were afraid Poland might break away from us at any moment."²⁶

A reduction in Moscow's influence in Poland and Hungary was inadmissible: strategically, Poland was a vital communication and transportation link between the Soviet Union and the GDR, and the loss of one country within the socialist community could lead to more "defections", thereby undermining the

24 During this period Ochab visited Peking to attend the Congress of the Chinese Communist Party. Mao Tse-tung showed sympathy for the Polish liberal faction and Gomulka: "We also have our Gomulka in China, but he has never been expelled from the party. The party keeps him in the Central Committee, and while they do not always agree with him, they often ask his opinion"; see Lewis, op cit., pp.181-82 and the New York Times, 19 October 1956.

25 There was a particular Polish hatred of Rokossovsky, not only because he exemplified Soviet predominance in Poland, but also because he had commanded the Soviet troops which had observed, but not intervened, during the August 1944 Warsaw Uprising.

26 Talbott, Last Testament, op. cit., p.199-200.

entire bloc (and, by extension, perhaps the USSR); and, the loss could undermine Khrushchev's leadership position. In addition, Soviet leaders were receiving from the Poles differing interpretations of events.²⁷

Moscow, therefore, initiated a number of policies and practices associated with the Soviet interventionist doctrine. The Soviet ambassador to Poland issued a formal invitation for the Polish leadership to visit Moscow "for consultation"; the latter, however, declined. On 19 October, the day of the meeting of the Central Committee of the PUWP, Khrushchev and a Soviet delegation arrived unexpectedly in Warsaw.²⁸ Simultaneously, the deployment of Soviet armed forces was initiated along the East German and Polish borders, along with a Soviet naval presence off Gdansk. Within Poland, Rokossovski had loyal units of the Polish Army carry out maneuvers in the direction of Warsaw.²⁹ On 20 October Pravda published an article reporting that Warsaw newspapers had fallen under the control of "reactionary forces". Moreover, elements within the

27 See Weydenthal, op. cit., pp.83-86.

28 The Soviet leader was accompanied by Molotov, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Marshal Konev (Commander-in-chief of the Warsaw Pact countries), and 11 generals. He may have believed that the sheer size and senior level of the delegation would have overwhelmed the Polish elite into submission.

29 See Davies, op. cit., p.585.

PUWP were preparing a coup d'état in the event negotiations failed.³⁰

Khrushchev castigated the Polish leadership for not considering Soviet interests in their decision-making:

There has been an act of betrayal. We had to come. It is not only a question of Polish-Soviet relations. You're endangering our position in Germany. You're menacing the whole socialist camp.³¹

He used the term "traitor" in referring to Gomulka and demanded the restoration of the old Politburo. He attacked Ochab for the anti-Soviet bias of the press and for not informing him in advance of personnel changes. The Soviet leadership argued that the Polish "disease" could spread to other members of the bloc. The Poles, on the other hand, argued that the domestic concessions planned by the Eighth Plenum were designed to strengthen the construction of socialism in Poland.

The Polish leadership eventually convinced the Soviet delegation that only a change in the PUWP leadership and extensive concessions to workers and

30 A list of 700 prisoners to be arrested, for example, had been drawn up along with a plan for seizing key posts.

31 See Lewis, op. cit., pp.209-10.

peasants would enable the party to retain control.³² Gomulka - along with Ochab and Jozef Cyrankiewicz (the Polish prime minister) - argued that the PUWP could maintain control over society.³³ Moreover, the Polish elites repeatedly asserted that no one in the Party desired to weaken ties with the USSR or the Warsaw Pact; relations between the two states would be preserved and even enhanced.³⁴

Gomulka and Ochab also argued that if the Soviet Union invaded, the Polish army would fight. Ochab threatened to make a radio broadcast announcing the movement of Soviet troops toward Warsaw.³⁵ Khrushchev supposedly calmed down and ordered the halt of Soviet troops.³⁶ The Soviet leadership appeared to fear the idea of a military involvement with Poland. Moreover, Rokossovsky informed Khrushchev that Polish troops under his command were not reliable. All these factors were acknowledged by Khrushchev:

32 See Syrop, op. cit. pp.95-96; Hiscocks, op. cit., p.212; and Lewis, op. cit., pp.209-13.

33 Throughout the day letters arrived asserting support for the PUWP, which further helped Ochab and Gomulka withstand Soviet pressure.

34 See Wojciech Roszkowski, Historia Polski 1914-1991 (Warsaw: PWN, 1992), p.237.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid, pp.236-37.

[A]s we began to analyze the problem in more detail and calculate which Polish regiments we could count on to obey Rokossovsky, the situation began to look somewhat bleak. Of course our armed strength far exceeded that of Poland, but we didn't want to resort to the use of our own troops if at all avoidable.³⁷

Ochab reiterated this view: a military intervention would have been "catastrophic": "Not because they would have lost - they had more than enough force to win - but because the consequences of such an intervention would have been tragic for them as well."³⁸

Moreover, to intervene while the Soviet delegation was in Warsaw would not have been a wise tactical decision. Intervention was a good option if it was to prevent an imminent disaster, or if there were favorable circumstance for its execution: in Poland neither case existed. To invade would also have been an admission by Khrushchev to his enemies in the Kremlin that his whole policy had been a failure; therefore, an important domestic consideration was involved.³⁹ Furthermore, Khrushchev could later point to the successful

37 Talbott, op. cit., p.203. For a debate regarding the military issues in Soviet decision-making and during the October crisis, see Jones, Soviet Influence, op. cit., pp.68-72.

38 See interview in Toranska, op. cit., p.69.

39 Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit., p.260.

resolution of the Polish crisis as a victory against his opponents. A peaceful solution was desirable in light of the deteriorating situation in Hungary.

With the departure of the Soviet delegation on 20 October a communiqué was issued which stated that members of the Polish Politburo would go to Moscow to discuss "problems of further strengthening the political and economic cooperation" between the two countries and "of further consolidating the fraternal friendship and coexistence" of the PUWP and the CPSU.⁴⁰ The Soviet leaders returned to Moscow after withdrawing their threat to employ force, and without exerting any influence on Polish plans to reconstitute the party leadership.

VI. A Peaceful Transition

There were a number of factors contributing to the peaceful conclusion of the Polish October. One reason was that the crisis had been preceded by a gradual process of reform. Since the party was conducting the policy of its own accord, the Polish regime was given a degree of legitimacy and popular

40 See Trybuna Ludu, 20 October 1956.

support.

Also important was Ochab's skill and self-denial which differed from Gero's role during the Hungarian crisis. While in Hungary, as will be seen in the following chapter, the Communist Party simply disintegrated, in Poland Ochab attempted to smooth over the differences. Although he could not prevent a division within the leadership, he was able to preserve a central core within the PUWP which dealt responsibly with developments. Ochab himself admitted that a split in the party ranks had to be avoided at all costs as it would have undoubtedly lead to Soviet intervention: "We managed to avoid [intervention], and by avoiding the worst we managed, despite a profound crisis to keep the Party from breaking up. The Hungarians didn't manage to do that then, nor the Czechs later."⁴¹

Gomulka also contributed to a peaceful transition. He displayed energy and tactical skill, convincing the Party, the army, and the whole population not to exceed the limits of diversity. Moreover, Gomulka symbolized Polish nationalism and national self-assertion which a change in Party program would have lacked. In addition, when the Soviet delegation arrived in Warsaw to prevent

⁴¹ See Toranska, op. cit., p.78.

Gomulka's return to power and his program of reforms, they unwittingly strengthened his hand by turning him into a popular hero.

The Soviet Union had played a "waiting game" over developments in Poland. According to Gomulka, "they did not give up at all the idea of intervening. They merely came to the conclusion that at that moment an intervention was not desirable or necessary. They simply decided to wait and see what would happen. That was all we achieved."⁴² When the Soviet delegation arrived in Warsaw, for instance, they had not come with either a clear-cut understanding of the situation or a formulated program to be imposed on the Poles, but a set of specific grievances. They did not have a priori objections to the inclusion of Gomulka in the leadership: rather they were alarmed by Rokossovsky's planned removal from the Politburo. Another factor was that the power in Poland was retained by the PUWP. The Soviet leadership had not doubted party control, but the character of Polish-Soviet relations: Moscow's dilemma was not whether socialism remained in Poland, but what form it would take.

What considerations might have led the Soviet

⁴² Nowiny Kurier, 16 April, 1973.

leadership into taking a cautious approach? Among the first was the danger of undermining the tenuous links with Tito. Khrushchev, having already accepted at some cost the Yugoslav precedent of a non-Soviet type of socialist state, could not denounce Polish aspirations as necessarily unjustified. The Soviet leader also could not ignore the "friendly advice" of the Chinese who urged restraint.⁴³ Ironically, the violent suppression of the Hungarian rebellion consolidated Gomulka's regime. The violent reaction of Polish public opinion to the second Soviet intervention in Hungary renewed the threat of serious disturbances; however, the violence of the suppression and the complete inaction of the West revealed the folly of such a path. In a speech on 29 October to the members of the Polish press, Gomulka cautioned the audience about drawing comparisons with events in Hungary:

43 The Chinese leader Mao Tse-tung, for example, claimed that he had saved the Gomulka regime by advising Moscow against the use of military force; see the New York Times, 11 January 1957. This assertion was reiterated by Ochab: "I'm convinced that, if China hadn't sent its warning in time there would have been an intervention in Poland"; see Toranska, op. cit., p.70.

The Hungarians are in a different geographical situation, and quite simply live under different conditions. The interests of our state dictate to us other necessities and other methods of behaviour.⁴⁴

In addition, the Hungarian crisis kept the USSR preoccupied from taking any measures against Poland.

By far the most important reason for the peaceful resolution was Gomulka's insistence, unlike Nagy, on remaining within the Soviet ideological and military camp. All of his references to independence were at the same time reinforced by assurances of Polish allegiance to the Soviet Union. In his speech in Warsaw on 24 October, Gomulka stated that Soviet troops were to remain stationed on Polish soil, a necessity that was "directly connected with the presence of Soviet forces in the GDR":

So long as there remain the bases of the Atlantic Pact in West Germany, so long as there is a new Wehrmacht army itself there, setting its chauvinism and revanchism against our frontiers, the presence of the Soviet Army in the GDR is in accordance with our highest state interests.⁴⁵

Khrushchev confirmed Poland's importance to the Soviet Union: "it was particularly important to us

⁴⁴ Trybuna Ludu, 30 October 1956.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 25 October 1956.

that we have forces in Poland, for Poland represented the only overland communication and supply route connecting us with our enormous army in the German Democratic Republic ... If Poland were to pull out of the Warsaw Pact, we would have been in a very serious situation."⁴⁶

VII. Conclusion

Throughout the Polish crisis there could be discerned in Soviet statements (more than during the East German crisis) a semblance of a doctrine justifying military intervention. Expressions such as the "international ties of the socialist camp" and the "consolidation of fraternal friendship" appeared to suggest that the socialist bloc was a unique body of countries, was united in its ideology, and was to be on guard against forces which sought to "tear it apart". While these comments did not add up to a formal doctrine per se, they did imply ideological justification for the use of force if it became necessary. The language used in statements made during the Polish October was more sophisticated

⁴⁶ Talbott, Last Testament, op. cit., p.199.

than that of the East German Uprising. It was also evident in comments made throughout the crisis.

The Soviet leadership had initiated certain policies and practices associated with the doctrine: high-level visits (particularly the Khrushchev delegation); speeches by Soviet politicians (such as Bulganin at the Seventh Party Plenum); invitations to Moscow for "consultations"; editorials in Soviet newspapers; and, military maneuvers.

The Polish October appeared to suggest that the limits of deviation were: national communism with loyalty to the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact; and, the leading role of a unified and viable party. The Soviet interventionist doctrine served as a signaling device of Moscow's concern, as a warning against deviation, and as a threat of military intervention.

During the crisis could be seen elements of a "push and pull" relationship between the Soviet Union and Poland. Moscow was wary of intervening: it relied on the Polish political elites to keep the reform process under control. The local elites wanted to avoid a Soviet intervention (particularly as their political survival depended on it), so they used whatever methods necessary to prevent it. In return for Gomulka's endorsement of Soviet policy in Hungary, as well as the permanent stationing of

Soviet troops, Moscow cancelled Polish debts to the USSR. In addition, while Moscow's influence on Polish internal developments was limited, its external control was strengthened.⁴⁷ The Soviet Union used various methods to coerce the Polish leadership into obedience. According to Polish Brigadier General Tadeusz Pioro, a member of the General Staff in 1956, Khrushchev had said to Gomulka during his visit to Moscow between 14 and 18 November: "You still have some grudge, but when it comes time for you [the Polish leadership] to escape, where do you run? To the West? No, you will run to us!"⁴⁸

Like France and the United States, the Soviet Union was constrained in its behavior toward Poland. Military force was an option, but involved a high political cost: Western opposition would be high - as in Hungary - especially at a time when Khrushchev was pursuing a policy of peaceful coexistence and rapprochement with the West. Khrushchev's loss of

47 The Soviet-Polish agreement of 18 December 1956, for example, permitted the stationing of Soviet troops in Poland. Within months similar agreements were concluded with Romania (April 1957), Hungary (May 1957), and the GDR (March 1957), although for the latter there was to be only "consultation" on troop movements. The last Soviet/Russian combat troops left Poland in October 1992; see RFE/RL Research Report, Vol.1, No.45 (13 November 1992), p.63.

48 See Gazeta Wyborcza, 15 April 1994 (author's translation).

power would have been, however, the biggest political cost.

The Polish October set a pattern of revolt for the future in both Poland and Eastern Europe. Lech Walesa, the Polish president, stated on the 38th anniversary of the crisis that the "Poznan June was the beginning of the road to freedom, to a sovereign and democratic Poland, and led to the birth of 'Solidarity'".⁴⁹ It also appeared to suggest that ideological and institutional diversity characterized the socialist bloc.⁵⁰ However, one inadvertent consequence was that other East European states interpreted Poland's success as meaning that force was no longer the immediate response to attempts at differentiation.

49 Rzeczpospolita, 30 June 1993 (author's translation).

50 Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit., p.263.

CHAPTER VII

THE HUNGARIAN REBELLION OF 1956

We want a voluntary union of nations - a union which precludes any coercion of one nation by another - a union founded on complete confidence, on a clear recognition of brotherly unity, on absolutely voluntary consent. Such a union cannot be effected at one stroke; we have to work towards it with the greatest patience and circumspection, so as not to spoil matters and not to arouse distrust.¹

- Lenin (1919)

The peaceful resolution of the Polish October was viewed erroneously by the rest of the East European countries as a triumph for polycentrism. The Hungarian leader Imre Nagy believed that he too could chart a nationalist path to socialism; however, his reforms and the subsequent events in Hungary alarmed Moscow and led to direct military intervention. The Hungarian crisis is instructive in illustrating the development of the Soviet interventionist doctrine.

This chapter will examine:

¹ Lenin, "Letter to the Workers and Peasants of the Ukraine Apropos of the Victories over Denikin," 28 December 1919.

- (i) the factors that led to the Hungarian Rebellion and military intervention;
- (ii) if anything resembling a doctrine justifying military intervention could be discerned in Soviet or other statements about the Hungarian events;
- (iii) and, how the Hungarian crisis differed from that of East Germany and Poland.

I. The Road to Intervention

As in the other East European satellites, the death of Stalin resulted in a number of changes in Soviet-Hungarian relations. In a Moscow meeting in June 1953 the Soviet leadership made their dissatisfaction with Matyas Rakosi known to the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (HSWP).² They complained that the Hungarian economy was near collapse, that the collectivization campaign had been too extensive, and that the political purges

² For details, see Charles Gati, "Imre Nagy & Moscow, 1953-56," Problems of Communism, Vol.35, No.3 (May-June 1986), pp.32-49.

For a survey of the events surrounding the Hungarian Revolution in general, see Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit.; Ferenc A. Vali, Rift and Revolt in Hungary: Nationalism Versus Communism (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961); and Gati, Hungary, op. cit.

had decimated the Party. Rakosi was told to give up his monopoly of power, and Nagy was appointed prime minister. Competition between Rakosi and Nagy, however, created divisions within an already confused Communist Party.³ The Soviet leadership added to the fissures within the Hungarian Party by inadvertently supporting both Nagy and Rakosi.⁴

As Malenkov's power declined, however, Nagy was exposed to increasing criticism. A Soviet memorandum sent in the summer of 1955 to the Communist leaders of Eastern Europe illustrated the impact of the Soviet leadership struggle on the bloc:

The policy of Malenkov, aside from the harm which it threatened in Soviet domestic matters, concealed serious dangers for the countries of the People's Democracies and for the relations of the Soviet Union with these countries, an example of which is the situation in Hungary.⁵

By November 1955 Nagy was dismissed as prime minister and expelled from the HSWP.⁶

3 See Paul Kecskemeti, The Unexpected Revolution: Social Forces in the Hungarian Uprising (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961) pp.46-54.

4 See Vali, op. cit., p.159.

5 Seweryn Bialer, "The Three Schools of Kremlin Policy," New Leader, 29 July 1957, p.10.

6 Ibid, pp.155-58.

With his return to power in April 1955 Rakosi was not able to halt the de-Stalinization process, particularly after Khrushchev's secret speech. In addition, Soviet support of a Stalinist was seen as contradictory in light of Moscow's rapprochement with Tito and the general relaxation of tensions within the socialist bloc. The Soviet leadership was also under increasing pressure from Tito to remove Rakosi: the latter had denounced the Yugoslav leader and had exterminated alleged Titoists.⁷ In July 1956 Khrushchev sent Anastas Mikoyan and Mikhail Suslov to Budapest: they forced Rakosi to resign.⁸

The replacement of Rakosi with Erno Gero in July 1956 was, however, only a "halfway measure".⁹ His selection seemed to be a compromise designed to contain disintegrative trends within the party while maintaining a regime fully committed to the Soviet Union. Unlike the selection of Ochab in Poland, the choice of Gero further alienated the opposition: any crime attributed to Rakosi could equally be ascribed to Gero.

In Hungary the Communist Party was seen as being

7 See Documents on International Affairs, 1955 (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p.271.

8 See Paul E. Zinner, Revolution in Hungary (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), p.147.

9 Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit., p.225.

Stalinist in nature and against liberalization; in Poland, on the other hand, Gomulka and the Polish communists were viewed as reformers. In Poland the majority of the party backed the process of reform while the Stalinist minority only discredited itself. In addition, the Polish leaders who bore the main responsibility for police terror and political purges were gradually eliminated from prominent positions; in Hungary, the main culprit was the party leader.

Moreover, Gomulka and his supporters' inclusion in the Politburo was achieved without the prior approval or consent of the Soviet leadership: Moscow, therefore, had to accommodate itself to the Polish fait accompli. In addition, the Polish leadership was forced to act prudently as it had no precedent to which to refer. For Hungary, the Polish example was encouraging: it suggested that a national road to socialism was possible.

The servility and rigidity of the Hungarian leadership toward Moscow also made any independent action unthinkable. In addition, Gero made the mistake - when the rebellion began on 23 October - of presenting to the Hungarian people the choice between "socialist democracy or bourgeois

democracy".¹⁰ The Polish reformers had avoided raising such a question because they knew that the only choice was one between the domestic or "Muscovite" factions of the PUWP. What Gero was offering, on the other hand, was a choice between a communist regime dominated by Moscow or an anti-communist uprising.¹¹

During the summer of 1956 the Soviet leadership made various statements which contained elements of the Soviet interventionist doctrine. These comments reflected Moscow's concern over the sequence of events occurring in both Poland and Hungary. They may have been issued to warn against further deviation from the "socialist course". In a Pravda editorial of 16 July, for example, the Kremlin warned against national interests taking precedence over common goals:

Marxism-Leninism teaches that the national interests of the working people, correctly understood, cannot contradict their international socialist interests. In his well-known article "National Pride of the Great Russians," V. I. Lenin emphasized with very great force that the interests of the Great Russians national pride, correctly understood, coincides with the socialist interest of the Great Russians and of other

10 "Radio Address by Erno Gero, 23 October 1956," in Zinner, National Communism, op. cit., p.526.

11 See Jones, Soviet Influence, op.cit., p.32.

proletarians.

This document contained two basic elements of the Soviet interventionist doctrine: the primacy of the Soviet Union in satellite relations; and the priority of bloc unity and community interests over the aspirations of individual states.

Moreover, on 15 July 1956 in a conversation with Veljko Micunovic (the Yugoslav ambassador to Moscow), Khrushchev discussed his views of Hungary:

Khrushchev said that if the situation in Hungary grew still worse, "we here have decided to use all means at our disposal to bring the crisis to an end." Khrushchev said he was telling me this in confidence, that such a situation had not yet arisen and that maybe it wouldn't arise ... He also said that the Soviet Union could not at any price allow a "breach in the front" in Eastern Europe, and that was just what the West was working for.¹²

This quotation contained another element of the Soviet interventionist doctrine: the use of military language and metaphors, such as "the front", as part of the process of justifying intervention.

It can, therefore, be deduced from these statements that the Soviet leadership was concerned about the sequence of events developing in the bloc,

¹² Veljko Micunovic, Moscow Diary (New York: Doubleday, 1980), pp.87-88.

particularly in Hungary; that it made various comments outlining the degree of deviation permissible; that the Soviet leadership was willing to resort to force, if necessary, to ensure that Soviet security concerns remained unchallenged; and, that the leadership wanted to ensure that the socialist camp remained unified and subservient to Moscow. At this point the function of the doctrine was to serve as a signaling device of Moscow's concern and as a warning against further deviation.

II. The First Soviet Intervention and the 30 October Declaration

The Soviet leadership decided to use force when on 23 October peaceful demonstrations turned into a rebellion. It justified the military intervention by claiming that the Hungarian leadership had "invited" its help.¹³ The intervention, however,

13 There has been a debate as to who "invited" the Soviet troops to Budapest on 23 October. While the Soviet Union and the satellites maintained at the time that Nagy sent a message to Moscow asking for armed help, the latter denied making such a request; see Nagy's speech at a mass meeting in Budapest on 31 October, in Documents on International Affairs, 1956 (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), pp.471-72. Recent archival evidence indicates the decisive role played by Gero and Andropov in encouraging Soviet

proved to be a mistake from both a military and political view. Militarily the intervention was abortive: it did not restore order or annihilate the resistance. Politically it greatly strengthened mass opposition, turning the riot into a genuine national rebellion, and further alienating "faithful" party members. The first Soviet military intervention, therefore, did not prevent the collapse of communist rule in Hungary, only postponed it. Although Nagy was recalled, he was unable to unify the Party. The presence of Soviet troops only emphasized the political elites impotence and dependence on Moscow.

The Soviet leadership had sent Mikoyan and Suslov to Budapest on 24 October to assess the Hungarian situation. They stated that the Soviet intervention had been a mistake; that there was evidence of anti-Soviet feeling among the population; and, that it was necessary to eliminate the Stalinists from the Hungarian leadership. The granting of these

intervention. Their support was particularly significant in that Khrushchev had been initially reluctant to provide a military solution; see Csaba Bekes, "New Findings on the 1956 Hungarian Revolution," Cold War international History Project Bulletin, Issue 2 (Fall 1992), pp.1-3. Moreover, other sources have revealed that Andropov had warned his superiors - months before the first invasion - that neither Nagy nor Gero would be able to contain the situation; see Fedor Burlatskiy, "On the Construction of a Developed Socialist Society," Pravda, 12 December 1990.

concessions, the Soviet leadership believed, would calm the workers and students, end the armed uprising, and save the Communist Party's monopoly of power.¹⁴

Khrushchev recalled that during this period the Soviet leadership was faced with a "crucial choice" between military intervention or a waiting game, whereby the "internal forces would liberate themselves and thwart the counterrevolution." A "waiting game" risked that

the counterrevolution might prevail temporarily, which would mean that much proletarian blood would be shed. Furthermore, if the counterrevolution did succeed and NATO took root in the midst of the socialist countries, it would pose a serious threat to Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Romania, not to mention the Soviet Union itself.¹⁵

On 25 October - in a private conversation between Micunovic and Khrushchev in Moscow - the issue of military intervention as the only possible solution was discussed. Khrushchev had stated that "blood had been shed" in Hungary, accused the West of provocation, and said that anti-Soviet elements had

14 See the Pravda editorial of 28 October 1956 which referred to "serious past instances" of Hungarian Communists as contributing to the difficulties in Hungary.

15 Talbott, Khrushchev Remembers, op. cit., p.417.

taken up arms against the "camp" and the USSR:

Khrushchev told me to take a message to Tito about the Soviet view of the situation and the readiness of the Soviet Union to answer force with force. Khrushchev assured me that the Soviet leadership was completely unanimous on this. The Russians would support a political solution in Hungary if such a solution was still possible. But Khrushchev gave the impression that he had no faith in such a solution.¹⁶

In addition, Khrushchev said that whatever solution was applied, the Soviet Union was not "pursuing nationalist goals, but the internationalist goal of fraternal proletarian solidarity."¹⁷

These statements illustrated Khrushchev's concern about events in Hungary. The language that he used contained elements of the "Brezhnev Doctrine", such as "counterrevolution might prevail" and "much proletarian blood would be shed". He also raised the issue of security: that threats within the bloc ultimately threatened the Soviet Union.

The Soviet leadership issued a statement concerning the nature of Soviet-East European relations. The conciliatory tone of the 30 October Declaration appeared to suggest that Moscow hoped to

¹⁶ Micunovic, op. cit., p.126.

¹⁷ Talbott, Khrushchev Remembers, op. cit., p.417.

bring the situation under control without a second intervention. The declaration also reflected the political infighting within the Kremlin. It was a product of compromise, containing elements of both orthodox "internationalism" and the liberalizing trends of "national communism".¹⁸

The purpose of the October Declaration was, on the one hand, to admit past mistakes and assure the right to internal liberalization and reform, as in Poland; on the other hand, to serve as a warning, reasserting Soviet hegemony in Hungary's external affairs. The withdrawal of Soviet troops (only from Budapest) would be permitted in the belief that their absence would expedite the HSWP's regaining of control; however, a permanent and total withdrawal of the troops from Hungarian soil would not be sanctioned.¹⁹

The declaration asserted that "the countries of the great commonwealth of socialist nations" could

18 An Italian communist correspondent in Moscow, Guiseppe Boffa, noted the disagreements at the top level. He stated that there was "perplexity" among Soviet leaders, decisions "were not lightly taken", and the more liberal faction wanted "to let the Hungarian people take care of the conflict"; see Guiseppe Boffa, Inside the Khrushchev Era (New York: Marzani & Munsell, 1959), p.105. See also Valdez, op. cit., p.42. British sources revealed that the Declaration was being prepared as early as mid-October and was only updated after the events in Poland and Hungary; see Bekes, op. cit., p.2.

19 Vali, op. cit., p.345.

build their relations only on five principles: national independence; sovereignty; equality; non-interference in internal affairs; and self-determination.²⁰ It admitted the occurrence of "violations and errors which demeaned the principle of equality among socialist states". The document also stated that while Soviet troops had entered Budapest at Hungary's request "to bring order to the city", the further presence of Soviet military units in Hungary "could serve as an excuse for further aggravation of the situation". The Soviet government, therefore, "has given its military command instructions to withdraw the Soviet military units from the city of Budapest as soon as this is considered necessary by the Hungarian Government." The USSR was also ready to consider withdrawing its troops from the territory of any member of the Warsaw Pact which so desired, but only "on the basis of an agreement between all its participants and not only with the agreement of that state."

The declaration finally warned:

The defense of the socialist gains of People's Democratic Hungary is today the chief and sacred obligation of the workers, peasants and intellectuals, of all Hungarian working

20 Full text in Zinner, National Communism, op. cit., pp. 485-89.

people. The Soviet Government expresses confidence that the peoples of the socialist countries will not allow external and internal reactionary forces to shake the foundations of the people's democratic system, won and reinforced by the selfless struggle and labor of the workers, peasants and intellectuals of each country.

Unlike in the Yugoslav declarations, the 30 October document specifically cited "proletarian internationalism" and the "common ideals of the construction of socialist society" as the principles uniting the countries of the socialist community. This appeared to suggest that Yugoslavia was considered outside the Soviet interventionist doctrine's scope. At the same time, the October Declaration suggested that the East European countries were not like Yugoslavia.

III. The Second Soviet Intervention

The Soviet Union's decision to employ a second military intervention was based on a number of factors. First, although differences existed within the Soviet leadership about what method to use to arrest developments in Hungary, the events after 30 October unified the leaders to use force; in

addition, they had support from the socialist community. Second, Nagy had failed to unify the Hungarian Communist Party. Finally, international events and opinion appeared conducive for such a policy.

Although Khrushchev was committed to forming a new basis for socialist relations, his policy was not accepted by the entire Politburo. The Soviet response to the Hungarian rebellion illustrated the deep divisions within the leadership: its members were divided on ideological, policy, and personal grounds. These factors resulted in indecisive and uncertain behavior toward developments in Hungary. In his memoirs Khrushchev admitted that the Kremlin had vacillated between "crushing the mutiny" and getting "out of Hungary. I don't know how many times we changed our minds back and forth."²¹ Condoleezza Rice and Michael Fry argued that perhaps three factions evolved: a militant group which in light of the Polish events favored invasion; a moderate group led by Khrushchev which favored invasion only after considerable provocation by Nagy; and those who even then, in Khrushchev's words, "thought that the lending of aid might be

²¹ Talbott, Khrushchev Remembers, op. cit., p.418. For a survey of how the leadership was divided at the time, see Michel Tatu, Power in the Kremlin (New York: Viking, 1967), p.29.

misunderstood."²² According to Micunovic, Khrushchev had stated that he could not permit a restoration of capitalism in Hungary:

There were people in the Soviet Union who would say that as long as Stalin was in command everybody obeyed and there were no big shocks, but that now, ever since "they" had come to power, Russia had suffered the defeat and loss of Hungary. And this was happening at a time when the present Soviet leaders were condemning Stalin.²³

Moreover, Khrushchev's position was being challenged within the leadership. One indication was, according to Micunovic, that Khrushchev was accompanied by a delegation when he went to Warsaw on 19 October: "Khrushchev no longer goes on his own as he did only a month ago to Yugoslavia. Something is obviously changing in the Kremlin when Khrushchev and Molotov go together to Poland."²⁴

Until the 30th of October Moscow was supportive of Nagy's decisions, including the appointment of a few noncommunists to his cabinet on 27 October.²⁵

22 See Condoleezza Rice and Michael Fry, "The Hungarian Crisis of 1956: The Soviet Decision," in Jonathan R. Adelman (ed), Superpowers and Revolution (New York: Praeger, 1986), p.191.

23 Micunovic, op. cit., pp.133-34.

24 Ibid, p.124.

25 See Gati, "Imre Nagy," op. cit., pp. 43-44. Evidence of Moscow's approval can be ascertained from the favorable

On 29 October at a diplomatic reception in Moscow Marshal Zhukov, the minister of defense, stated that "the situation in Hungary is improving. A government has been formed which is enjoying our support and the support of the Hungarian people."²⁶

When Mikoyan and Suslov returned to Budapest on 30 October they found, however, a different situation. There was a rebirth of political democracy with several parties, the almost complete disintegration of the Communist Party, the end of the "dictatorship of the proletariat", and a prime minister intent on forming a coalition government independent of Moscow. In addition, Nagy had attempted to reorganize the Hungarian armed forces (to "de-Sovietize" them) and to appoint a general staff loyal to his policies. The situation in Hungary, therefore, represented a quadruple threat: to Communist Party dominance; to the reliability of the army; to the stability of the Eastern bloc; and to the Soviet security system. As Khrushchev explained to Micunovic on 25 October, "Anti-Soviet elements have taken up arms against the 'camp' and

comments regarding Hungary in the Soviet press: in Pravda, 28 October 1956, for example, an article stressed the "collapse of counterrevolution" rather than the idea that what transpired in Hungary should be classified as a "counterrevolution".

26 See Borba, 30 October 1956.

the Soviet Union. The West is seeing a revision of the results of World War II and has started in Hungary, and will then go on to crush each socialist state in Europe one by one."²⁷

The Soviet political and military leaders may have believed that out of the two crises Hungary was an easier target for invasion: it was smaller, less populated, and had a more deeply divided Party than Poland. Moreover, Hungary was remembered by the Soviet leadership as the one East European country that had aligned itself with the Axis powers in the Second World War without being occupied first. Therefore, fears of a revival of fascism, or dislike and suspicions dating from the war, were most probably also factors. The importance of these considerations was mentioned by Khrushchev. According to Micunovic, "Khrushchev mentioned incidentally that Hungary had twice fought in coalition with the West against Russia, and stressed the bad feeling existing in the Soviet army against Hungary, which wanted again to join the West against the Russians."²⁸ The political decision to intervene in Hungary and overthrow the Nagy government was probably made on 31 October.²⁹

²⁷ Micunovic, op. cit., p.127.

²⁸ Ibid, pp.134-35.

²⁹ Charles Gati provides the following evidence: that new Soviet troops entered the country during the night of 31

Before the Soviet Union launched the second military intervention, it sought support from the international socialist community. According to Khrushchev, the entire Soviet Politburo was mobilized to shuttle between the "fraternal" capitals.³⁰ The leaders in Prague, East Berlin, Bucharest and Sofia regarded Gomulka's return as a threat to the stability of their regimes. Moreover, a neutral parliamentary Hungary leaning towards the West would have demonstrated to the people of Eastern Europe that the "march of communism" could be reversed.³¹ Czechoslovakia and Romania - which included large Hungarian minority groups - appeared to be alarmed by the possibility of a resurrection of a nationalist Hungary. Poland did not favor a military solution initially, but changed its position after Nagy's declaration of Hungarian neutrality.³²

October and the morning of 1 November; that Nagy's relationship with the Soviet leadership suddenly deteriorated during the morning of 1 November; and that on 1 November Khrushchev, Molotov, and Malenkov were already secretly consulting with the Polish leadership in Brest (on the Soviet-Polish border), following which Khrushchev and Malenkov went on to Bucharest to brief the Romanian, Bulgarian and Czechoslovak leaders; see Gati, Hungary, op. cit., p.148 and Micunovic, op. cit., p.132.

30 See Talbott, Khrushchev Remembers, op. cit., pp.419-22.

31 See Fejto, Peoples Democracies, op. cit., p.79.

32 See Bekes, op. cit., p.3. This evidence is based on Polish sources, namely the Political Committee of the PUWP.

The Soviet leadership also turned to China and Yugoslavia for support. Mao Tse-tung pressured the Soviet Union to suppress the Hungarian rebellion as Nagy was undermining the power of the Communist Party.³³ Tito also supported the second Soviet intervention, although he had disapproved of the first.³⁴ In his 11 November 1956 speech at Pula, Tito stated that although the second intervention (of 4 November) was regrettable, it was justified.³⁵ Moscow, therefore, may have judged that it had the necessary socialist support to use force: "The leaders of the sister states were unanimous: we had to act and act quickly."³⁶

While the Soviet leadership had united in regard to the use of military intervention, between 31 October and 4 November (the day of the invasion) it followed a duplicitous policy towards Nagy; the Kremlin pursued negotiations while adding the final touches on the invasion plan.³⁷ The Soviet Union had also prepared a replacement government under

33 For Khrushchev's account of the Chinese conversations, see Talbott, Khrushchev Remembers, op. cit., pp.417-19; also M. K. Dziewanowski, "Peking and Eastern Europe," Survey, No.77 (Autumn 1970), pp.59-74.

34 For Tito's view, see Brzezinski, Soviet Bloc, op. cit., pp.233-38 and Vali, op. cit., pp.349-52.

35 Borba, 16 November 1956.

36 Khrushchev, in Talbott, Khrushchev Remembers, op. cit., p.420.

37 See Gati, "Imre Nagy," op. cit., pp.46-47.

Kadar to follow the military intervention.³⁸ Although Kadar had initially supported Nagy, his sudden change of mind may have been motivated by an external factor, possibly a message received from Munnich or Andropov, of the Kremlin's decision to break with Nagy.³⁹

A major misconception of the Soviet intervention has been that Moscow responded because of Nagy's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact and his appeal for neutrality; Nagy's declaration of neutrality, however, was the result of the obviously imminent Soviet invasion.⁴⁰ Ironically, a year before at the

38 Kadar, who disappeared from Hungary right before the Soviet action, announced on the morning of 4 November his break with Nagy and the formation of a "Hungarian Revolutionary Worker-Peasant Government". He made a broadcast (claiming from eastern Hungary) stating that he had formed a new government and appealed for military help from Moscow. Kadar returned, together with Ferenc Munnich (the former minister of the interior), to Budapest following the Soviet tanks and established a new regime; see Schechter and Luchkov, The Glasnost Tapes, op. cit., p.123.

39 See Gati, "Imre Nagy," op. cit., p.47; also Michel Tatu, "Intervention in Eastern Europe," in Stephen S. Kaplan (ed), Diplomacy of Power: Soviet Armed Forces as a Political Instrument (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1981), p.247. Kadar, however, never admitted to this explanation. In an interview with the New York Times, conducted twenty-two years after the intervention, he said that "there would have been virtual civil war in Hungary" and it was only "to avoid bloodshed that we asked the Soviet Union for help"; the New York Times, 10 June, 1978. This, however, contradicted the fact that not only had the Soviet military action led to bloodshed, but Moscow had already decided to "aid" its fraternal ally.

40 The movements of the army to occupy all strategically

1955 Geneva Summit Conference, Bulganin had endorsed the right of any state to declare its neutrality:

Should any nation desiring to pursue a policy of neutrality and non-participation in military groupings ... raise the question having their security and territorial integrity guaranteed, the great powers should accede to these wishes.⁴¹

The impact of the Suez Crisis on Soviet decision-making can be summarized as influential, but not decisive. While the Soviet Union was focusing on events in Hungary, the West was preoccupied with the crisis in the Middle East: therefore, Moscow's anxiety over a Western response was eased. According to Khrushchev, the Suez Crisis had created a "favorable moment" for the second Soviet military intervention.⁴² In addition, a 31 October speech by President Dwight D. Eisenhower may have further encouraged the Soviet leadership to believe that the intervention would not trigger a

important points of the country outside Budapest, to seal off the Western border of Hungary, and to prepare for the military blow were already under way when the withdrawal from the Warsaw Treaty was conveyed to the Soviet leadership. Nagy withdrew from the Pact and proclaimed Hungary a neutral state in order to generate international pressure against the intervention; see Vali, *op. cit.*, pp.365-67.

⁴¹ Quoted in Tatu, "Intervention," *op. cit.*, p.223.

⁴² Micunovic, *op. cit.*, p.134.

Western military response. After stating that the aim of US policy in Eastern Europe had always been these nations' achievement of "sovereignty and self-government", the President added that "we could not, of course, carry out this policy by resort to force".⁴³

IV. Soviet Justifications for the Intervention

As indicated above, the Soviet leadership advanced several justifications for its "fraternal assistance" to Hungary.⁴⁴ The first such argument was that the Soviet Union rendered assistance only after an "invitation" from the Hungarian leadership.⁴⁵ Although Gero and later Kadar made requests for military aid, in neither case was the request regarded as a collective decision by the members of the Hungarian leadership. In addition, Kadar's request was a product, not a cause, of

43 "Radio and Television Report to the American People on the Developments in Eastern Europe and the Middle East," Public Papers of the President: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1956 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1958), p.1061.

44 For details, see Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit, pp.120-25.

45 Text in Documents on International Affairs, 1956, op. cit., pp.523-37.

Soviet military intervention.

A second justification was that Soviet military assistance was rendered in accordance with the terms of the 1948 Soviet-Hungarian mutual assistance treaty and the Warsaw Treaty: however, both treaties were directed at external aggression. They also promised that the contracting parties would adhere to the principle of noninterference in their mutual relations. Khrushchev apparently saw no contradiction in this justification. During a speech in Minsk on 22 January 1958, he referred to Soviet "fraternal help" that "routed in three days the counterrevolutionary bands in Hungary and restored revolutionary order". At the same time Khrushchev proclaimed that "we want absolute nonintervention in the internal affairs of other states" and "we have strictly observed and shall continue to observe this inviolable rule."⁴⁶

The Soviet leadership also sought to provide an ideological rationale for its action in Hungary. Terms such as "internationalist duty", "counterrevolution", and "fraternal obligations" can be found throughout Soviet speeches, editorials, and declarations issued during this period. These statements resembled more strongly than those in the

⁴⁶ Pravda 26 January, 1958.

past a doctrine justifying military intervention. While such comments were not recognized by the West as an official doctrine supporting the use of force, they implied that such a doctrine was being formulated.

Although similar justifications were used in Czechoslovakia in 1968, in the Hungarian crisis they were given less attention and appeared to play a less significant role. There were several reasons for this difference. First, an armed rebellion provided an excuse for a military invasion. Second, the creation of an alternative government - no matter of how questionable legitimacy - gave the "invitation" some appearance of legal validity. In addition, the Soviet Union enjoyed the support of the international communist movement. The Suez Crisis provided a convenient distraction from events in Eastern Europe. Moreover, the Hungarian crisis developed rapidly in comparison to the Prague Spring and the Polish crisis of 1980-81, giving Moscow less time to use the interventionist doctrine as a threat and then later as a rationale.⁴⁷

Moscow had initiated certain policies and practices associated with the doctrine: the dispatch of senior officials to Budapest; the issuance of

⁴⁷ See Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., p.121.

declarations; the publication of editorials; the enlistment of the socialist allies in support of their decisions; and, of course, direct military intervention.

Different functions of the Soviet interventionist doctrine were used: as a signaling device of Moscow's concern; as a warning against deviation; as a unifying element within the bloc; as a method of mobilizing support; as a weapon of last resort; as a tool for regaining stability within the bloc; and, as an example to dissuade others from following the Hungarian course.

The role of the Warsaw Pact during the crisis was limited. According to R. A. Remington, Moscow considered trying to make the conflict with Hungary multilateral. In the October Declaration, the Soviet leadership sought to make the withdrawal of Soviet troops in Hungary dependent on all Warsaw Treaty states.⁴⁸ Bilateral consultation between the Soviet Union and Hungary did include references on both sides to responsibility under the Warsaw Pact, and Pact "obligations" were used as an ex post facto justification. However, Moscow did not use the Warsaw Pact during the crisis (Romania, for example, had offered assistance), perhaps for the following

⁴⁸ See Remington, Warsaw Pact, op.cit., p.185.

reasons: the Warsaw Treaty Organization was relatively new and, therefore, its member states may have been militarily unprepared; there may have been concern in regard to the image such a joint intervention would have; the satellite forces may have been perceived by Moscow as unreliable; and, there may have been more sympathy within the bloc toward the Polish cause than was being voiced.

After the Hungarian crisis Moscow undertook further steps to develop a formal ideological justification for future Soviet intervention. Jones has coined this precursor the "Pomelov Doctrine".⁴⁹ This version emphasized a number of features: that socialist sovereignty could not be judged by the standards of bourgeois law⁵⁰; that the socialist camp had a unique organic unity in which "there are not and cannot be contradictions between the national interests of a socialist nation and the interests of international cooperation"⁵¹; that proletarian internationalism was the guiding principle to which all other principles were subordinated⁵²; that "mutual assistance" was a basic

49 For details, see Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., pp.121-24.

50 See E. Korovin, "Respect for Sovereignty, An Unchanging Principle of Soviet Foreign Policy," International Affairs (Moscow), No.11 (1956), pp.31-41, at pp.37-38.

51 Ibid.

52 I. Pomelov, "Razvitie sotsializma i proletarskii

principle; and, that Moscow's policies in defending Hungary's sovereignty were in harmony with the interests of the socialist community. The Kremlin's policies, therefore, resulted not from selfish interest, but "international duty".⁵³

In a major article in Kommunist of January 1957 I. Pomelov, a senior Soviet party theoretician, developed an ideological justification for the intervention by incorporating the above dimensions of proletarian internationalism. In rendering aid to Hungary the Soviet Union "has always fulfilled and will always fulfill its international duty" in the interests of the unity of the socialist community, and "in complete fidelity to the practice of proletarian internationalism".⁵⁴ According to Pomelov, the principles of "sovereignty, equality and respect for territorial integrity in relations between socialist states" were basic rules of behavior; he warned, however, that socialist states did not merely "coexist" but that their relations were based on "selfless help and cooperation".⁵⁵ Like Kovalev in September 1968, Pomelov juxtaposed

internatsionalizm," Kommunist, No.1 (1957), pp.15-30.

53 See N. Vasilyev, "Protivizvrashcheniia printsipov proletarskogo internacionalizma," Izvestiia, 9 March 1957, pp.3-4, at p.4.

54 Pomelov, op.cit., p.23.

55 Ibid, p.16.

the "invitation" argument with the justification of "fraternal aid".⁵⁶

This group of ideas was reiterated in the 1957 Declaration of the meeting of Representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties of the Socialist Countries. The document stressed:

The Socialist countries base their relations on principles of complete equality, respect for territorial integrity, state independence and sovereignty, and non-interference in one another's affairs. These are vital principles. However, they do not exhaust the essence of relations between them. Fraternal mutual aid is part and parcel of these relations. This aid is a striking expression of Socialist internationalism.⁵⁷

In an April 1958 speech in Budapest Khrushchev stated that although the decision to intervene was not made easily, it was necessary:

Comrades! Believe me, the decision was difficult, but we could not stand by indifferently when brazen fascist elements began to brutally attack workers, peasants, Communists, and other fine representatives of

56 Tito's approval of the Soviet second intervention reflected the belief that, specifically in regard to the Hungarian crisis, the defense of socialism had priority over the principle of nonintervention.

57 See I. Dudinsky, "A Community of Equal and Sovereign Nations," International Affairs (Moscow), No.11 (November 1964), p.6.

the Hungarian working people ... when the counter-revolution tried to drown the socialist gains of the Hungarian working people in the blood of the people ...

In giving aid to the Hungarian people, in routing the forces of counterrevolution, we fulfilled our international duty.⁵⁸

He added:

We declare that if a new provocation is directed against any socialist country whatsoever, then the provocateur will have to deal with all the countries of the socialist camp, and the Soviet Union is always ready to come to the assistance of its friends, to give the necessary rebuff to the enemies of socialism if they attempt to disturb the peaceful labor of the people of the socialist countries.⁵⁹

In addition, in his memoirs Khrushchev justified the action in terms of proletarian internationalism: "by helping Hungary to suppress the uprising and eliminate its aftermath as quickly as possible we were also helping all the other countries of the Socialist camp."⁶⁰

The meaning and importance of socialist international law for the Eastern bloc was also

⁵⁸ Pravda, 8 April, 1958.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Talbott, Khrushchev Remembers, op. cit., pp.428-29.

emphasized. Prior to the events of 1956 the Soviet leadership had not needed to use the concept of socialist international law as a means to maintain bloc cohesion. In order to deflect accusations that the people's democracies were merely Soviet "colonies", relations between the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe were described as being based on general international law. The theory that an important type of international law was emerging in the socialist commonwealth was pronounced by Khrushchev during a speech at the Polish Embassy in Moscow 1957, and by various writings by Soviet scholars.⁶¹ The rules between the socialist states were "of a much higher type compared with general international law" since they were socialist international principles.⁶² However, socialist international law had not supplanted general international legal norms and principles; rather, it existed alongside general international law. This view of the relationship between socialist international law and general international law changed in the aftermath of the Prague Spring;

61 See Pravda, 21 April 1957, p.2. An example of such articles was by G.I. Tunkin, "Sorok let sosuschestvovaniia i mezhdunarodnoe pravo," Sovetskii ezhegodnik mezhdunarodnogo prava (1958), pp.15-49; cited in Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., pp.130-31.

62 Tunkin, p.47; in *ibid*, p.130.

socialist legal norms were argued to supersede those of bourgeois legality.

Thirty-five years after the intervention (9 December 1991), the Soviet Union officially apologized to the Hungarian Government for the invasion. The apology came from both Gorbachev and Russian President Boris Yeltsin during a news conference. An apology was included in the 1991 Hungarian-Russian agreement. Both called the 1956 action an inexcusable act of interference in the internal affairs of Hungary.⁶³ Earlier in October 1991 Soviet presidential spokesman Andrei Grachev had said that "it is absolutely clear and obvious" that the Soviet leadership regards the 1956 invasion as a violation of international law.⁶⁴ In November 1992 during his visit to Hungary, Yeltsin called the intervention a "tragedy" which the "masters of the Kremlin obliged Russian soldiers to take part."⁶⁵ In the same visit he turned over Soviet documents regarding the 1956 invasion.⁶⁶ The last of the Soviet troops stationed in Hungary since the Second

63 See the RFE/RL Daily Report, No.232 (9 December 1991).

64 See Radio Budapest, 22 October 1991; in RFE/RL Daily Report, No.202 (23 October 1991).

65 ITAR-TASS and MTI, 11 November 1992; in Alfred S. Reisch, "Hungarian-Russian Relations Enter a New Era," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol.2, No.2 (8 January 1993), p.6.

66 See the New York Times, 12 November 1992. Hungarian scholars argued that significant gaps, however, remained; see *ibid*, 25 March 1993.

World War departed on 19 June 1991.⁶⁷

V. Conclusion

During the Hungarian crisis the Soviet leadership had used the Soviet interventionist doctrine to urge socialist compliance. The Kremlin had issued statements which together formed a doctrine justifying military intervention. Added to previous expressions such as "the unity of the socialist camp" and the threat from "fascist" or "reactionary" forces, were terms expressing the promise of "fraternal assistance". Such language appeared to suggest that "mutual aid", including the use of force, was the "duty" of the socialist community. While these Soviet statements were not recognized by the West as a doctrine supporting military intervention, they did imply that such a doctrine was in the process of being formulated. The "Pomelov Doctrine", a precursor to the "Brezhnev Doctrine", appeared to suggest that Moscow felt insecure about Soviet-bloc relations and, therefore,

⁶⁷ See Alfred A. Reisch, "Free of Soviet Military Forces After Forty-six Years," RFE/RL Research Institute Report on Eastern Europe, Vol.2, No.30 (26 July 1991), pp.21-32.

sought to develop an ideological justification if military intervention became necessary. Moreover, the Soviet invasion of Hungary demonstrated for the first time that statements were being backed up with direct force.

The Soviet leadership initiated certain policies and practices associated with the doctrine. First, various public speeches were made and articles published warning against "nationalist deviation". Second, there was a series of high level visits by Mikoyan and Suslov urging compliance. Third, a formal declaration was drafted, spelling out once again the limits of deviation. Finally, Moscow launched a military intervention.

The Soviet interventionist doctrine served a number of functions during the Hungarian crisis: as a warning device clarifying socialist "ground rules"; as a way of uniting bloc interest; as a weapon of "last resort"; as a justification for invasion; and, as an example of the costs of deviation. As a warning device the doctrine was not successful as it did not solidify the Hungarian Party or prevent the intervention. As a justification it lacked credibility outside the bloc. Within the socialist community, however, it did unite elite interests, especially in Romania and Czechoslovakia. Military intervention did succeed

in ending Nagy's regime and replacing it with one loyal and malleable to Moscow. However, the intervention succeeded only in the short-term in preventing similar crises. Ultimately, if by the successful use of the doctrine it was meant the arrest of nationalist reform and the replacement of Nagy with a more obedient leader, then the doctrine indeed had accomplished its purpose. If by success it was meant to prevent similar future crises, then it only succeeded in the short-term.

The impact of the doctrine was to lead Moscow to take the necessary steps to increase the ideological unity of the bloc. The doctrine also made the East European elites aware of what was demanded and what was tolerated. In order to protect their own power, these elites realized the need to be loyal to Moscow. The intervention may also have indicated to the elites that certain statements and phrases were coded language meant to convey Moscow's concern.

The Soviet Union intervened for both ideological and security reasons. The Kremlin leadership wanted to prevent another Tito within the socialist bloc. Moreover, in security terms, Moscow feared reformist "contagion", party instability within a Warsaw Pact state, and the potential of a Western foothold on the border of the USSR. Hungarian events could ultimately have threatened Soviet security at home:

demands for reform could have spread to the USSR, which would have undermined the power of the CPSU. Djilas argued, for example, that letting Hungary decide its own fate would have inevitably destroyed the socialist system in the Soviet Union.⁶⁸ The events of Autumn 1989 indeed appeared to substantiate this fear. Hungary also was viewed by the USSR as a former "enemy" state. Hungary's alliance with the Axis powers during World War II left in the Soviet leaders' minds uncertainty as to Hungarian intentions and sympathies.

After the Hungarian uprising the two non-negotiable constants of bloc relations were: the leading role of the Communist Party; and, incontestable membership of the Warsaw Pact. Yugoslavia appeared not to be included within the boundaries of the socialist commonwealth. There was also the emergence of a renewed emphasis by Soviet theorists on socialist international law. They were not, however, as yet arguing that socialist law superseded general international law.

In the case of Hungary, the Soviet Union acted in a manner similar to other great powers. It justified its policies through higher, ideological principles, such as "proletarian internationalism"

⁶⁸ The New Leader, 19 November 1956.

and "fraternal assistance". The Soviet Union was restrained in its behavior toward Hungary. It used force, but only after deep deliberation. Like other hegemons, the Soviet Union attempted to gain the support of the socialist community before intervening.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PRAGUE SPRING OF 1968

Aren't you ashamed, you race of rash defectors, To rise against us? We are your protectors!¹

- "To the Ungrateful Nations,"
N. A. Dobroliubov (1859)

For the socialist community, the events in Hungary had been interpreted as implying certain rules of Soviet-satellite relations and the tolerable degree of deviation. One major condition of Soviet-bloc relations was the indisputable commitment to the Warsaw Treaty Organization: a withdrawal from the Pact, particularly by a state of vital strategic importance, was considered unacceptable. Second, internal liberalization and diversity were permitted as long as the Communist Party's leading role remained sacrosanct, and the reform process did not threaten it.

¹ N. A. Dobroliubov, Collected Works (Moscow, Soviet Jubilee ed., 1961).

The Czechoslovak experiment was to differ from previous attempts at "liberalization" in that Dubcek and his supporters aimed at fundamental reforms initiated by a strong Communist Party whose loyalty to the Soviet Union and the socialist commonwealth would remain unquestioned. The Czechoslovak leadership, however, found itself sponsoring more radical reforms than it had originally supported. Consequently, it faced a dilemma: to ignore Soviet demands calling for a curtailment of the reform process; or to stifle the popular democratization movement and remain subservient to Moscow. Dubcek attempted a third course of slightly modifying the process of "democratization"; however, even this proved to be too great a threat to the interests of Soviet hegemony.

This chapter will examine:

- (i) the factors that led to the Prague Spring and military intervention;
- (ii) the development of the Soviet interventionist doctrine during the crisis;
- (iii) the international reaction to the doctrine;
- (iv) and, how the Prague Spring differed from other East European crises.

I. The Fall of Novotny and the Rise of Dubcek

The origins of the crisis that culminated in the expulsion of Novotny can be found in the aftermath of both Khrushchev's renewed attack on Stalin at the Twenty-Second Party Congress of 1961 and the Twelfth Congress of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (CPCz) in December 1962.² Unlike in the rest of Eastern Europe, the process of de-Stalinization had been delayed in Czechoslovakia. The sudden relaxation of repression (in addition to public revelations of Novotny's complicity in Stalinist-era crimes) led to the release of powerful pressures from below which the party found difficult to control. Added to the increasing criticism of the economic system were calls for political reform.³ In addition, the process of de-Stalinization exposed the contradictions of Marxist-Leninist ideology and gave an opportunity for critics to develop a humanistic interpretation. Moreover, there existed in Czechoslovakia the memory of a democratic, liberal

2 For a detailed discussion of the factors leading to Novotny's fall, see William R. Kintner and Wolfgang Klaiber, Eastern Europe and European Security (New York: Dunellen, 1971), pp.271-78.

3 See William E. Griffith, Eastern Europe After the Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia (Santa Monica: Rand, 1968), p.12; see also Otto Ulc, "Czechoslovakia," in Teresa Rakowska-Harmstone (ed) Communism in Eastern Europe (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp.121-22.

tradition. A further factor was the regime's continuing embarrassment over the political show trials of the 1950s, whose injustices were never successfully resolved or their victims rehabilitated.

There were also external, international factors. The 1960s provided, according to R. A. Jones, many examples of the "masking" function of ideology.⁴ There was a rift between Soviet utterances about the "march of socialism" and political realities. There was, for example, increasing tension and friction within the international communist movement: the ruling parties of Yugoslavia, China, Albania and Romania had openly challenged the Soviet model of socialism. In addition, and the Czechoslovak leadership's unqualified conformity with the USSR's pro-Arab policy during the 1967 Middle Eastern War revealed the extent of Novotny's "independence".⁵

The combination of all of these internal and external factors resulted in the apparent acknowledgment by Moscow (particularly after Brezhnev's visit to Prague in December 1967) that Novotny was losing his legitimacy and becoming an impediment to the adoption of necessary reforms.⁶

4 Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., pp.140-41.

5 See Francois Fejto, "Moscow and its Allies," Problems of Communism, Vol.17, No.6 (November-December 1968), p.35.

6 See Windsor and Roberts, Czechoslovakia 1968, op. cit.,

Moreover, Brezhnev was suspicious of Novotny, who was known to have expressed sorrow at Khrushchev's overthrow.⁷ In addition, the Soviet leader might have believed that the removal of Novotny would strengthen his own position within the Kremlin leadership against the conservative faction.⁸

The Soviet leadership considered Alexander Dubcek a suitable successor to Novotny: he was viewed as a reliable communist likely to act as a moderating force.⁹ Initially Dubcek insisted on gradual reform. Despite Dubcek's caution, however, Novotny's demotion at the January Plenum unleashed powerful pressures for reform from students, intellectuals, writers, and local party cadres. The Czechoslovak leader was forced by circumstance to strike a balance between reformist and conservative policies.¹⁰ In his speech in February 1968, for

p.15; see also Mlynar, Night Frost, op. cit., pp.91-93.

7 Mlynar, op.cit., p.70.

8 For Dubcek's account of Novotny's removal see his autobiography, Hope Dies Last, edited and translated by Jiri Hochman (New York: Kodansha, 1993), pp.116-26.

9 For a brief description of Soviet views of Dubcek before the Prague Spring, see Kenneth Ames, "Reform and Reaction," Problems of Communism, Vol.17, No.6 (November-December 1968), pp.38-41. For a general survey of events concerning the Prague Spring, see Karen Dawisha, The Kremlin and the Prague Spring (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); Windsor and Roberts, op. cit.; and H. Gordon Skilling, Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

10 See William Shawcross, Dubcek (London: Weidenfeld and

example, Dubcek promised, on the one hand, that there would be no return to "administrative methods" (a communist euphemism for arbitrary rule): "Democratic centralism in the Party and State is necessary, but its nature and application must be reconsidered". At the same time, he reassured those who feared that "a more or less widely tolerated democratism ... might weaken the foundations of power and ... the principles of socialism" by stating his awareness of the dangers of "going too far in the process of democratization".¹¹

As for external relations Dubcek hinted, on the one hand, at greater independence in foreign policy: he stated that Czechoslovakia would formulate "standpoints of her own on basic international questions", in this case implying improved relations with West Germany.¹² Dubcek, on the other hand, reaffirmed Czechoslovakia's fidelity to the Soviet Union: he declared that the CPCz "stands firmly and unshakably linked" to the USSR by its "fraternal bonds with the CPSU" and that "our future plans and

Nicolson, 1970), pp.146-47.

11 Rude Pravo, 23 February 1968.

12 This aspect, particularly, alarmed the East German leadership who sought continued adherence by Warsaw Pact members to the Karlovy Vary agreement (this agreement stipulated that no member of the WTO would establish diplomatic relations with the FRG until the GDR itself received Western recognition).

prospects cannot be maintained without Czechoslovakian membership in the community of socialist countries".¹³

Although Dubcek continually professed allegiance to the Soviet-Czechoslovak relationship and to the Warsaw Pact, his domestic reforms raised concern in Moscow. At the Budapest Party Congress of 27 February, Soviet Party theoretician Suslov denounced the "dangerous nationalistic tendencies which have appeared in separate links of the communist movement". It was necessary, he argued, to strike "a serious blow at the anti-communist reaction that is trying to use the ideology of nationalism to split our ranks".¹⁴ The impact of a Czechoslovak model of "reformed socialism" could have weakened the stability of conservative regimes, especially in Poland and the German Democratic Republic, as well as within the Soviet Union. Moreover, it was likely that both Gomulka and Ulbricht were urging Moscow to take some action to warn the Czechoslovak leadership against excessive deviation.¹⁵

13 Rude Pravo, 23 February and 17 March 1968.

14 Tass, 28 February 1968.

15 In Poland unrest among students and intellectuals led to widespread public disorders and fueled a power struggle within the Polish leadership. General Wojciech Jaruzelski, Polish deputy defense minister at the time, argued that Gomulka's harsh reaction to the unrest would not have been severe if not for the Prague Spring; he had to reaffirm his ability to take charge of events in his country. See

II. The Dresden Conference

By mid-March, therefore, the Soviet leadership may have been convinced that an internal shift and/or external pressure was needed in order to alter the trend in Czechoslovakia. Covertly, the Soviet authorities began to ready their military forces; overtly they commenced a slow escalation of political pressure.¹⁶ Moscow issued statements which contained words and phrases associated with the Soviet interventionist doctrine. The Kremlin

Jaruzelski's comments in an article by Andrzej Friszke, "Gwiazda Gomulki Zgasla," Gazeta Wyborcza, 19-20 March 1994 (author's translation).

For a description of the East German leader's concern with events in Czechoslovakia, see Melvin Croan, "Czechoslovakia, Ulbricht, and the German Problem," Problems of Communism, Vol.18, No.1 (January-February 1969), pp.1-7; and Michael J. Sodaro, Moscow, Germany, and the West from Khrushchev to Gorbachev (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp.108-34. New evidence has also revealed that the Bulgarian leader Todor Zhivkov had reacted "with great anxiety and apprehension" to Novotny's removal and Dubcek's elevation ("Zapis' besedy s pervym zamestitelem Ministra inostrannykh del NR Bolgarii tov. Gero Grozevym," Cable No. 40 (SECRET) from N. V. Maslennikov, counselor at the Soviet embassy in Bulgaria, 8 January 1968, in Tsentr khraneniya sovremennoi dokumentatsii (herein after TsKhSD), F. 5, Op. 60, D. 279, L1, 2-3; see Mark Kramer, "The Prague Spring and the Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia: New Interpretations," Cold War International History Project Bulletin, Issue 3 (Fall 1993), p.5.

¹⁶ For example, Aviation Week and Space Technology of 25 March 1968 reported that air mobile and light armored units in the Carpathian military districts were placed on alert in late February.

also called a Warsaw Pact conference, published a Pravda editorial warning against deviation, and had Brezhnev give a speech in Moscow.

The first example of overt pressure was the Dresden meeting of 23 March, which was attended by all the leaders of the Warsaw Pact states with the exception of Romania.¹⁷ According to Karen Dawisha, there was "universal agreement" among the Soviet and Czechoslovak leaders that the decision to call the Dresden meeting marked "the real beginning of the crisis".¹⁸ At the meeting, concern was expressed over the developments in Prague, such as the call for a modification of censorship, the talk of a "socialist market economy", and greater inner-party democracy. Brezhnev warned the Czechoslovak leadership that

17 Evidence suggests that the Soviet decision to call the bloc meeting was heavily influenced by the Poles and East Germans. For example, Radio Belgrade, commenting on the meeting, agreed that "it is not a secret that changes in Czechoslovakia were not welcomed in the GDR and to a certain degree in Poland"; see Radio Belgrade, 25 March 1968; quoted in RFE, Communist Area, USSR and East Europe 27 March 1968. Zdenek Mlynar argued that Poland and East Germany (the latter especially) were important forces behind the convocation of the meeting; see the interview with Mlynar by Karen Dawisha, 1 June 1979, in Dawisha, op. cit., p.39.

18 Ibid, p.37. The importance of the Dresden summit for the Soviet Union can be determined, for example, in the 15 July "Warsaw Letter": "we expressed these fears at a meeting in Dresden".

an acute ideological struggle is now in progress. The front line of this struggle ... lies between socialism and capitalism ... Imperialism has attempted to weaken the ideological-political unity of the working people in the socialist countries ... the ideological struggle in our time is the sharpest form of the class struggle. In it there can be no political indifference, passivity or neutrality with respect to the aims pursued by the enemy.¹⁹

Vasil Bilak (one of the conservatives within the Czechoslovak leadership and head of the Slovak Communist Party) noted in a subsequent interview that the personnel changes made by the Czechoslovak party leaders up to the Dresden meeting had "violated ... the basic principles of cadre policy".²⁰ According to his account, Brezhnev argued that Czechoslovak violation of this principle in allowing the selection, for example, of a new president without party interference undermined the party's hegemonic position within that society. This was a particularly sensitive issue for Moscow as the USSR exercised its control over East European

19 See Pravda, 30 March 1968. In addition, the once-secret transcripts and summaries of the Dresden Conference confirm that Gomulka and Ulbricht led the way in opposing the Czechoslovak reforms. They depicted the events in Czechoslovakia as a "counterrevolution"; see "Zaznam z porady sesti bratrskych stran v Drazdanech (23.3.1968), vypracovany s. V. Bil'akem" (TOP SECRET), March 1968, in Archiv UV KSC, F. 01, Vol. AJ 131; in Kramer, op. cit., p.5

20 Rude Pravo, 3 September 1969.

developments by maintaining the closest ties with the ruling Communist Parties. Brezhnev warned that whereas certain anti-socialist tendencies previously had been regarded purely as a "transitional phenomenon", there was now a growing discrepancy between "words and deeds"; he urged the Czechoslovaks to "mobilize the party and the working class in time" to prevent "chaos".²¹

The stance adopted by the Soviet Politburo after the Dresden meeting was reflected in Pravda on 28 March under the name of I. Alexandrov, a pseudonym used for top level policy statements.²² While reaffirming the deep bonds uniting the two countries and parties, the editorial also contained an explicit statement of Moscow's determination to maintain Czechoslovakia as a member of the socialist community:

The peoples of the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia and our communist parties are linked by indissoluble ties of fraternal friendship. This friendship has deep historical roots. It has been sealed with the blood of the best sons of the Soviet and Czechoslovak peoples, shed together in the struggle against the common enemy, fascism,

²¹ Ibid.

²² In July 1968 during a press conference in Sweden Alexei Kosygin, a member of the Soviet Politburo, conceded that the Alexandrov articles reflected Politburo opinion; see the text of the interview in Pravda, 16 July 1968.

the struggle in which the unshakable alliance between the USSR and Czechoslovakia emerged. The Communist parties of the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, united by fidelity to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, inspire and direct our friendship ... No one and nothing, under any conditions, can shake our fraternal friendship, which serves the vital interests of the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia.

In addition, in his speech to the Moscow City Party Conference on 29 March Brezhnev called for "iron party discipline". He warned of the danger of "revision and nationalist" elements attempting to undermine the rule of communist parties and the solidarity of the socialist camp.²³

There were, as during the other East European crises, divisions within the Soviet leadership over domestic and foreign policy. Brezhnev's permitting the CPCz to replace Novotny with Dubcek was seen by conservatives within the Kremlin as a mistake which endangered Soviet patrimony.²⁴ In addition, the party bosses of the western border republics argued that their areas were particularly vulnerable to "contagion". The Ukrainian Party First Secretary Piotr Shelest, in particular, believed that Czechoslovak events were being sympathetically

²³ Pravda, 30 March 1968.

²⁴ For details, see Harry Gelman, The Brezhnev Politburo and the Decline of Detente (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), pp.98-101.

viewed by a large Ukrainian audience.²⁵ Throughout the spring and summer the Ukrainian press published many articles which stated or implied that Czechoslovak "revisionist" ideas had penetrated across the border.²⁶ Disquiet had also spread within the Soviet military, which viewed events in a northern tier state as dangerous to the entire alliance.²⁷

Brezhnev appeared unenthusiastic about the political costs of an invasion; overall a consensus for a military solution was slow in forming, primarily because the most ideologically-oriented segment itself was divided. Suslov was apparently reluctant about a military intervention because it would undermine the prestige of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, an intervention would damage relations with other East European countries, as well as with other communist parties in the West and the Third

25 For further examination of the general impact of Czechoslovak events on the Ukraine Republic, see Peter J. Potichnyj and Grey Hodnett, The Ukraine and the Czechoslovak Crisis, Australian National University, Department of Political Science and Research, School of Social Sciences, Occasional Paper, No.6 (1970).

26 For Shelest's views regarding the Czechoslovak crisis, see his speeches in Pravda Ukrainy, 17 February and 5 July 1968, and his article, "Faithful Attachment of the CPSU" in Voprosy istorii KPSS, No.7 (28 June 1968), pp.7-20.

27 See A. Ross Johnson, Robert W. Dean, and Alexander Alexiev, East European Military Establishments: The Warsaw Pact Northern Tier (New York: Crane Russak, 1982).

World. In addition, an invasion could have threatened the planned November 1968 World Communist Conference.²⁸ There was, however, agreement on the need to pressure the Czechoslovak elite to slow the process of reform.²⁹

There were also divisions within the Czechoslovak leadership, roughly between the "reformers" and the "hard-liners". The reformers were separated into two groups: radicals, such as Josef Smrkovsky and Frantisek Kriegel; and moderates, such as Dubcek and Mlynar. The hard-liners were represented by Drahomir Kolder, Alois Indra, Bilak, and Milos Jakes. The factions differed primarily in their views on the process of reform and, particularly on the outcome of the Extraordinary Party Congress scheduled for 9 September.³⁰

28 For Suslov's views, see Pravda, 6 May 1968; for comments regarding the Congress, see "On the Eve of the Consultative Meeting in Budapest," World Marxist Review, Vol.11, No.2 (1968), pp.3-6.

29 For an examination of the factions within the Kremlin leadership, as well as those existing within the East European elites, see Jiri Valenta, Soviet Intervention in Czechoslovakia 1968: Anatomy of a Decision, revised and expanded edition (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), pp.15-39.

30 Valenta, op. cit., p.37.

III. The Action Program

In early April Dubcek's "Action Program" was adopted. The program projected numerous reforms and a restructuring of Czechoslovak society.³¹ On domestic policy it proclaimed: a full break with the dogmatism of the past; increased democratization within the party; separation of party and state functions; relaxation of censorship and the safeguarding of political rights; and, the expansion of Slovakia's autonomy. This was essentially the blueprint for "socialism with a human face". Externally, the Action Program affirmed the CPCz's determination: that Czechoslovakia would remain firmly committed to the socialist community; that it would fulfill its obligations to the Warsaw Pact and Comecon; and, that Czechoslovakia would maintain its loyalty to the Soviet Union.

In Soviet opinion and elsewhere in the bloc these reforms were considered dangerous: although the program did not envisage the dismantling of socialism in domestic affairs, the changes it contemplated might have resulted in a system more pluralistic and democratic than that of any other socialist state. The announcement of the Action

31 Rude Pravo, 10 April 1968.

Program, moreover, came at a time when the reformists within Czechoslovakia were replacing many of the hard-liners.³²

The Soviet leadership undertook, therefore, a number of measures to relay its disapproval. First, Brezhnev attempted to form a pro-Soviet ruling faction from the remnants of the Novotny group and those party members apprehensive about the increase in "reformists". Second, on 10 April the Soviet leader convened a CPSU Central Committee Plenum where he affirmed the readiness of the Soviet party to take all necessary measures for the "political, economic, and defensive consolidation of the socialist confederation". He also warned against anti-communist attempts to weaken the "unity of the socialist camp".³³ Third, a 12 April article in Pravda attacked "rightist excesses" in Prague. It questioned the degree of control the Czechoslovak leadership would be able to maintain should the Action Program be carried out. Statements were also made to reinforce the existence of socialist obligations. Fourth, Brezhnev sent a letter to Dubcek expressing his uneasiness about developments in Czechoslovakia.³⁴

32 For details, see Jones, Soviet Influence, op. cit., pp.46-47.

33 Pravda, 11 April 1968.

34 See Dubcek, op. cit., p.157.

Finally, on 22 April the Moscow party boss, V. V. Grishin, delivered a speech in which he affirmed that socialist construction was a collective endeavor. He argued that socialist states were free to pursue independent domestic and foreign policies providing that they were compatible with their obligations. Grishin also warned that imperialism was not only seeking to weaken socialism, but to restore capitalism in the socialist countries. He cited the five principles of proletarian internationalism and stated that the CPSU considered that

now as never before, the unity of the countries of the socialist commonwealth and the harmonization of the national interest of each fraternal country with the general interest of the world socialist system and the international communist movement is paramount.³⁵

Grishin also announced that "the Soviet Union will extend to those people whose freedom and independence is threatened by imperialism all-round political, economic, and - if necessary - also military aid". Moreover, on 25 April Pravda published an article on "Marxism and the Contemporary Ideological Struggle" by S. Kovalev

³⁵ Izvestia, 23 April 1968.

(later of "Brezhnev Doctrine" fame) in which he attacked the democratic ideals of the Prague Spring:

To oppose the guiding role of the Communist party in socialist society is to make an attempt on the very foundations of this society, on the fundamental vital interests of the working masses.³⁶

At the same time, between April and May a military option began to be considered. According to Mlynar, Brezhnev revealed that the military option was prepared in May 1968, but that "At the time it seemed that it wouldn't be necessary".³⁷ On 3 May Dubcek was "invited" to Moscow where he was met by Brezhnev, Kosygin and Nikolay Podgorny. The haste with which the meeting was arranged, the late hour of arrival, and the presence at the airport of the top Soviet leadership was indicative of its importance. Bilak later reported that the Soviet leader told the contingent that the situation in Czechoslovakia had deteriorated since the Dresden meeting and that Moscow feared "the growth of counterrevolutionary forces."³⁸ The Soviet authorities "begged" the Czechoslovaks "not to forget that the Western boundaries of the CSSR were

36 Pravda, 25 April 1968.

37 Mlynar, op.cit., p.162.

38 Interview with Bilak, Rude Pravo, 3 September 1969.

at the same time the boundaries of the socialist camp", and that "under no circumstances would it be permitted for events to develop in such a way that sooner or later socialism would be liquidated in Czechoslovakia. This had become the concern not only of Czechoslovakia, but of international socialism as a whole".³⁹

The Kremlin also initiated other measures. On 9-10 May Soviet-Polish-East German maneuvers were conducted on the CSSR's northern borders. Prague then agreed to permit Warsaw Pact maneuvers to take place on Czechoslovak territory in June. T. W. Wolfe argues that this agreement proved to have been a tactical error: the maneuvers permitted the introduction of Soviet troops into Czechoslovakia.⁴⁰

The developments in Czechoslovakia were closely monitored by the East European allies. Both Gomulka and Ulbricht feared similar movements in their countries.⁴¹ At the Moscow conference, they

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ See T. W. Wolfe, Soviet Power and Europe 1945-1970 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), p.371.

Dubcek argued that the Soviet Union had proposed a "small training exercise" with limited staff and was surprised with its eventual size; see Dubcek, op. cit., p.158.

⁴¹ The East German press continuously published articles which criticized the developments in Czechoslovakia. In one instance Neues Deutschland reported the presence of American tanks on Czechoslovak territory, but neglected to explain that they were being used in a film.

demanded that immediate action be taken.⁴² In a speech on 16 May during the signing of a new Polish-Hungarian Friendship Treaty, Gomulka pointed out that imperialism "frequently camouflages its subversive activity with the mask of 'improving' socialism".⁴³ In contrast, Kadar's speech while calling for "vigilance, cohesion, and an active stand of the forces of progress", made no specific reference to the situation in any communist state.⁴⁴ Yugoslavia and Romania were supportive of Czechoslovak developments.

The results of the May Plenum allayed Soviet concern, albeit only temporarily. The plenary session of the Czechoslovak Central Committee passed a five-point resolution which stated that: the leading role of the party should be ensured; the development of socialism should be protected; the new political system should be in accordance with the development of socialism; and, the relations between Czechoslovakia and the other socialist countries should further develop on the basis and

42 "Zapis' besedy v TsK KPSS s rukovoditelyami bratskikh partii Bolgarii, Vengrii, Germanii, Pol'shi, 8 maya 1968 goda" (TOP SECRET), 8 May 1968, in Archiv Komise vlady CSFR pro analyzu udalosti let 1967-1970 (henceforth abbreviated as Archiv Kom.), Z/S 2; in Kramer, op. cit., p.5.

43 PAP, 16 May 1968.

44 MTI, 16 May 1968.

principles of proletarian internationalism.⁴⁵ With these reassurances the May Plenum appeared to be a victory for the Soviet moderates in the Politburo who had urged patience toward Czechoslovakia's reform program. Brezhnev was reported to have told the Czechoslovak delegation during the post-invasion negotiations that the Soviet leadership initially had considered a military solution in May. "But then," he continued, "it seemed that this would not be necessary. The first swallow appeared - the plenary session of the Central Committee of the CPCz."⁴⁶

IV. The "2000 Words"

After the May Plenum, the Kremlin conducted a two-prong policy toward Czechoslovakia. While continuing to put pressure on the Dubcek leadership to slow the pace of reform, Moscow at the same time prepared for a possible invasion. Concern was heightened with the publication in Prague on 27 June of the "2000 Words". Briefly, the statement "2000 Words to Workers, Farmers, Scientists, Artists and

45 See Windsor and Roberts, op. cit., pp.46-47.

46 See Mlynar, op. cit., p.206.

Everyone" called for more rapid progress in the democratization of the party and the departure of those who constituted an obstacle to reform.⁴⁷

By itself, the impact of the "2000 Words" may not have been significant, but coming at the end of a month of polemics, negotiations, dissent, and maneuvers it was perhaps inevitable that Moscow should have regarded this statement as "the last straw".⁴⁸ In addition, there was increasing polarization of the factions within the Czechoslovak political elite.⁴⁹ While Dubcek and the Presidium as a whole condemned the "2000 Words" as extreme, the party's failure to invoke any penalty against the authors undermined its criticism. When the definitive Soviet comment appeared, it was evident that Moscow's attitude had hardened dramatically. The Kremlin issued several statements to indicate that the course being pursued by Czechoslovakia was dangerous. These statements - culminating with the Warsaw Letter - which were couched in socialist language, had a number of functions: as a signal of Moscow's concern; as a warning to the Czechoslovak leadership to change its reformist course; as a method of mobilizing support within the rest of the

47 See Literarni listy, 27 June 1968.

48 Mlynar, op. cit., p.139.

49 See Valenta, op. cit., pp.40-42.

bloc; and, as a future justification for military intervention.

On 4 July Brezhnev warned that "we cannot and never will be indifferent to the fate of socialist construction in other countries, to the common cause of socialism and communism in the world."⁵⁰ An article appeared in Pravda (again under the pseudonym "I. Alexandrov") after Dubcek had declined an invitation to attend a joint meeting of the WTO. The article, entitled "Attack on the Socialist Foundations of Czechoslovakia," was ostensibly a criticism of the "2000 Words", but it reflected the antagonism toward the entire reform movement. The article stated that those who supported the views of the "2000 Words" were seeking to undermine the very foundations of socialism.⁵¹ It contained phrases which warned that forces existed which were trying "to discredit the Czechoslovak communist party and its leading role", and to "prepare the way for counterrevolution". Moscow could not "remain indifferent" when the "foundations of socialism" were "subject to attack". The Czechoslovak leadership, therefore, could "always rely on the ... support ... of the Soviet Union".

The article also contained an explicit comparison

⁵⁰ Pravda, 4 July 1968.

⁵¹ Pravda, 11 July 1968.

between the tactics used by "counterrevolutionary elements" in Czechoslovakia and those used twelve years previously in Hungary:

Such tactics are not new. They were resorted to by the counter-revolutionary elements in Hungary that in 1956 sought to undermine the socialist achievements of the Hungarian People. Now, 12 years later, the tactics of those who would like to undermine the foundations of socialism in Czechoslovakia are even more subtle and insidious.

That "Alexandrov" described these tactics as "subtle and insidious" was, according to Karen Dawisha, the first time that the Soviet Politburo had specifically endorsed elements of the theory of "quiet counterrevolution". It was fully enunciated after the invasion by Kovalev. According to this theory, it was not necessary to wait for "blood to be shed" before going to the aid of "good communists". It was the duty of the "defenders of socialism" to take action not solely in response to an irrevocable breakdown in law and order, but when the socialist foundation of a society was being undermined.⁵²

At the same time, the Soviet leadership delayed the withdrawal of troops used in the June exercises.

⁵² See Dawisha, op. cit., p.193.

The presence of these troops was necessary if a military intervention was launched. Windsor argues that the lingering presence of Soviet troops in effect already constituted an intervention.⁵³ Moreover, the Soviet leadership made the decision that whatever option was chosen it was necessary to involve the Warsaw Pact: a collective approach may have been deemed more legitimate by a global audience than one that was unilateral; second, a multilateral approach would enable the Soviet Union to avoid the odium it had incurred by acting alone in Hungary in 1956; and, a joint effort prevented the socialist countries from forming separate agreements and "fronts" against the Soviet Union.

V. The Warsaw Letter

By mid-July, as Kadar later acknowledged, "the ranks of the supporters of military intervention had increased within the Soviet Politburo."⁵⁴ On 15 July the Soviet Union and four of its Warsaw Pact allies - East Germany, Poland, Hungary, and Bulgaria - in a

⁵³ Windsor and Roberts, op. cit., p.51.

⁵⁴ "Yanosh Kadar o 'Prazhskoi vesne'," Kommunist (Moscow), Vol.13 (July 1990), p.101; in Kramer, op. cit., p.6.

joint letter delivered what amounted to an ultimatum to the Dubcek leadership to either comply with its demands or face the consequences.⁵⁵ Within the "Warsaw Letter" were the main elements of the Soviet interventionist doctrine: the subordination of national interests to the (Soviet-defined) interests of the international communist movement; and, the duty and the right of socialist states to come to the defense of socialism, wherever it might be threatened, and irrespective of the source of that threat. The text of the letter asserted that anti-socialist forces had gained control of the media, were attempting - in alliance with the imperialists - to undermine Czechoslovakia's socialist foundations, and that Dubcek's leadership appeared to be losing control of the situation:

The development of events in your country deeply disquiets us. The rise of reaction against your party and the bases of the socialist system in Czechoslovakia, supported by imperialism, threatens to lead your country away from the path of socialism, and as a consequence, is a danger to the interests of the whole socialist system ... We have no intention to intervene in such matters as they are the purely internal concern of the party and of your state ... At the same time we

55 The Romanians did not participate as they viewed the other bloc countries actions as interference in Czechoslovakia's internal affairs.

cannot consent to hostile forces forcing your country from the socialist path and creating the threat of tearing Czechoslovakia away from the socialist commonwealth. This is no longer your concern alone. It is the common concern of all communist and workers parties, of states that are bound by allegiance, cooperation and friendship ...

The peoples of our countries, at the cost of enormous sacrifice achieved victory over Hitler's fascism, have fought for and won freedom and independence, the possibility of advancing in the path of progress and socialism ... We shall never consent to the endangering of these historic achievements of socialism, independence and the security of all our nations to be threatened ... 56

The alternatives were clear: either the CPCz Central Committee would form a new majority composed of conservatives with more submissive liberals and would revise its policy or the five "allies" would suppress the counterrevolution. "We are convinced," it concluded, "that the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, aware of its responsibility, will resort to the necessary measures and bar the way to reaction. In this struggle you can count on the solidarity and complete assistance of the fraternal socialist countries." According to recent archival evidence, it was during the Warsaw meeting that the

56 Pravda, 18 July 1968; full text in Windsor and Roberts, Czechoslovakia 1968, op. cit., pp.150-56.

parties agreed that all means - including military force - would be applied if necessary. Also, that the "healthy core" of the CPCz would be secretly asked for support against the reformists.⁵⁷

The Soviet military leadership's concern was augmented by the public comments made in July by Czechoslovak General Vaclav Prchlik, in which he criticized Soviet hegemony within the Warsaw Pact.⁵⁸ Soviet sensitivity was high as Albania had formally left the Pact, and Romania had stopped being a reliable member. Soviet military commanders had wanted a strong permanent Soviet military presence in Czechoslovakia (as in the GDR, Poland and Hungary). They had, at different times during the Prague Spring, urged the Czechoslovaks to accept the "temporary" deployment of Soviet forces.⁵⁹ In addition, reformist influences were spreading within the Czechoslovak armed forces with pro-Soviet

57 See Czechoslovak Television, 16 July 1992; in Jan Obrman, "Moscow Reveals Documents on 1968 Invasion of Czechoslovakia," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol.1, No.37 (18 September 1992), p.18.

58 Ibid.

59 See "Vystoupeni generala Prchlika, vedouciho statne administrativniho oddeleni UV KSC, na tiskove konferenci," 16 July 1968, pp.1-2; in Kramer, op. cit., p.8. Not only was Soviet troop presence a major requirement for the military, but there was also concern that the Prague Spring could disrupt arrangements regarding nuclear weapons deployment; for details see Kramer, op. cit., pp.8-10.

officers being removed, or increasingly isolated.⁶⁰

VI. The Bratislava Declaration

After the publication of the Warsaw Letter, Dubcek and the Soviet Politburo met at Cierna nad Tisou on 29 July. The fact that almost the entire Soviet leadership attended the meeting appeared to suggest how seriously Moscow viewed the situation. Moreover, according to Mlynar, Dubcek deduced that Brezhnev was genuinely looking for a peaceful solution that would vindicate his moderate approach. He was in conflict with the "hawks" in the Soviet Politburo as well as with Ulbricht and Gomulka, who favored military intervention.

Dubcek inferred from the proceedings that the Soviet Politburo felt that the security of the entire bloc was being threatened; that the Czechoslovak reforms were impairing the defensive

⁶⁰ Memorandum No.2351-14 (TOP SECRET) from N. Malygin, deputy chairman of the KGB, to the CPSU Secretariat, 10 October 1968 in TsKhSD, F.5, Op. 60, D.311, pp.92-94; in Kramer, op. cit., p.9. For further examination of the military issue in Soviet-Czechoslovak relations, see Lawrence L. Whetten, "Military Aspects of the Soviet Occupation of Czechoslovakia," World Today, Vol.25 (February 1969), pp.60-68.

capability of the bloc, as well as weakening its political unity. In such a situation Dubcek (according to Mlynar) was willing "to sign anything affirming the hegemony of Moscow and the membership of Czechoslovakia in the Soviet bloc, thinking that in doing so he would avert the pressure of the 'hawks' and thus the danger of a military intervention".⁶¹

Once a relative consensus was reached, the other four authors of the Warsaw Letter were invited to Bratislava to make the compromise official. The resulting Bratislava Declaration of 3 August contained assurances by the "fraternal parties" that "progress along the road to socialism and communism can only be made by strictly and consistently abiding by the general laws of socialist construction and, above all, by strengthening the leading role of the working class and its vanguard - the communist parties."⁶² The agreement concluded that it was "the common international duty of all socialist countries to support, strengthen, and defend these gains, which have been achieved at cost

61 Mlynar, op. cit., p.153. According to Jiri Hajek - Czechoslovak Foreign Minister at the time - the Czechoslovak delegation took seriously the possibility that its members could be arrested; see Adam Michnik's interview with Jiri Hajek in Gazeta Wyborcza, 28-29 August 1993.

62 Pravda, 4 August 1968.

of every people's heroic effort and selfless labor."

The talks at Cierna demonstrated that the two sides had different ideas about socialism and the situation in Czechoslovakia. The Kremlin insisted that the main characteristics of socialism were the leading role of the party, which was being threatened by press criticism of past and present activities of the CPCz, as well as the birth of four non-communist parties. For Brezhnev this type of dissent was viewed as "counterrevolutionary".⁶³ Moreover, Moscow did not want to tolerate a Communist Party that put its country's interests ahead of those of the Soviet Union. Shelest condemned the CPCz leadership, accusing it of doing nothing against "a wave of chauvinism and nationalism" which was impacting on Transcarpathian Russia.⁶⁴ Brezhnev told the CPCz to take control of the mass media and to prohibit the activities of the new non-communist parties. If these actions were not taken, the alternative would be an invasion:

63 "Zaznam jednani predsednictva UV KSC a UV KSSS v Cierna n. T.," ("The minutes of the meeting of the Presidium of the CC of the CPCz and the CC of the CPSU at Cierna nad Tisou,"), 29. 7-1.8. 1968, CPCz Archives, Fund 07/15, Vol. AJ 274, pp.5,28,32; in Jan Moravec, "The Ultimatum of Cierna Nad Tisou," in "Documentation: Could the Prague Spring Have Been Saved?" *Orbis*, Vol.35, No.4 (Fall 1991), p.588. For a more detailed examination of the meeting, see *ibid*, pp.587-95.

64 *Ibid*, p.159; in *ibid*, p.593.

"You gave us a promise and we believe that you will fight. On our part, however, we want to state that we are ready to give you unlimited assistance in this fight. We are already fully prepared to provide this aid."⁶⁵

Some observers, such as Kenneth Ames and Francois Fejto, have argued that the Soviet leadership's request for a meeting at Cierna was really a hoax, that under the guise of military maneuvers the Soviet Union was mobilizing for invasion.⁶⁶ Windsor, on the other hand, argued that up to Cierna the Soviet authorities still held out hope of a possible compromise. Similarly, Richard Lowenthal has termed the meeting at Cierna "a stay of execution".⁶⁷ What occurred at Cierna was that both sides misinterpreted the agreements made. Brezhnev left Cierna apparently convinced that Czechoslovakia would comply: hence the meeting at Bratislava. But then Dubcek, in Soviet eyes, began acting as if the compromise at the border town had not happened at all.⁶⁸

65 Ibid, p.329; in *ibid*, p.595.

66 See Ames, *op. cit.*, p.49.

67 See Lowenthal, "Sparrow in the Cage," Problems of Communism, Vol.17, No.6 (November-December 1968), p.18.

68 During the Cierna meeting, the Czechoslovak hard-line faction began passing on biased information and exerted subtle pressure for the Soviet Union to take action. For a detailed examination of the hard-liners' role from Cierna until the invasion, see Kramer, *op. cit.*, pp.2-4; and

It was the publication in Rude Pravo on 10 August of draft party statutes for the congresses of the Slovak party (26 August) and the Czech party (9 September) which sealed the fate of the Prague Spring. The Fourteenth Party Congress appeared likely to confirm the whole reform process and drop from power most of its opponents. Draft statutes provided for strictly limited tenure for party officials and secret elections for office, both of which were radical departures. These reforms were certain to be discussed and supported. In addition, it was assumed that the Slovak Party Congress would commit itself to the reforms.

According to Windsor, the draft statutes and their probable approval appeared to be "a direct invitation to the ultimate sin: factionalism. It meant the end of what was euphemistically known as democratic centralism, and the introduction of democracy into the party instead."⁶⁹ Not even the last-minute appearances in Prague of Tito (9 August) and Ceausescu (15 August) could have prevented the decision to invade; indeed, their visits may have further provoked the Soviet leadership. Their actions may have added to Soviet fears that in preparation for further resistance the Czechoslovak

Obrman, op. cit., pp.16-19.

⁶⁹ Windsor and Roberts, op. cit., p.61.

leaders were attempting to reinsure their position and solicit help.

Moscow, therefore, pursued several policies and practices associated with the Soviet interventionist doctrine. On 11 August new military maneuvers around Czechoslovakia were announced. Brezhnev then called Dubcek on 13 August to say that he and his fellow East European allies "were not satisfied" with the way the Bratislava Agreement was being implemented.⁷⁰ On 16 August, in a personal letter to Dubcek, Brezhnev insisted that the Czechoslovak leader fulfill the Cierna promise.⁷¹ It was at a meeting on 18 August in Moscow, with the five "Warsaw Letter" signatories, that the final decision was made to intervene.⁷²

VII. The "Brezhnev Doctrine"

The Soviet intervention of 21-22 August had sent

70 Dubcek. op. cit. p.172.

71 The original text of this letter was reported in Rude Pravo, 14 May 1990, pp.1-2.

72 See the stenographic record from a Conference of First Secretaries of the Communist Parties of Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland, and the USSR held on 18 August 1968 in Moscow; Archives of New Sources, Warsaw, "Secret," no number; in Dubcek, op. cit., p.172,

shock waves throughout the Western and socialist community. Although, as has been argued throughout this chapter, there had been evidence of a serious and imminent Soviet military threat, many observers had neglected it. Throughout the Prague Spring Moscow had issued statements warning Czechoslovakia against deviation. These statements were supplemented with policies and practices associated with the doctrine, such as allied meetings, official visits, publication of articles, and military maneuvers.

The following recurring themes were stated throughout the crisis: the developments in Czechoslovakia were the concern of the entire socialist community; each socialist country had obligations to the socialist community; peculiarities in each socialist country did not invalidate the general laws of socialist construction; the leading role of the communist party in Czechoslovakia was under threat; the danger existed of capitalist restoration through counterrevolution; revolutionary vigilance was needed against imperialist attempts to exploit "weak links" in the socialist community; Moscow was prepared to fulfill its international duty to defend the socialist gains of Czechoslovakia; and, the Soviet Union was protecting Czechoslovak sovereignty

by its intervention.⁷³

These formulations, found in the Warsaw Letter and other statements, had been delivered first as cautious reminders and later as forceful warnings of the punishment for disobeying Moscow's basic rules; however, they did not suffice, on the basis of interpretations heretofore made of proletarian internationalism, as a justification for military intervention. It was not a matter of a popular uprising with the aim of overthrowing one-party rule, as in Hungary in 1956, nor did Czechoslovakia intend to leave the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

The Soviet leadership, therefore, justified its intervention in three ways: first, Tass announced that the people and the leadership of the CSSR had asked the Soviet Union and other allied states to render "urgent assistance, including assistance with armed forces" (which Dubcek and other leaders denied) and declared that "Nobody will ever be allowed to wrest a single link from the community of socialist states".⁷⁴

73 See Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., pp.145-47.

74 See Pravda, 21 August 1968. The Kremlin had wanted the hard-liners within the CPCz to form a new "revolutionary workers' and peasants' government" (as in the Hungarian crisis) to request fraternal assistance (in the hope of legitimizing the invasion) as well as to carry out all the administrative measures to "normalize" Czechoslovakia. However, the Soviet Union was unable to form an alternative government and by 22 August concluded that there was no

There had been rumors circulating for many years about a "letter of invitation". Not, however, until July 1989 with Kadar's mention of an appeal by a few individuals within the CPCz leadership was the existence officially confirmed.⁷⁵ The documents or "letters of invitation" were not published until July 1992, when they were turned over by Russia to the Czechoslovak government. They revealed that Antonin Kapek wrote a letter to Brezhnev during the Cierna meeting urging the Soviet leader to "extend fraternal assistance to our Party and our whole nation".⁷⁶ A second, collective "letter of invitation" by the Bilak group was given to Brezhnev during the Bratislava Conference.⁷⁷ The signatories called on the CPSU to "use all means at your disposal", including military force, to "prevent the imminent threat of counterrevolution."⁷⁸ Some analysts, such as Mark Kramer, argue that the letters of invitation were not decisive in provoking

alternative but to negotiate with the existing party leadership; see, for details, Mlynar, op. cit., pp.201-04 and Dawisha, op cit., pp.320-25.

75 Interview in Magyarország (Budapest), Vol.28 (14 July 1989), p.5; in Kramer, op. cit., p.3.

76 "Dopis A. Kapeka," in Archiv Kom., Z/S 21; in *ibid.*

77 It was signed by Bilak, Indra, Kolder, Kapek, and Oldrich Svestka.

78 "Kdo pozval okupacni vojska: Dokumenty s razitkem nikdy neotvirat vydaly svedectvi," Hospodarske noviny (Prague), 17 July 1992, pp.1-2; in Kramer, op. cit., p.3.

the invasion.⁷⁹ The second letter, however, might have contributed to Moscow's erroneous assumption that a viable conservative group existed within the CPCz.⁸⁰ In January 1991 Vladimir Nelchanicky, Czechoslovak prosecutor and head of a special team charged with investigating the 1968 invasion, stated that "indeed, no constitutional official or any state organ had ever asked for military assistance".⁸¹

Second, the invasion was justified as being in accordance with "treaty obligations". The decision to invade was justified as one "fully in accord with the right of states to individual and collective self-defence envisaged in treaties of alliance concluded between the fraternal socialist countries".⁸² Comments made in the wake of the Soviet intervention described it as a legitimate preemptive strike against indirect aggression; against a revanchist West Germany; and, against the imperialists who were inciting counterrevolution.⁸³

79 See Kramer, op. cit., p.4.

80 The text of the collective letter translated into English can be found in the Cold War International History Project Bulletin, Issue 2 (Fall 1992), p.35.

81 See RFE\RL Daily Report, No.8 (11 January 1991).

82 Pravda, 21 August 1968.

83 References to West German aid to "counterrevolutionary forces" could be found in the East German, Bulgarian, Hungarian, and Polish press: see Radio Free Europe Research, Eastern Europe, No.32 (August 1968); also comments by Andrei

Article 4 of the Warsaw Treaty did refer to an armed attack, but made no reference to threats or incitements as constituting legitimate grounds for military action. Moreover, Article 1 of the WTO stated that the parties would agree to refrain from the threat or use of force in their mutual relations.

A theoretical justification for the intervention was, therefore, developed. As a first step a theory of "peaceful counterrevolution" was developed by the party ideologist, S. Kovalev in Pravda on 11 September 1968. Kovalev argued that by using the forms of a "quiet" or "peaceful" struggle against socialism the counterrevolutionary forces would be aiming at the communist party and would separate it from its leading position in society; this in turn would create a bridge to capitalist domination and separation from the socialist commonwealth. Kovalev wrote

The tactic of "peaceful counterrevolution" (in its initial stage) is a highly insidious tactic, since it is calculated to deceive the masses within the country by citing the necessity of "improving" socialism, supposedly in the interests of the people, and to mislead gullible people in foreign countries.

Kovalev warned that "neither peaceful nor armed counterrevolution would succeed in breaking even one member away from the socialist commonwealth".

Second, theoretical arguments were put forward which indicated that the Soviet justification for the intervention - socialist internationalism - transcended bourgeois legal concepts. In his second major article in Pravda on 26 September 1968 Kovalev spelled out in detail the theory of "limited sovereignty". Based on the principle of "proletarian socialist internationalism" he outlined the thesis of "limited sovereignty" and "limited right of self-determination" of the socialist states. In the article, Kovalev described four basic concepts: the indivisibility of the socialist commonwealth and of world socialism; socialist self-determination and the socialist commonwealth as the guardian of sovereignty; two camps or the struggle between systems; and the class basis of law.

Kovalev described world socialism as the "main achievement of the international workers' class", and ascribed the role of the "leading force" to the Soviet Union. World socialism was "indivisible" and its defense was the common concern of all communists and workers of the socialist countries. The sovereignty of any particular socialist country could not be placed above the interests of the world

revolutionary movement. In addition, the socialist countries should not allow themselves to be deterred from fulfilling their "international obligation" in the defense of their "common achievements", neither by "abstractly conceived sovereignty" nor by "formal adherence to the principle of freedom on the basis of self-determination of nations":

Just as, in V. I. Lenin's words, someone living in a society cannot be free of that society, so a socialist state that is in a system of other states constituting a socialist commonwealth cannot be free of the common interests of that commonwealth. The sovereignty of individual socialist countries cannot be counterposed to the interests of world socialism and the world revolutionary movement.

The weakening of any link in the world socialist system has a direct effect on all the socialist countries, which cannot be indifferent to this. Thus, the anti-socialist forces in Czechoslovakia were in essence using talk about the right to self-determination to cover up demands for so-called neutrality and the CSSR's withdrawal from the socialist commonwealth. But implementation of such "self-determination", i.e. Czechoslovakia's separation from the socialist commonwealth, would run counter to Czechoslovakia's fundamental interest and would harm the other socialist countries. Such "self-determination", as a result of which NATO troops might approach Soviet borders and the commonwealth of European socialist countries would be dismembered, in fact infringes on the

vital interests of these countries' peoples, and fundamentally contradicts the right of these peoples to socialist self-determination.

Kovalev argued that charges that the sovereignty of Czechoslovakia had been violated were based upon an abstract, classless approach to questions of sovereignty and self-determination. The Soviet theorist asserted that in a class society there is no such thing as nonclass law: legal norms must be subordinated to the laws of class struggle and socialist development. He explained, therefore, that every law, including international law, was subordinated to the laws of class struggle:

in the Marxist conception the norms of law, including the norms governing relations among socialist countries, cannot be interpreted in a narrowly formal way, outside the general content of the class struggle in the present-day world ... Those who speak of the "illegality" of the allied socialist countries' actions in Czechoslovakia forget that in a class society there is and can be no such thing as nonclass law. Laws and the norms of law are subordinated to the laws of the class struggle and the laws of social development. These laws are clearly formulated in the documents jointly adopted by the Communist and Workers' Parties.

World imperialism was, according to Kovalev, seeking to export counterrevolution into Czechoslovakia and

detach the country from the socialist commonwealth. This imperialist goal, if it had succeeded, would have contradicted the right of the Czechoslovak people to "socialist self-determination".

This was the essence of the doctrine enunciated in Pravda that came to be known as the "Brezhnev Doctrine". Although Kovalev's comments were viewed by many Western commentators as a new contribution to Soviet justifications for the invasion, they were a reiteration of statements made by Korovin, "Alexandrov" and others. In addition, there were many similarities in substance and in terminology to statements which had appeared in Soviet journals, speeches, and declarations made during the 1956 Hungarian crisis. Moreover, between March and August 1968 elements of the Soviet interventionist doctrine had been evident in Soviet statements, including the Warsaw Letter and the Bratislava Declaration.

On 3 October 1968 the "Brezhnev Doctrine" was further elaborated by Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko in a speech to the UN General Assembly:

The countries of the socialist commonwealth have their own vital interests, their own obligations, including those of safeguarding their mutual security and their own socialist principles of mutual relations based on

fraternal assistance, solidarity, and internationalism. This commonwealth constitutes an inseparable entity cemented by unbreakable ties such as history has never known ... The Soviet Union and other socialist countries have on many occasions warned those who are tempted to try to roll back the socialist commonwealth, to snatch at least one link from it, that we will neither tolerate nor allow that to happen.⁸⁴

The Soviet interventionist doctrine was essentially a sharpening of proletarian internationalism: it outlined more clearly the parameters of divergence; and, was defined within three months of the Soviet intervention by two articles and two speeches. The term "Brezhnev Doctrine", however, did not come to be widely used in the West until after Brezhnev's speech on 12 November 1968 to the Fifth Party Congress of the Polish United Workers Party.⁸⁵ While Brezhnev's remarks were essentially a reiteration of the previous remarks made by other Soviet theoreticians, his enunciation gave the doctrine the stamp of authority. Moreover, Brezhnev also provided a prescription for dealing with similar threats in the future: a renewed ideological offensive, involving a reasserting of the role of the communist parties; a

84 "Address by Foreign Minister Gromyko to the UN General Assembly," UN Document A/PV. 1625 (30 October 1968).

85 See Pravda, 13 November 1968. For the main body of the speech pertinent to this argument, see Chapter IV.

need for integration of the socialist community; and vigilance against the forces of imperialism.

There can also be found in Soviet statements the use of military language and metaphors as part of the process of justifying intervention. At the Dresden meeting, for example, Brezhnev warned of a "front line" struggle between capitalism and communism. At the April CPSU Central Committee Plenum, the Soviet leader expressed his concern over attempts by the "enemy" to weaken the "unity of the socialist camp". Other such phrases included "healthy forces" versus "hostile forces", fraternal states "being subjected to attack", protecting the "bases of the socialist system", and concerns of "armed counterrevolution".

There were two important points which the Soviet interventionist doctrine omitted to mention or outline. One involved the ambiguity as to the boundaries and limits of the doctrine: Yugoslavia, Romania, China, and Albania were unsure whether it applied to their relations with the Soviet Union. Kadar, for example, acknowledged in a November 1968 interview that the latter countries still had to be called "socialist" because, "regardless of differences on many matters they have the same viewpoint on basic issues". This appeared to suggest that at least one East European elite

considered those countries "commonwealth members."⁸⁶ There was also evidence of NATO producing a new set of contingency plans due to the possible threat to the "gray areas" countries.⁸⁷ In addition, who decided what objective criteria "endangered" socialism? In the Czechoslovak case, five socialist countries decided, while the overwhelming majority of the world's communist parties rejected Soviet arguments of "counterrevolution". Dubcek himself expressed that Soviet ambiguity was a "trademark" of the socialist system.⁸⁸

Second, the doctrine did not mention the Warsaw Pact. Moscow reserved the right to intervene militarily or otherwise if developments in any socialist country inflicted damage upon either socialism in that country or to the basic interests of other socialist countries. This view, however, was incompatible with Warsaw Treaty guarantees of independence and noninterference in internal affairs. As Remington put it, "The logic of this interpretation would restrict the Warsaw Pact to an instrument for political and military coordination

86 See Kadar's interview with C. L. Sulzberger in the New York Times, 15 November 1968.

87 See, for example, the Washington Post, 14 November 1968; and Time, 22 November 1968, pp.18-19.

88 See Dubcek, op. cit., p.176.

among European communist states."⁸⁹ Moreover, the "Brezhnev Doctrine" did not state that military force was the only instrument which Moscow could use to rein in deviation. Therefore, the reiteration of the Soviet interventionist doctrine might have also meant various kinds of interference short of military force, such as economic blockade, undermining of leaders and so forth.

VIII. The International Reaction **to the "Brezhnev Doctrine"**

The international reaction to - first - the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia and - second - the "Brezhnev Doctrine" was primarily negative. The global impact of the doctrine has been extensively examined in other publications and will only be briefly summarized in this study. Although the United States criticized the Warsaw Pact action, there appeared to be no question of a military response. The fundamental reason for the lack of a US or NATO response was the strong sense that Europe was divided into some kind of spheres of influence.

⁸⁹ See Remington, Warsaw Pact op. cit., p.109.

A direct military challenge to the Soviet sphere would have risked a huge military confrontation and nuclear war. Therefore, the Western powers were forced by events not to accept the "Brezhnev Doctrine", but to tolerate on a temporary basis certain material facts which were associated with it.⁹⁰

West European reaction to the intervention was similar to that of the United States. However, the West European governments, attempted to repair the damage done by the intervention to East-West relations. The detente process started by France in 1966 continued and was followed by Willy Brandt's "Ostpolitik".

In Eastern Europe reaction to Soviet military intervention varied.⁹¹ The leaders of Bulgaria, East Germany, and Poland gave unqualified support.⁹² According to Kiril T. Mazurov, a Soviet Politburo

90 For further description of the US reaction to the military intervention, see Thomas M. Franck and Edward Weisband, World Politics: Verbal Strategy Among the Superpowers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp.41-47.

91 For further discussion of both West European and socialist countries' reaction, see Jeffrey Simon, Cohesion and Dissension in Eastern Europe: Six Crises (New York: Praeger, 1983), pp.49-62.

92 See Skilling, op. cit., pp.742-45; Jan B. de Weydenthal, "Polish Politics and the Czechoslovak Crisis of 1968," Canadian Slavonic Papers, Vol.14 (Spring 1972), pp.31-56; and Erwin Weit, Eyewitness: the Autobiography of Gomulka's Interpreter (London: Andre Deutsch, 1973).

member and First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, "The main roles were played by Gomulka and Ulbricht. They were constantly phoning, suggesting solutions, and insisted on [the] toughest steps ... and on soldiers entering Czechoslovakia."⁹³ Hungary appeared more conciliatory in part because it remembered 1956, but also because of its own internal economic reforms adopted in January 1968. Once the decision was made to intervene, however, Hungary was forced to participate.⁹⁴

The Yugoslavs were shocked by the invasion and feared that under the "Brezhnev Doctrine" Moscow might define the socialist commonwealth to include Yugoslavia.⁹⁵ Tito feared that the Soviet Union,

93 Budapest Television, 4 September 1989; reprinted in Foreign Broadcast Information Service Daily Report: The Soviet Union (FBIS-SOV), 7 September 1989.

94 For further description, see Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., pp.160-61; and Lowenthal, op. cit. pp.21-22. Dubcek in his memoirs admitted that at no point during the Prague Spring did he believe that the Soviet Union would intervene militarily (see, for example, Dubcek, op. cit., p.128). He felt that the crushing of Hungary occurred in a different era, and that the international repercussions following such an invasion would have been worse than those after Hungary. In addition, Moscow had been promoting peaceful coexistence and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. Dubcek, therefore, questioned how they would challenge all the above by attacking Czechoslovakia (see *ibid*, pp.165-66 and 178-79).

95 For a detailed discussion of Yugoslav-Czechoslovak relations during the Prague Spring and the Yugoslav reaction to the Soviet intervention, see Richard B. Craig and J.

along with the other members of the Warsaw Pact, might send their armies into Romania and Yugoslavia for having supported the Czechoslovak reform movement, and for their denunciation of the Warsaw Pact action. In March 1969 Tito, therefore, issued an elaborate rejection of the "Brezhnev Doctrine":

[In] some East European socialist countries the unacceptable doctrine of a "collective", "integrated", and of an essentially limited sovereignty, is appearing. In the name of a supposedly higher level of relationships between socialist countries this doctrine negates the sovereignty of these states and tries to legalize the right of one or more countries according to their own judgment, and if necessary by military intervention to force their will upon other socialist countries.⁹⁶

The Soviet Union, along with the participating states in the intervention, instituted an anti-Yugoslav propaganda campaign. In an editorial appearing in the 31 August 1968 edition of Trybuna Ludu, Yugoslavia was warned that "our countries cannot tolerate the popularization of slogans of the non-alignment of states of the socialist camp". In

David Gillespie, "Yugoslav Reaction to the Czechoslovak Liberalization Movement and Invasion of 1968," Australian Journal of Politics and History, Vol.XXIII, No.2 (August 1977), pp.227-38.

⁹⁶ Borba, 13 March 1969. For an account of Tito's fears, see Time, 8 November 1968, pp.34-38.

addition, Tito was denounced in the Soviet press as "a lover of counterrevolution".⁹⁷ Such verbal attacks gave credence to Yugoslav fears of a possible military incursion by the Soviet Union.

In Romania, Ceausescu declared the invasion "a flagrant violation of the national sovereignty of a fraternal, socialist, free, and independent state".⁹⁸ Prior to the 1968 events Ceausescu had frequently repeated the theoretical defense of state sovereignty. He dismissed the notion that the sovereignty of a socialist state could be subordinated to class interests or that class interests of one country could dictate or speak for the interests of the entire community.⁹⁹ The Albanian leaders characterized the events of 1968 as a "brutal aggression" which was carried out "in a lightning-like and perfidious manner using fascist methods". Because of this intervention they warned "no one in the world will have any faith whatsoever in the Soviet revisionist clique."¹⁰⁰ They further demonstrated their opposition by formally

97 See Time, 11 October 1968, pp.28-29.

98 Scinteia, 22 August 1968.

99 See, for example, Nicolae Ceausescu, The Leading Role of the Party in the Period of Completing the Building of Socialism (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1967). For further discussion see Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., pp.158-60.

100 Declaration by the Albanian Communist Party and the Government Council of Ministers, 22 August 1968.

withdrawing from the Warsaw Pact.

The Chinese termed the "Brezhnev Doctrine" a "fascist" theory of "social-imperialist hegemony". They accused the Soviet "aggressors" of possessing "colonial interests in Eastern Europe" and of attempting to re-divide the world in collusion with US imperialists.¹⁰¹ In his address to the 9th Chinese Party Congress, Lin Biao described the great power chauvinism of the doctrine: "In order to justify its aggression and plunder, the Soviet revisionist renegade clique trumpets the so-called theory of 'limited sovereignty' ... What does all this mean? It means that your sovereignty is 'limited', while his is unlimited."¹⁰²

Even Cuba (which supported the invasion) admitted that Czechoslovakia's sovereignty had been violated.¹⁰³ Although the invasion was supported by North Vietnam, North Korea and Mongolia, the Soviet action divided the socialist camp. Most of the international communist movement, particularly that of Western Europe, condemned the invasion (with the exception of the communist parties of Luxembourg, Greece, Portugal, Cyprus, and West Germany).

101 See People's Daily, 17 March 1969.

102 Peking Review, 30 April 1969.

103 Granma, 25 August 1968.

**IX. Soviet Union Denies the Existence of
the "Brezhnev Doctrine"**

While the West had dubbed the concept of limited sovereignty the "Brezhnev Doctrine", the Soviet leadership denied its existence. In 1969 Brezhnev, for example, explained that sovereignty was not limited within the socialist commonwealth:

Bourgeois propaganda goes out of its way to malign the principles of the independence, sovereignty and equality of the national contingencies of the working class and the communist movement. That is the purpose for which imperialist propagandists have fabricated and put into circulation the notorious theory of "limited sovereignty".¹⁰⁴

The East European leaders who participated in the military intervention in public played down the significance of the doctrine. Kadar, for example, argued that the doctrine resulted logically from the fact that there were in 1968 fourteen "socialist" states in the world, whereas previously the Soviet Union had been alone. Some type of "guidelines" were, therefore, needed to define the "ground rules"

¹⁰⁴ See L. I. Brezhnev, O vneshnei politike KPSS i Sovetskogo gosudarstva (Moscow: Izdvo Politicheskoi literatury, 1973), p.175.

of socialist relations.¹⁰⁵ Gierek, on the other hand, claimed that Gomulka was an active partner in the "creation" of the "Brezhnev Doctrine". He added: "Officially it has to be stated, that there was no such doctrine; rather ... the Western press found in the thesis of 'fraternal aid' a theoretical-legal justification."¹⁰⁶

For Moscow the arguments regarding the Soviet violations of international law in the Czechoslovak case were futile as the law they were based on was not true, but "bourgeois" law. One Soviet theoretician, O. Pavlov, argued in October 1968

Typically enough, the loudest shouts about "violation of sovereignty" and "interference in domestic affairs" came from the ruling circles of these states which have made real violations virtually a guiding principle of their own policy.¹⁰⁷

Therefore, the West's allegations of Soviet violation of sovereignty and international law should really be targeted at themselves. The Western press' "fabrication alleging that the Soviet

105 See the New York Times, 15 November 1968.

106 See Janusz Rolicki, Edward Gierek: Przerwana Dekada (Warszawa: FAKT, 1990), p.110 (author's translation).

107 O. Pavlov, "Proletarian Internationalism and Defense of Socialist Gains," International Affairs (Moscow), No.10 (October 1968), p.11.

Union has put forward a 'new concept' of relations between socialist countries, which supposedly represents a radical revision of the former theory and practice in these relations" and which disregards "the principle of complete sovereignty of other socialist states" is, therefore, utter nonsense and an effort only "to smear Soviet foreign policy".¹⁰⁸

Still other Soviet analysts, such as V. Polyansky, disputed whether there was such a thing as a Soviet theory of "limited sovereignty":

Imperialist propaganda has put into circulation the doctrine of "limited sovereignty," which the Soviet Union, they say seeks to introduce in its relations with the socialist countries. The authors of this doctrine would reduce the conception of sovereignty to purely formal points and contrast it with the protection of the socialist system. They sought to weaken the international ties between socialist countries, to shatter the socialist community.¹⁰⁹

Polyansky added that proletarian internationalism did not limit a socialist state's sovereignty, but

108 Sh. Sanakoyev, "Proletarian Internationalism: Theory and Practice," International Affairs (Moscow), (April 1969), pp.9-15. at p.9.

109 V. Polyansky, Proletarian Internationalism: Guideline of the Communists (Moscow: Novosti, 1970), pp.64-65.

guaranteed it. The fraternal states could not remain "neutral" in the face of imperialist encroachment "on the sovereign right of the people of any socialist country to build socialism". This message was reiterated at the International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties in June 1969 when Gustav Husak, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPCz, stated:

Our own experience shows that the slogan of sovereignty devoid of class content is a refined and very effective weapon of the right opportunist, revisionist and anti-socialist forces ... We reject the various quasi-theories of limited sovereignty, artificially concocted by our class enemies, and look upon them as perfidious maneuvers of modern anti-communism.¹¹⁰

There were some Soviet international lawyers, such as V. M. Shurshalov, who argued that socialist states applied general international law in their mutual relations.¹¹¹ In general, however, there were few, if any serious efforts by Soviet legal scholars to justify the intervention.

110 "International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties," June 1969, pp.412-13.

111 See his essay in a volume published in English under G. I. Tunkin (ed), Contemporary International Law (Moscow, 1969).

X. Factors Considered in Decision to Intervene

Difficulty of decision

In their decision to invade, the Soviet leadership took a number of factors into consideration. The decision appeared to be taken with great difficulty. There existed within the Soviet leadership a split regarding what measures to initiate against the reform movement. Brezhnev was dependent on the power structure within the Politburo and apparently could not afford to be seen as "soft" on Czechoslovakia. According to Mlynar, three months after the invasion Brezhnev reportedly told Bohumil Simon (who led the Czechoslovak delegation to the anniversary of the October Revolution) that he had been against the action but: "If I hadn't voted in the Politburo for military intervention, what would have happened? You almost certainly would not be sitting here. And I probably wouldn't be sitting here either."¹¹² Mlynar argued that Brezhnev and his colleagues were pushed into the decision by the threat of a putsch in the Kremlin by anti-Brezhnev forces backed by Grechko and other Soviet marshals.¹¹³ In order to prevent

¹¹² Mlynar, op. cit., p.163.

¹¹³ Ibid, p.168.

the "coup" Brezhnev, therefore, took the initiative and united with the "hawks" in favor of the invasion. Kramer noted that a three-day session of the Politburo was required before the decision was reached. This suggested that there were some members who had serious reservations.¹¹⁴

It appeared, however, that every attempt was made to find a peaceful solution: a military intervention would be costly in terms of US-Soviet relations, the international communist movement, and global public opinion. As Gomulka explained in his memoirs:

The Soviet comrades obviously were very disturbed by what was happening in Czechoslovakia ... However, to intervene in a socialist country is not a simple or easy matter ... it was necessary to weigh very carefully on the scale the pros and cons of the situation. Even in the Soviet leadership itself there was no unanimity as to the final balance of that account. I will tell you very frankly that the scale was tipping both ways until the last minute.¹¹⁵

Domestic factors within the Soviet Union also appeared to have played a significant role. The Kremlin feared that Czechoslovak liberalization could have spread to the Ukraine and stimulated similar demands for reform, as well as calls for

¹¹⁴ Kramer, op. cit., p.11.

¹¹⁵ Nowiny Kurier, 15 June 1973.

increased independence from Moscow. The notion of proletarian internationalism had been used not only to justify Soviet leadership of the communist world, but also internally for Great Russian domination over the non-Russian nationalities. When signs that the reformist influence was beginning to filter into the Soviet Union, especially Ukraine, it alarmed some members of the Soviet political elite.¹¹⁶

Loss of party control

There was also the fear that events in Czechoslovakia were drifting out of the party's control. During the post-invasion meeting between the Soviet and Czechoslovak Politburos Brezhnev castigated Dubcek:

You lost control of the situation in Prague, and we saw our interests threatened. You put the results of the Second World War at risk. That our Western border is on the Elbe today has been paid for by the blood of our soldiers. We cannot allow this to be jeopardized, least of all because you have irresponsibly decided to experiment with socialism without so much as bothering to

¹¹⁶ For a survey see Hodnett and Potichnyj, op. cit., pp. 115-25.

consult us.¹¹⁷

The Soviet leadership might have suspected that sooner or later the reforms would give Czechoslovakia a form of ideological independence that may have encouraged the extremists to call for the country's departure from the Warsaw Pact; and the establishment of (at best) an alternative model of socialism or (worse) a Western kind of social democracy.¹¹⁸ Christopher Jones listed a number of events which indicated to Moscow that the "reformists" within the CPCz were increasingly gaining influence.¹¹⁹ Jaruzelski later argued that one of the main arguments for intervention was the creation of a social-democratic party.¹²⁰ Taken

117 See interview with Mlynar in G. R. Urban (ed), Communist Reformation: Nationalism, Internationalism and Change in the World Communist Movement (London: Maurice Temple Smith, 1979), p.133. See also Mlynar's account of the post-invasion meeting in Night Frost, op. cit., pp.237-41.

118 See Jonathan Steele, Soviet Power: The Kremlin's Foreign Policy - Brezhnev to Andropov (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983), p.100.

119 By mid-July of 1968 the progressives had a large majority among the delegates elected to the extraordinary party congress scheduled for early September; at the congress they planned to take complete control of the party's Central Committee and Presidium; and, a relaxation of censorship opened up the debate on the subject of Czechoslovakia's sovereignty with challenges to Soviet ideological orthodoxy appearing in Rude Pravo and other papers. See Jones, Soviet Influence, op. cit., pp.40-42.

120 See Wojciech Jaruzelski, Stan Wojenny Dlaczego ... (Warszawa: BGW, 1992), p.180.

together these developments challenged Soviet conceptions of the universal validity of the Soviet model; of the harmony of national and international interests; of the direction of Czechoslovak foreign policy; and, of the Soviet Union's leading role. Therefore, by intervening the Soviet leadership prevented the 14th Party Congress from convening and enabled the pro-Soviet conservative faction to take control of the party. Moscow, in turn, could count on the loyalty of the hard-liners because they owed their positions to the presence of Soviet troops.

"Spillover" effect

Another factor was the possible "contagion" of events in Prague on the members of the Warsaw Pact, especially the GDR and Poland. According to Mlynar, "Gomulka and Ulbricht saw their positions gravely threatened - and the best proof of how right they were to feel threatened was that within two years of the Soviet invasion both were removed from their posts."¹²¹ The responses of Gomulka and Ulbricht showed the low resistance of the East European

¹²¹ Mlynar, in Urban, op. cit., pp.134-35.

elites to political "infection" from their socialist allies. If the reform movement could have been contained and restricted only to Czechoslovakia, then intervention may have been averted. Once, however, Czechoslovak liberalization was legitimized as a bona fide variant of Marxism-Leninism, then it would validate demands by communists in the other satellites for the same measures. Therefore, the use of force was seen as the only effective remedy in line with the dictum attributed to Stalin that "socialism is where the Red Army soldier stands".

Christopher Jones argued, therefore, that what had alarmed the Soviet leadership was contagion of the Czechoslovak experiment to the rest of Eastern Europe; but that the contagion was not liberalism, but autonomy. What the Kremlin feared was the adaptation of ideology to the specific conditions of each country which could result in the local party securing the domestic and foreign support necessary to become independent of the Soviet party. It logically followed that if communist control was lost in Czechoslovakia, then not only might Soviet hegemony over Eastern Europe in general be severely limited, but its main security concerns might be left unprotected.

Security concerns

Another element was diplomatic and security considerations.¹²² Soviet reluctance to invade was accompanied by a determination to treat the democratization program in Czechoslovakia as a matter affecting the security of the socialist camp and not merely as a matter of ideological disagreement.¹²³ The crucial factor was "security", both of the USSR and of Eastern Europe, which was perhaps thought to be threatened by American imperialism, West German policies, possible shifts in Czechoslovak defense and foreign policy, and/or any weakening of the unity and defense capacity of the Warsaw Pact. Recent archival evidence indicates that Soviet leaders who were skeptical about invasion agreed with the common view that Soviet national security was threatened.¹²⁴ At the Cierna

122 In Moscow's concept of security in Europe, the need to preserve the ideological and political basis of the Soviet Union's hold upon East Europe was so intimately linked with its interests in maintaining a forward military position that it was difficult to say where one left off and another began.

123 See Philip Windsor, "Yugoslavia, 1951 and Czechoslovakia, 1968," in Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan (eds), Force Without War: US Armed Forces as a Political Instrument (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1984), pp.474-75.

124 See the Czechoslovak and Hungarian transcripts of the negotiations at Cierna and Bratislava; in Valenta, Soviet Intervention, op. cit., pp.168-73.

meeting, for example, the Soviet leadership talked about the Czechoslovak western border also being a Soviet border, or as Kosygin put it: "our common borders", "the border of World War II" from which Moscow would "never retreat".¹²⁵ Hans J. Morgenthau stated that the Soviet intervention was simple power politics and the reaffirmation of spheres of influence. Countries such as Poland and East Germany relied on the protection of the Soviet Union for their existence; the need of the other East European states for Soviet assistance, however, was not as clearly defined. Because these countries had more freedom of maneuver than Poland and the GDR, "therein lies the threat to the security of the Soviet Union."¹²⁶

The Federal Republic of Germany represented, in Soviet eyes, a direct threat to the interests of the USSR, particularly in the light of its Ostpolitik. Bonn's conciliatory policy was viewed by Moscow (and still more by East Berlin and Warsaw) as: designed to achieve a peaceful penetration of the East European countries (thus threatening the postwar frontiers, especially those of Poland and

125 Zaznam jednani predsednictev UV KSC a UV KSSS v Cierna n. T., op. cit., 29.7-1.8, 1968, pp.3/2, 7/2, 8/1, 32/3, 83/2; in Valenta, Soviet Intervention, op. cit., p.170.

126 Hans J. Morgenthau, "The Fate of Czechoslovakia," The New Republic (7 December 1968), pp.19-21, at p.20.

Czechoslovakia); isolating the GDR; and, undermining in the long run the socialist regimes themselves.

Strategic/military importance

Linked to the above security concerns was the strategic/military importance of Czechoslovakia. Because of its central location linking the northern and southern sectors of the Warsaw Pact, any decline in Czechoslovakia's reliability as an ally could have created untold problems in formulating bloc military strategy. Such a decline may have divided and isolated the two tiers within the WTO. An editorial in Pravda of 4 September elaborated Czechoslovakia's strategic importance:

Let [him] who is interested in this ... outline the Czechoslovak borders sharply on the map of Europe and see what the situation of the Socialist countries would be. This is a wedge dividing the Warsaw Treaty countries. The GDR and Poland remain to the North, Bulgaria and Romania to the South, without any direct communication between them, and soldiers of the Bundeswehr and American soldiers would appear directly on Soviet frontiers.

In addition, Soviet marshals saw in an intervention the opportunity to station troops permanently in Czechoslovakia. The "desertion" of Czechoslovak General Sejna on 25 February to the West was cited by Jaruzelski as an additional element taken into consideration in the military action: it deepened the socialist community's lack of confidence in Czechoslovakia.¹²⁷ Moreover, East Germany strongly supported the Soviet military, arguing that if Czechoslovakia continued to liberalize, to open its economy to Western investment, and to follow its own way in dealing with the Federal Republic of Germany (such as Romania) the net result would be a severe weakening of the GDR. Finally, it was possible that Soviet intelligence had assured the Kremlin that in the event of a military intervention the Czechoslovaks would not fight.

Role of the KGB

Recent evidence has confirmed earlier assumptions that the KGB had played a large role in the formation of Soviet policy toward Czechoslovakia. The security services' officers had presented Soviet

¹²⁷ Jaruzelski, op. cit., p.356.

policy-makers with a misleading view of developments in Czechoslovakia, thereby manipulating them to take the decision to intervene. The former KGB station chief in Washington, DC., Oleg Kalugin, described the problems he encountered when trying to present a balanced assessment of the crisis:

It's no secret that the KGB played an important role in many decisions concerning foreign policy matters. This applies to the events of 1968 in Czechoslovakia. The KGB stirred up fears among the country's leadership that Czechoslovakia could fall victim to NATO aggression or a coup unless certain actions were undertaken promptly.¹²⁸

KGB efforts against the Czechoslovak reform movement were so diverse and comprehensive that, according to Mark Kramer, "it would be impossible to understand Moscow's response during the crisis without taking full account of the role played by the Soviet security forces."¹²⁹

128 Interview in "Otkrovennost' vozmozhna, lish' kogda za toboi zakroetsya dver': General KGB o KGB," Moskovskie novosti 25 (24 June 1990), p.11; in Kramer, op. cit., p.6.

129 Kramer, op. cit., p.7. For further information, see Kramer, pp.6-8.

Other considerations

An additional consideration was one of "principle". The Soviet Union had made personal sacrifices and "shed blood" for Czechoslovakia during the Second World War: therefore, the results of the Great Patriotic War were not to be revised. During the post invasion meeting between the Czechoslovak and Soviet Politburos, Brezhnev stated that the Soviet Union "bought the territory" at enormous human cost and that the borders of that country were, therefore, "our borders as well. It is immaterial whether anyone is actually threatening us or not: it is a matter of principle, independent of external circumstances. And that is how it will be, from the Second World War until 'eternity'".¹³⁰

Also, the Soviet Union appeared to believe that the United States would not react forcefully to the intervention. According to Mlynar, during the post-invasion meeting Brezhnev, while castigating Dubcek for his intransigence, stated that he had received from President Johnson such assurances:

What are you waiting for? Do you expect anything is going to happen to help you? No, there is going to be no war - you might as

¹³⁰ Mlynar, Night Frost, op. cit., p.240.

well take note of that. I had an enquiry sent to President Johnson asking him whether the United States would respect the Yalta and Potsdam agreements, and on 18 August I received his reply saying that as far as Czechoslovakia and Rumania were concerned the US would unquestionably honour these agreements.¹³¹

Finally, there may have existed within the Kremlin the view that Moscow could not afford yet another defection, as in the past eight years the Soviet Union had witnessed the "loss" of Albania and China, with Romania possibly next. The loss of Czechoslovakia would have been viewed as gravely weakening the bloc and Soviet security.

¹³¹ See interview with Mlynar in Urban, op. cit., p.132.

XI. Hungary 1956/Czechoslovakia 1968

It is instructive to examine the similarities and differences between the two examples of intervention in the name of proletarian internationalism.¹³² In 1956, Hungary presented the Soviet authorities with one of the first serious challenges to their hegemony in Eastern Europe: twelve years later another crisis occurred in Czechoslovakia. In both cases the results were similar, albeit the actual course of events differed in several respects. The Soviet reaction to Hungary was to crush the rebellion after it started; in Czechoslovakia the "quiet counterrevolution" was preempted before it began. In addition, the Hungarian uprising was brief and bloody and attempted to destroy the communist system in Hungary; the Prague Spring, on the other hand, was relatively bloodless and sought to maintain a form of communism in Czechoslovakia.

In both the Hungarian and Czechoslovak crises,

132 For comparative surveys, see Jiri Valenta, "Soviet Policy Toward Hungary and Czechoslovakia," in Sarah Meikeljohn Terry, Soviet Policy, op. cit., pp.95-99; Bela Kiraly, "Budapest 1956, Prague 1968," Problems of Communism (July-October 1969), pp.52-60; and Ivan Volgyes, "The Hungarian and Czechoslovak Revolutions: A Comparative Study of Revolutions in Communist Countries," in E. J. Czerwinski and Jaroslaw Piekalkiewicz (eds), The Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia: Its Effects on Eastern Europe (New York: Praeger, 1972), pp.121-38.

the leaderships had attempted to establish greater internal freedom; both originally were revolts against autocratic regimes whose repressive practices had led to popular resentment and desire for reform (albeit that the Rakosi/Gero regimes were worse); and both movements failed in their goals. In Hungary and Czechoslovakia the reform movements endeavored to "humanize socialism" and contained similar political demands.

There were, however, significant differences. Whereas the Czechoslovak experiment was interrupted by the Warsaw Pact intervention and the pre-invasion government remained in office, Hungary's experience in reform communism was shorter and was more than once arrested by Soviet troops. Unlike in Hungary, where violent riots and the collapse of the communist power structure demanded a quick decision, there was no disorder at any time during the Prague Spring. The more gradual, less violent, and more ambiguous process made it difficult, therefore, for the Soviet leadership to define the exact point at which the situation became unacceptable. The Dubcek leadership could, therefore, claim that they had control of the situation, that there was no apparent threat to Soviet interests, and that all the changes being introduced complied with Communist Party statutes.

In addition, the USSR had no troops in Czechoslovakia as it had in Hungary and Poland in 1956. It, therefore, lacked one instrument of pressure that had been used in those two countries: military maneuvers. Although Moscow tried to remedy this situation by conducting Warsaw Pact exercises within Czechoslovakia, their number was, according to one observer, insufficient and their effectiveness as a political deterrent "nearly nonexistent".¹³³

While the Czechoslovak reformers drafted a single basic platform in the form of the Action Program, the Hungarian Party's program contained no single document, but was incorporated into Nagy's New Course. In addition, the two experiences differed in their manner of implementation. The Action Program was launched by Dubcek and his associates after they had won key posts in the party and state. Nagy and his followers had tried to carry out their program with only the executive branch of government in their hands.

Another important difference was related to developments within the Warsaw Pact. The revolt in Hungary occurred approximately one year after the formation of the WTO and little effort had been made

¹³³ See Tatu, "Intervention," op. cit., p.224.

to integrate the East European forces. Moreover, there had been significant changes in the international situation between 1956 and 1968. The Hungarian revolt occurred at a time: when the Soviet Union was still in a semi-isolation phase; when cold war tension characterized East-West relations; when Khrushchev had not yet attained full power; and, when the Sino-Soviet split had not played a role in Soviet policy formulation. The Czechoslovak crisis, by contrast, occurred: when the Soviet Union was encouraging active contact with the Western powers; when Stalin's shadow on Soviet-East European relations had decreased; when the doctrine of peaceful coexistence had replaced the view that war between capitalist and socialist systems was inevitable; and, when the Soviet Union was being threatened by an increasingly hostile China.

While the intervention in Hungary was a unilateral action undertaken by the Soviet Union, the Czechoslovak invasion was a multilateral assault by the Warsaw Pact. In 1956 it was the Soviet army alone that invaded the territory of one of its "fraternal allies". The invasion of Czechoslovakia twelve years later was carried out jointly with most of Moscow's military allies. This reflected not only a change in Soviet political strategy within the framework of bloc relations that had evolved

since 1956; it also revealed the anxieties generated among some of the bloc regimes, especially those of East Germany and Poland, by the popular ferment in Czechoslovakia. Moreover, a collective action - it was believed - would appear more legitimate in the eyes of the international community.

The importance of the intervention being multilateral was indicated by Weit, Gomulka's interpreter. During the Warsaw Pact meeting of 14 July in which the "Warsaw Letter" was composed, Brezhnev's emphasis on this point was noted by the interpreter: "It was interesting to see how Brezhnev insisted on basing his arguments on the agreement of the five Warsaw Pact countries taking part in the meeting. It was the same old story. Anyone planning to put an evil action into effect always tries to implicate his audience in his decision. Clearly the Soviet authorities felt that their unilateral action in suppressing the Hungarian uprising of 1956 had been a mistake."¹³⁴

In addition, the Soviet Union's effort to justify its actions by invoking the spectre of "counterrevolution" was specious. The danger in Czechoslovakia was not one emanating from counterrevolution, but the possibility of any form

¹³⁴ Weit, op. cit., p.210.

of political pluralism, including a modified multiparty system in which the communist party would play a strong and vital, yet not totalitarian role. In sharp contrast when a multiparty system was taking shape in Hungary, the Hungarian Party was in a state of total disarray and collapse. But Budapest in 1956 and Prague in 1968 also demonstrated another lesson - that Moscow remained determined to preserve the essentials of one-party rule, and to keep the East European countries under its control by whatever means necessary.

As the Soviet interventionist doctrine was not a new phenomenon, why did the West address particular attention to the doctrine after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia? There are several possible answers. First, the Western reaction may have been the result of indifference to previous Soviet statements and declarations in Eastern Europe or at least a failure to realize their importance. In that the East European countries were of vital strategic and ideological importance to the USSR, it was logical that any deviation from or threat to that area would be resisted by the Soviet Union, including the use of military measures.

Second, R. A. Jones argues that unlike in the past, Kovalev's statements were expressed boldly and with unusual clarity in Pravda, than being "hidden

in a maze of circumlocutory jargon".¹³⁵ Third, the invasion also infused concrete meaning (in the form of actual military intervention) into previously theoretical phraseology about "restoring unity to the socialist camp". In addition, the formal announcement of the doctrine helped destroy any illusion that the Soviet Union was willing to release the socialist countries without a fight. The doctrine also alerted Bucharest, Belgrade, Peking and Tirana to the possibility of similar interventions in their countries.

Finally, in Hungary the liberalization process had turned into a violent rebellion in which it was obvious that only one side, the stronger Soviet Union, could win. In Czechoslovakia, however, the reform movement was a gradual process initiated and controlled by the Communist Party: the Soviet intervention, therefore, was viewed not only as unwarranted but also as a violent interference in Czechoslovak affairs. Finally, in 1968 there was the formal articulation, in a number of fora, of that nexus of ideas known as the "Brezhnev Doctrine", and in connection with a specific crisis, in Czechoslovakia. Articulated in this context, the doctrine was much noted in the West. Although there

¹³⁵ Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., p.154.

might have been other reasons for Western acknowledgment of the "Brezhnev Doctrine", this writer believes that these arguments provide a degree of explanation.

After the events of Autumn 1989, the Soviet Union, and subsequently Russia, attempted to apologize for its 1968 military action. An agreement for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Czechoslovakia was signed on 26 February 1990 and the withdrawal was completed by 26 June 1991.¹³⁶ On 13 May Yeltsin (RSFSR Supreme Soviet Chairman at the time), during a visit to Prague, condemned the invasion as a big mistake.¹³⁷ He told Czechoslovak legislators that he denounced the USSR's "imperial impudence of the past".¹³⁸ On 18 February 1992 the first treaty of friendship and cooperation was signed between Russia and Czechoslovakia. The document called the 1968 Soviet-led invasion an "act of violence" by the former USSR.¹³⁹ In April 1992, Yeltsin presented Czechoslovak president Vaclav Havel with archival documents from the CPSU Central

136 See Jan Obrman, "Withdrawal of Soviet Troops Completed," RFE/RL Report on Eastern Europe, Vol.2, No.30 (26 July 1991), pp.14-20.

137 RFE/RL Daily Report, No.91 (14 May 1991).

138 See RFE/RL Daily Report, No.92 (15 May 1991).

139 See RFE/RL Research Report, Vol.1 No.9 (28 February 1992), p.79.

Committee archives pertaining to the invasion. 140

XII. Conclusion

In the Czechoslovak crisis there were found - more than in any previous crisis - many statements which together formed the Soviet interventionist doctrine. In this case the Soviet Union, along with its allies, was prepared to supply "fraternal assistance" according to the demands of "proletarian internationalism". The use of words and phrases such as "the threat of counterrevolution" was hoped to signal to the CPCz its excesses. In addition, the Kremlin pursued certain policies and practices associated with the doctrine: it issued statements and "invitations" to Moscow; it initiated military maneuvers; it enlisted the help of the socialist allies; it published articles critical of the CPCz; and, of course, direct military intervention.

Three main issues played a role in why the Soviet Union intervened: ideology, security, and the potential decline of the leading role of the CPCz in Czechoslovak society. The strategic importance of

140 See Foreign Broadcast Information Service, East Europe Daily Report (FBIS-EEU), 3 April 1992.

Czechoslovakia to the Warsaw Pact was high, as the Soviet leadership repeated that its western border was that essentially of the Soviet Union. Moscow would not have tolerated a Czechoslovakia with a social democratic government, with sympathies and foreign policy tied to the West. Finally, the decline of the CPCz's leading role, or monopoly on power, was also considered dangerous, particularly for the East European allies. The expected changes on the political scene from the 14th Party Congress were the final move which ended Kremlin vacillation and united the Politburo. All of these aspects threatened not only the East Europe elites in their own countries (as well as the socialist bloc as a whole), but ultimately impacted on the Soviet Union itself.

In addition, the issue of security was seen as a large determinant of how the Soviet Union reacted to changes within an East European country. Romania, Yugoslavia, and Albania, for example, increased their autonomy vis-a-vis the Soviet Union, but Albania's defection from the Warsaw Pact and Romania's refusal to participate in the invasion did not lead to Soviet military intervention. Yugoslavia faced certain threats, but they were never realized. Changes in Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, however, triggered responses which

grew with urgency as events gained momentum. Only Poland managed to avoid intervention of the three, and its special position within the bloc helped play a role. Therefore, security concerns were the main ingredient of whether or not the military component of the Soviet interventionist doctrine was used.

The Soviet reaction to the Prague Spring indicated that the limits of deviation permissible within the "core" East European countries (Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland) were the continued monopoly of power of the party, its loyalty to the Soviet Union, and membership of the Warsaw Pact. In the Polish October both factors remained unchallenged; in the case of Hungary the leading role of the party was undermined and the withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact occurred only after a second Soviet intervention appeared inevitable. In Czechoslovakia, as in Poland, the two factors remained constant with one significant exception: although the primacy of the party was not at issue during the reform process, under the newly proposed reforms pluralism of a kind would have been introduced, and this would have eventually undermined the CPCz's control. However, the limits of deviation for the "core" countries were stricter than for other East European states.

There was also ambiguity within the "Brezhnev

Doctrine" about which countries were considered part of the socialist commonwealth: Romania and Yugoslavia were verbally threatened by the USSR after invasion; and other socialist countries denounced the doctrine, perhaps because of concern that it could also have been applied to them. There may have been ambiguities about the "borders" of the Soviet interventionist doctrine, but it unquestionably applied to certain countries: Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland (Bulgaria perhaps was considered so loyal that it was not seen as a high risk).

Soviet domestic factors played a role in Soviet policy toward Czechoslovakia and the decision to intervene. The split between those in the Kremlin who were reluctant and those who urged an invasion made Soviet policy two-pronged: on the one hand, there were warnings from Moscow followed by a "waiting period" to give the Czechoslovak elites time to act. This may have mislead the Czechoslovak leaders that they could continue on the same path because no other action was taken. Only when the "doves" within the Soviet leadership saw that there was no other recourse did they switch to military intervention (and then after three days of debate). The nationality factor also played a role. Pressure from Ukrainian Party representative, as well as

those from the Baltic states, was constant and grew in intensity after the "Warsaw Letter" meeting. The "contagion" issue was a worry for the Kremlin. The Prague Spring was impacting on the border republics: this directly could have threatened the cohesion of the USSR.

The Soviet interventionist doctrine was explained by Soviet theorists as being both political and legal. Socialist relations were termed as being based on socialist international law which was superior to, and had different rules from, general bourgeois law. Brezhnev wanted the intervention to be collective in the hope that it would add legitimacy.

The role of the East European elites varied during the Czechoslovak crisis. The East German and Polish leaders were vocal critics of the Prague Spring. They urged the use of meetings, declarations, and letters to coerce and threaten the Czechoslovak elites into submission. The Hungarian leader did not appear to favor a military outcome, and only acquiesced at the end. The Yugoslav and Romanian leaders tried to help Dubcek, but to no avail. The Czechoslovak leaders appeared not to believe that the Soviet Union and its allies would ultimately intervene, although they were aware of such a threat; they felt that Moscow had too much to

loose if it did.

At the same time, Dubcek - as the local elite - did have some bargaining power with Moscow: the Soviet Union did not intervene for eight months. Second, the Soviet leaders needed Dubcek to serve in the post-invasion government.¹⁴¹ During the post-invasion meeting of "The Five" in Moscow on 24-26 August, Brezhnev told Czechoslovak president Ludvik Svoboda that he "wanted to find a way out of the situation".¹⁴² At the same time, the Soviet leadership desired that any solution appear as an agreement between partners, not a "diktat". Kosygin, for example, wanted the Moscow Protocol "to be a document proposed by the [Czechoslovak] delegation, not by us".¹⁴³ Gomulka also urged at the meeting that any decisions made regarding Czechoslovakia should appear to come from the Czechoslovak elites.¹⁴⁴ Ulbricht, on the other hand, approved of using a "diktat". If the Czechoslovak leadership did not sign an appeal for calm at home, then he said that the "Five" should

141 See Dubcek's account of the post-invasion Moscow negotiations in Dubcek, op. cit., pp.196-205.

142 See the English translation of the Polish minutes of the 24-26 August 1968 meeting in Moscow concerning the 1968 invasion in New Times International, Part I., No.8 (August 1991), pp.22-26, at p.23.

143 Ibid, Part II, No.9 (September 1991), pp.28-31, at p.30.

144 Ibid, Part I, see for example p.25.

"do it".¹⁴⁵

The Soviet interventionist doctrine served several functions during the Czechoslovak crisis. It was used "in defense" of an "offensive" "counterrevolutionary" threat. The doctrine served as a signaling device through: the use of statements; the publication of articles; the issuance of "invitations" to Moscow; the sending of official and private letters; the exercise of military maneuvers; and, the arranging of intra-bloc visits. Doctrinal statements were also used to mobilize support and unite bloc interest against Czechoslovak reforms. They were also used to underline the seriousness of the situation, as was evident in the "Warsaw Letter". The Bratislava Declaration spelled out the socialist "ground rules" of behavior. Comments such as "blood will be shed" and the "western border of Czechoslovakia is the western border of the Soviet Union" were to remind Czechoslovakia that its position was historically and permanently associated with the Soviet Union. The "Brezhnev Doctrine's" was also applied as a weapon of last resort. In Czechoslovakia, the signaling device and mobilizing support functions were more common and evident than in the other

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, p.25.

crises. Moreover, the justification function was a new aspect, or at least more developed, than in the East German or Hungarian crises.

In addition, the enunciation of these statements served as a reminder to the other socialist states of what behavior would or would not be condoned and tolerated; and how their existence, particularly in the case of Poland and East Germany, was inexorably tied to the Soviet Union. In this way the Soviet interventionist doctrine united bloc interests by giving these countries a stake in preventing the spread of "counterrevolution" anywhere in the socialist camp.

Similar in manner to other great powers, the Soviet Union sought to protect its sphere of influence from outside interference: in the Czechoslovak case, this meant "quiet counterrevolution" aided by "imperialists", and the prevention of West Germany from increasing its ties with Czechoslovakia. The Kremlin justified the intervention in the name of a higher principle, "the defense of socialist gains". Moscow viewed Czechoslovakia as vital to its status as a great power; control over that country also served as a legitimizing device for Moscow's domination of the Soviet republics.

The Soviet Union, like other hegemons, dominated

Czechoslovakia through political and economic means, with the important exception that it did not have a permanent troops presence in that country; the resulting Moscow Protocol and military treaty, however remedied this "strategic" gap. Interference was both explicit - such as the Warsaw Letter - and implicit - such as political coercion by Ulbricht and Gomulka, or the Politburo presence at Cierna. The tone of Soviet policy toward Czechoslovakia changed over time, from initial concern to growing alarm.

A specific doctrine, the "Brezhnev Doctrine", was officially recognized by the West as a justification for Soviet hegemony, although it had existed prior to 1968. The "Brezhnev Doctrine" served to unify bloc interest with the Soviet Union and was used to justify the invasion with a higher, ideological and "legal" principle. The Soviet Union was, like France and the United States, the sole interpreter of its doctrine.

The Soviet Union shared common interests with the East European elites. The Soviet Union received multilateral support, while some elites in exchange felt their positions bolstered against developments at home. Poland relied on Moscow for its protection against the threat of German "revanchism", and the GDR for its existence. The Soviet Union needed the

East European elites to legitimize its policies toward Czechoslovakia; it also used them individually to coerce and pressure the Prague elites.

Like other hegemons, the Soviet Union was constrained in its behavior toward Czechoslovakia. It did not initially want to intervene, but ultimately felt that the benefits of such an action outweighed its political costs. In addition, the Soviet Union, similar in manner to the US (but not France) did not want to undertake a military intervention on its own: it involved the Warsaw Pact. The Kremlin was also aware that it could not be too domineering after the invasion, as it needed Dubcek to form a government.

In all four crises examined so far in this thesis, the strategic importance of Eastern Europe was more important to the Soviet Union than Latin America to the United States. Some have made comparisons of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" with the Monroe Doctrine, but the latter was not used militarily until the mid 19th century, and the issue of military assistance was not given as the doctrine's main purpose. The Monroe Doctrine was conceived to prevent other great powers from intervening in the affairs of smaller powers, while the Soviet interventionist doctrine was designed to

control the domestic policies of the East European states. Moreover, unlike the Monroe Doctrine, the Soviet interventionist doctrine was not limited in theory to its East European sphere of influence.¹⁴⁶

The Soviet Union, in addition, had a longer history of interventionism than the US or France. US interventions in Latin America were more limited in scope and intensity than Soviet, and in the case of the Dominican Republic led to free elections, which was not the case in East Germany, Hungary or Czechoslovakia. Moreover, after intervention, the United States pulled its troops out of the target countries - the Dominican Republic 1965, Grenada 1983, and Panama 1990 - which was not the case in Hungary or Czechoslovakia; indeed, after the invasion Soviet troops were given a permanent presence. In addition, the US had a communist regime near to its borders, while the Soviet Union was not willing to tolerate a capitalist state in such proximity. The US did not want the "New World" to suffer from the balance of power politics and conflicts of the Old World. The Soviet Union,

¹⁴⁶ The similarities of the Soviet interventionist doctrine with the Monroe Doctrine have been noted by Stephen Glazer and by Thomas Franck and Edward Weisband, among others; see Stephen G. Glazer, "The Brezhnev Doctrine," International Lawyer, Vol.5, No.1 (1969-70), pp.168-79; and Franck and Weisband, op. cit.

on the other hand, did not want Eastern Europe to be used as an invasion route or launching ground for attack. All these factors appeared in sum to indicate that the Soviet Union was more insecure about its sphere of influence than either the United States or France.

Eastern Europe, like other subordinate regions, was not, however, without influence. Poland, for example, forced the Soviet Union to choose between concession or force. Czechoslovakia and Romania increased their involvement with other powers (West Germany and China respectively). Poland and Hungary took advantage of the Soviet Union's preoccupation with domestic affairs in the late 1980s to increase their autonomy. The states of Eastern Europe also used nationalism or a history of resistance as leverage. They could also, like the countries of Latin America, use the economic threat of collapse. Finally, an East European state could be so loyal - like the GDR and Bulgaria - that it received rewards from the USSR.

CHAPTER IX

DECLINE OF THE SOVIET INTERVENTIONIST DOCTRINE: 1970-1981

Following the Warsaw Pact action in Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union undertook a number of measures which were aimed at further consolidating the political, economic, military, and ideological interests of the socialist community. An important component of this strategy was the Soviet interventionist doctrine. However, the period from approximately 1970 to the end of 1981 - from the aftermath of the invasion of Czechoslovakia to the declaration of martial law in Poland - actually witnessed the decline of the doctrine.

While Moscow sought greater cohesion within the socialist community, a number of factors - such as the Helsinki process, the impact of East-West detente, and the global economic recession - undermined Soviet influence in the region. Moreover, although the Soviet interventionist doctrine appeared to be extended to the Third World - Afghanistan - and was self-administered by an East European state to avoid external intervention -

Poland - the doctrine proved far less successful than in the past in suppressing opposition.

This chapter will trace the decline of the Soviet interventionist doctrine in the period beginning from 1970 through the end of 1981. In particular, it will examine:

(i) the developments during the first half of the 1970s which were viewed by Moscow as demonstrating the success of the Soviet interventionist doctrine as a policy toward Eastern Europe;

(ii) and, the various factors - from the mid-1970s to the Polish crisis of 1980/81 - which were to ultimately weaken Soviet dominance in the region and the effectiveness of the "Brezhnev Doctrine".

Consolidating Factors of the Early 1970s

The early 1970s appeared to be one of the most successful periods of Soviet domestic and international development. Domestically, it was a time of stability of leadership and politics in the USSR. It was also a period when the Brezhnev regime did not undergo any significant degree of systemic crisis within its social and political system.

Internationally, the Soviet Union achieved

strategic parity with the United States and appeared to have become a truly global power. Moscow increased its influence in the international arena and, at the same time, witnessed the apparent economic and political decline of the United States. Moreover, Brezhnev pursued a policy of detente with the West which promised economic benefits. Most importantly, detente enabled an expansion of Soviet global influence without the danger of confrontation with the United States and its allies.

In its policy toward Europe the Soviet leadership pursued two different, but interrelated foreign policies. On the one hand, Moscow sought to consolidate control and ideological orthodoxy over Eastern Europe. On the other hand, it pursued a policy of detente with Western Europe which promised political, economic, technological benefits, and Western recognition of the postwar territorial division of Europe. In the Soviet perspective, therefore, detente was to provide material advantages for both the countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, as well as formal recognition of the region as part of the Soviet sphere of influence: this in turn, the Kremlin hoped, would augment Moscow's control of the area and enhance the

legitimacy of the local regimes.¹

However, the danger in this two-prong policy was that increased economic ties and cultural and human contacts exposed the populations of Eastern Europe to aspects of Western life which they could find attractive and possibly lead to widespread discontent. To arrest such a possibility, the Soviet leadership's first task was to bolster cohesion within the bloc.

I. The "Integration" of Eastern Europe, 1969-1975

The Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia had a tremendous impact on the East European elites. J. F. Brown argued, for instance, that the crushing of the Prague Spring "signaled" Moscow's refusal to permit any East European regime to regenerate itself.² Moreover, in the future the pressure for change would not originate from within the system,

1 For a discussion of the Soviet dilemma of seeking both to influence Western Europe and control Eastern Europe, see A. Ross Johnson, The Impact of Eastern Europe on Soviet Policy Toward Western Europe (Santa Monica: Rand, 1986); and Pierre Hassner, "Soviet Policy in Western Europe: The East European Factor," in Terry, Soviet Policy, op. cit.

2 See J. F. Brown, Surge To Freedom: The End of Communist Rule in Eastern Europe (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991, pp.24-25.

but from "without": from workers and intellectuals. Brezhnev, therefore, destroyed whatever attraction or potential legitimacy communism could have had in Eastern Europe as an ideology.

In addition, the ambiguities about what "socialism" was remained unclarified after Czechoslovakia. Nowhere in the "Brezhnev Doctrine" was "socialism" defined; therefore, there was difficulty in determining what constituted a threat to socialism or what procedures could identify such a threat. What was clear, however, was that the Soviet Union ultimately defined what the transgressions against socialism were; and, that the doctrine could not be applied to the USSR itself. These ambiguities about the "Brezhnev Doctrine" may have constrained East European behavior in the early 1970s during the detente process; and, alternatively, the doctrine did not seriously impede the process of detente, as it may have fostered stability in the region necessary for Soviet-Western rapprochement.

After the intervention Moscow apparently concluded that the invasion had arrested, but not eliminated, disintegrative tendencies within Czechoslovakia. The invasion had generated much criticism and fear about Soviet intentions elsewhere in the region, particularly in Romania and

Yugoslavia.³ One of the first measures that the Kremlin initiated, therefore, to take control of the communist movement was to convene an international meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in June 1969. This gathering of seventy-eight parties was described as being characterized by frank discussion and criticism of the intervention.⁴ The final statement issued stressed the need for cohesion and reaffirmed that "the defence of socialism is an internationalist duty of Communists".⁵

The disruptive potential of the Prague Spring for the rest of Eastern Europe (and - possibly - the Soviet Union) led the Soviet leadership to embark upon a comprehensive integrationist policy designed to eliminate disruptive, "unhealthy" tendencies within the bloc.⁶ In Soviet theoretical literature, "socialist integration" was described, according to Robert Hutchings, as both a means and an end.⁷ As a

3 In his November 1968 speech Brezhnev had not defined the boundaries of the "socialist community" or the scope of the Soviet interventionist doctrine. He may have left this aspect of the doctrine ambiguous for leverage in future crises, as well as to reinforce Moscow's dominant role in the international communist movement.

4 For details of the meeting, see Fejto, Peoples' Democracies, op. cit., pp.480-82.

5 See New Times, 26, (1969), pp.25-39, at p.31.

6 For a summary of integrationist methods up to the mid-70s, see Brown, Relations, op.cit; and John Van Oudenaren, The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe: Options for the 1980s and Beyond (Santa Monica: Rand, 1984), pp.20-23.

7 Robert L. Hutchings, Soviet-East European Relations:

means it was designed to improve domestic economies, foster military efficiency and security, and promote unity within the alliance; as an end, it envisioned the eventual economic, military, political, cultural, and territorial union of the "socialist commonwealth". Soviet ideologists argued that this "merger" (sliianie) would follow a lengthy period of "drawing together" (sblizhenie), which would result not only in the "withering away" of national boundaries, but the creation of a global Soviet state.⁸ In November 1974 Brezhnev gave a speech in which he claimed that socialist integration was "natural" between the countries of the commonwealth:

"We have an economic foundation of the same type - the social ownership of the means of production. We have similar state systems ... We have a single ideology - Marxism-Leninism. We have common interests in ... defending the revolutionary gains from the encroachments of the imperialists. We have a single great aim - communism."⁹

Integration was pursued in five main areas: economic, military, political, foreign policy, and

Consolidation & Conflict (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), pp.6-7.

⁸ Hutchings, op. cit., pp.6-7.

⁹ Speech in Moscow on the occasion of the 57th Anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution; see the New York Times, 7 November 1974.

ideology.¹⁰ Brezhnev sought economic integration by interlocking the basic elements of the East European economies. Comecon, for example, was strengthened: there was coordination of plans and cooperation in long-term target programs and investment projects. Moscow appeared to believe that economic growth would facilitate the rapid development of trade relations with the West, as well as ushering in a new era of prosperity and stability in Eastern Europe. Efforts were made by the bloc regimes to raise the standard of living of their populations through consumer rewards; the purpose of such a policy was to subdue any political unrest.¹¹ This "consumerism" was facilitated by a generally favorable global economic situation, relatively cheap Soviet raw materials, and the increasing availability of Western credit. At the same time, the Soviet Union tightened its grip on Eastern Europe by increasing the region's dependence on supplies of energy, oil, natural gas, as well as other raw materials. Brown argued that, although the East European elites gained economically from

10 For a detailed discussion on each of these forms of integration, see Van Oudenaren, op. cit., pp.23-39.

11 The December 1970 food riots in Poland - coming soon after the Prague Spring - perhaps jolted the Soviet leadership and its East European allies into the realization that living standards had to be improved.

these subsidies, they lost politically: the more they received, the more political freedom and legitimacy at home they surrendered.¹²

In the first half of the 1970s the new economic policies appeared successful. Rising levels of East-West trade and credits sustained growth rates and boosted living standards throughout the bloc, without the need for potentially de-stabilizing reforms.¹³ This new prosperity appeared to give the regimes a sense of legitimacy and also helped to placate political discontent.

In the military realm, the use of the Warsaw Pact forces during the invasion of Czechoslovakia led to a re-assessment by Moscow of the Pact's functions and organization. The effectiveness of the alliance was increased through, for example, the establishment of new military institutions to coordinate activities, and more consultative privileges. Through the policy of "directed consensus" the Soviet leadership made an effort to draw the East European regimes into a corporate

12 See Brown, Surge, op. cit., pp.27-28.

13 The increases in standard of living were, however, uneven. For example, growth in Poland between 1971 and 1976 was impressive, while Romania benefited least from the general prosperity; see J. F. Brown, "Soviet Interests and Policies in Eastern Europe," in Richard D. Vine (ed) Soviet-East European Relations as a Problem for the West (New York: Croom Helm, 1987), p.62.

system of decision-making.¹⁴ Although Soviet-East European relations were not based on conciliar agreements - and Moscow remained in command - genuine efforts were made for close consultation.

At the same time, Moscow signed a number of bilateral treaties with the East European states. On 16 October 1968, for example, an agreement was reached which provided for the "temporary presence of Soviet forces on the territory of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic".¹⁵ The reason for the presence of Soviet troops was to counter the "threat of West German revanchists." Article 2 of the treaty maintained that the temporary presence of Soviet troops on Czechoslovak territory did not violate Czechoslovakia's sovereignty: "Soviet troops are not interfering in the internal affairs of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic." Moreover, the principles of the Soviet interventionist doctrine were embodied in the Soviet-Czechoslovak Treaty of 6 May 1970. Its preamble confirmed that the "support, strengthening, and protection of socialist achievements are an international duty, common to socialist countries". While the treaty reaffirmed the policy of peaceful coexistence and of

14 Ibid, pp.62-63.

15 Reprinted in 7 International Legal Materials 1334, 1335 (1968) (Article 2).

international detente, at the same time it promised "support to the countries which have freed themselves of the yoke of imperialism".¹⁶ In addition, Andrei Gromyko tried to give the treaty a special international legal significance when he declared that it constituted "a step forward in the elaboration of the norms of international law, of a new type of relations between the socialist states."¹⁷

Another area of Soviet integration was in foreign policy. To prevent the countries of Eastern Europe from undertaking their own initiatives, the Soviet leadership emphasized bloc unity toward foreign policy. Such a unified posture lent, at least superficially, credibility to the claim that

16 For the text of the "Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Aid between the USSR and the Socialist Republic of Czechoslovakia", see the United Nations Treaty Series (UNTS), Vol.735, No.10560 (1970). The common defense of socialist achievements was included in the Soviet-Czech treaty, the Soviet-East German treaty of 1975, and the 1977 Soviet Constitution; however, it was not mentioned in the Soviet-Romanian Friendship Treaty of 1970. This appeared to suggest that Romania was not viewed by Moscow as a "core" state of the socialist community. See the "Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Aid between the USSR and the German Democratic Republic," signed 7 October 1975, in UNTS, Vol.1077, No.16471 (1975), pp.12-13; the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Moscow: Novosti, 1985); and the "Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Aid between the USSR and the Socialist Republic of Rumania," signed 7 July 1970, in UNTS, Vol.789, No.11221 (1970).

17 Le Monde, 8 May 1970.

relations among the bloc countries were governed by the principles of "socialist internationalism".¹⁸

These measures were accompanied by what Brown has termed a "Counter-Reformation" in Soviet-East European relations. Moscow sought to place relations among the socialist countries on the same kind of stable, institutionalized basis that marked relations between the Soviet Union and Western countries. The domestic motivation for this policy was the long-standing desire for stability and control in Eastern Europe, and to create the internal conditions which would make future military intervention unnecessary.

Brezhnev initiated a long-term effort to translate the principles of "socialist internationalism" into reality. Soviet ideologists claimed that communism was creating a true community of peoples that was qualitatively different from anything that had existed in history. As Brezhnev stated in his report to the 26th Party Congress in February 1981: "Together with [the countries of socialism] we are building a new socialist world, a type of relations between states which is unprecedented in history, relations which are just,

¹⁸ See Leonid Brezhnev, Report of the CPSU Central Committee and the Immediate Tasks of the Party in Home and Foreign Policy (Moscow: Novosti, 1981), p.8.

equal, and fraternal."¹⁹ Ideological conformity was maintained through annual meetings between East European party first secretaries and the CPSU, as well as individual visits by bloc leaders to the Crimea.

Most East European leaders had been alarmed by the events of the Prague Spring and welcomed the emphasis on ideological orthodoxy.²⁰ Moreover, Polish and East German support for orthodoxy appeared to suggest that ideological conformity was no longer the sole concern of the Soviet leadership, but was a shared value. Moscow, however, occasionally faced opposition from some of the East European leaders. Walter Ulbricht, for example, was replaced by Erich Honecker in May 1971 for his intransigence on the "German Question".

Although tighter political and ideological controls were introduced, the Soviet leadership was willing to permit, within limits, a certain amount of domestic latitude to the East European leaders. In Poland Moscow tolerated Gierek's "consumerism" and his extensive ties with the West.²¹ In Romania,

19 Materialy XXVI S"ezda KPSS, p.5.

20 See Brown, Relations, op. cit., p.27. For further discussion, see Carl Beck, Frederick J. Fleron, Milton Lodge, Derek J. Waller, William A. Welsh, and M. George Zaninovich, Comparative Communist Political Leadership (New York: David McKay, 1973).

21 Gierek in his memoirs noted that in the 1970s - in a

it permitted a relatively independent foreign policy; and in Hungary, the New Economic Mechanism.²² Moreover, Moscow did not threaten to intervene - even at moments of considerable upheaval - such as during the crises in Poland of 1970 and 1976. Diversity was permissible because it developed within an overall context of tight Soviet control. In addition, universal conformity was maintained in regard to the two main constants of Soviet-East European relations: loyalty to the USSR in foreign affairs; and, the maintenance of the leading role of the party.²³

divided world dominated by the two superpowers - Poland could conduct an independent foreign policy and, thus, strengthen its authority; see Edward Gierek, Smak Zycia: pamietniki (Warszawa: BGW, 1993), p.171 (author's translation). See also Gierek's comments in Rolicki, op. cit., pp.109-120. Gierek stated that up to the time of the Helsinki accords the Soviet leadership approved such an "independent" foreign policy, as it was beneficial equally to the Soviet Union; see Rolicki, op. cit., pp.111-112. By the late 1970s, however, Brezhnev - in conversations with Gierek - did criticize Poland's liberal policies toward the Church and the opposition, as well as the extent of Polish economic ties with the West; see Gierek, pamietniki, op. cit., pp.172-73 (author's translation).

22 For an examination of the Soviet views on economic reforms in Hungary, see Zvi Y. Gitelman, "The Diffusion of Political Innovation: From East Europe to the Soviet Union," in Szporluk, Influence of East Europe, op. cit., pp.48-56.

23 It is difficult to assess how much of the diversity in the bloc developed under Soviet scrutiny or how much resulted from Soviet neglect. While there was a degree of neglect, the diversity that existed was possible only because of universal conformance on the key issues that the Soviet leaders deemed most important.

Moreover, the Soviet Union and the East European elites shared common interests. Moscow wanted viable, but loyal regimes which would enhance stability, and thus prevent the need for the "Brezhnev Doctrine". The socialist regimes wanted to increase their legitimacy in the eyes of their respective populations, and needed a degree of autonomy to prove that they were not wholly dependent on the USSR. As Gierek argued in his memoirs: "The Soviet Union needed a stable Poland; Poland, on the other hand, needed the greatest freedom and independence of action." The reconciliation of these tendencies was the dilemma, the Polish leader noted, that he faced in the 1970s.²⁴ It was not easy for the East European leaders to assert greater independence from Moscow, for their rule was dependent not on the trust of their peoples, but on Soviet support. Their guarantee of survival was the Soviet interventionist doctrine, which protected them from revolt at home in return for obedience to Moscow. The doctrine also served as a threat to the regimes to remain loyal to Moscow. Moreover, economic "carrots" from the Soviet Union added to the elites' allegiance to

24 See Gierek, pamiętniki, op. cit., p.197 (author's translation).

their Soviet patron.²⁵

The notion of unity in the context of controlled diversity was exemplified in the Brezhnevian concept of "real socialism". Moscow emphasized that "real socialism" was Soviet socialism, not the Chinese "deformation" or the alternative model advocated by the Italian Communist Party.²⁶ This concept - first used widely in the 1970s - served as both a justification for the existence of diversity within the bloc, and as a rationale for the primacy of the communist party and strict loyalty to the USSR in foreign affairs. John Van Oudenaren argued that the concept of "real socialism" was essentially a corollary to the "Brezhnev Doctrine": the Soviet system and the actions of the Soviet state were not justified by referring to the tenets of Marxism-Leninism or bourgeois law or morality, but to the fact of Soviet power itself.²⁷ The Soviet Union was called the only "developed" socialist society: the highest level prior to the attainment of communism. In this way, the theory reinforced the USSR's claim

25 Giersek noted that a rivalry existed between the various East European regimes about their relative "position" within the "socialist family", particularly who was closest to "Big brother"; see *ibid*, pp.193-94 (author's translation).

26 See V. Kortunov, "Lenin i ideologicheskaya bor'ba nashikh dnei," Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, No.10 (1969), pp.3-11, at p.8; and Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, *op. cit.*, pp.168-73.

27 Van Oudenaren, *op. cit.*, p.43.

to its leading status.²⁸

II. Detente and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)

With an integrationist policy initiated in Eastern Europe, the Soviet leadership turned its attention towards detente with the West. Aware that an active policy toward the West might lead to loss of control in the East, Brezhnev sought to base his policy on the claim that detente was possible only because the West recognized a decisive shift in the global balance toward the Soviet Union, and with it the permanence and legitimacy of Soviet control in Eastern Europe. The Soviet leader envisioned the participation of the West, particularly Western Europe, in helping to maintain stability in Eastern Europe.²⁹

28 For a detailed discussion, see for instance J. Seroka and M. D. Simon (eds), Developed Socialism in the Soviet Bloc (Boulder: Westview, 1982).

29 Soviet detente policy with the West had three areas of operation: the nuclear relationship with the United States; Soviet-Western political struggle in the Third World; and Soviet policy in Western Europe. For the purposes of this study, only Soviet detente policy towards Europe will be examined. For further details of Soviet-European detente policy, see John Van Oudenaren, Detente in Europe: The

In his detente policy toward Western Europe, Brezhnev sought: to win Western recognition of the territorial status quo in Europe and, by implication, acceptance of the East European regimes' claims to legitimacy; to ensure that West European countries maintained "friendly" relations with Moscow and refrained from "interference in the internal affairs" of either the USSR or the East European states; to broaden access to Western technology and credits; and, to preclude any security threat from Western Europe.³⁰

Soviet Union and the West since 1953 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991); Raymond L. Garthoff, Detente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations From Nixon to Reagan (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1985); Herbert J. Ellison (ed), Soviet Policy Toward Western Europe: Implications for the Atlantic Alliance (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1983); and Robbin F. Laird and Susan L. Clark (eds), The USSR and the Western Alliance (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990).

30 See Hannes Adomeit, "Soviet Policy Towards the West: Costs and Benefits of Using 'Imperialist Contradictions'," in Uwe Nerlich and James Thomson (eds), The Future of East-West Relations (New York: Crane Russak, 1985), pp.12-13.

Some observers have argued that a stabilization of relations with Western Europe was also vital to stop or reduce Chinese influence in Eastern Europe. In the past, Chinese comments appeared to have affected Soviet policy in Hungary and Poland in 1956. In 1971, when Soviet relations with both Yugoslavia and Romania appeared to deteriorate, there was serious speculation about the prospect of a "Balkan triangle" (composed of Albania, Romania, and Yugoslavia) looking to China for protection. In addition, there had also been the border conflict of Ussuri in 1969 (between the Soviet Union and China) which had also strained relations and aroused mistrust.

Brezhnev pursued his objectives through the initiation of formal agreements. He first sought Western recognition of the permanence of the postwar borders. By the end of 1971, for example, both the Moscow-Bonn Non-Aggression Treaty and the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin had been signed. By 1973 treaties had also been concluded between West Germany and Poland, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia.³¹

The Soviet leader saw as the centerpiece of his detente policy a European security conference. In the Warsaw Pact declaration of March 1969 - only seven months after the invasion of Czechoslovakia - the Soviet Union renewed its campaign for the convening of such a conference. The 1973-1975 Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) was interpreted by the Soviet Union and its allies as the legal and political framework for new political, economic, and security arrangements between Eastern and Western Europe. The goal was to increase Moscow's influence in the West without undermining its hold on the East. Moscow appeared to believe that what came to be known as the "Helsinki process" would help to consolidate Soviet

31 The Moscow-Bonn treaty was signed in August 1970, the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin in September 1971, and West Germany's treaties with Poland (May 1972), East Germany (December 1972), and Czechoslovakia in June 1973.

control over the countries of Eastern Europe, while gradually persuading the West Europeans of the merits of the Soviet version of detente.

During the long pre-negotiations (which began in November 1972) and the official negotiations (starting in July 1973) of the Helsinki Final Act, the various parties attempted to find areas of common interest as well as to compromise on issues of difference.³² While Moscow sought to achieve Western acceptance of the territorial status quo in Eastern Europe and to reduce trade barriers, the West (particularly the West Europeans) appeared to make a conscious effort to undermine the foundations of the Soviet interventionist doctrine: they stressed the nonintervention principle and emphasized human rights standards in numerous fields.³³

Moscow, however, was reluctant and suspicious about the West's insistence on the inclusion of the "nonintervention" and "human rights" provisions.³⁴

32 For a detailed examination of the Helsinki process, see Vojtech Mastny, The Helsinki Process and the Reintegration of Europe 1986-1991: Analysis and Documentation (New York: New York University Press, 1992).

33 One reason for this Western approach might have been that, unlike in 1968, the West had the possibility of undermining, or at least diminishing, Soviet influence through diplomatic means.

34 See Van Oudenaren, Detente, op. cit., pp.320-31; and Garthoff, op. cit., p.475; for a general survey of the

The Soviet Union, however, could not object outright to these principles as many of them were included in the Soviet constitution. Moreover, a strong objection by Moscow may have been viewed by the West as contradicting Soviet support for detente. In the end, the Soviet leadership agreed, albeit reluctantly, to most of the provisions in order to reach an agreement. In addition, by this time Moscow had a substantial stake in the success of these negotiations, and believed that the carefully couched language of the agreement would protect its interest and freedom of action in case of political controversy.³⁵

The resulting Helsinki Agreement or "Final Act" of 1 August 1975 was not a legally binding treaty, but did represent a series of commitments on the part of the various signatory states. This non-binding aspect, although appearing as an inherent weakness, was a strength: it made adherence to stated intentions a test of political credibility, rather than a document where legal loopholes could be found.³⁶ The Final Act contained three sections or "baskets".³⁷ The stipulations in the first

negotiations, see *ibid*, pp.473-79.

³⁵ Garthoff, *op. cit.*, p.475.

³⁶ See Mastny, *Helsinki*, *op. cit.*, p.2.

³⁷ Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Final Act (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1975).

section, "Questions Relating to Security in Europe", stated that international relations were to be based on a set of ten principles, including "sovereign equality, respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty", "refraining from the threat or use of force", "the inviolability of frontiers", "territorial integrity of states", "the peaceful settlement of disputes", "non-intervention in internal affairs", and "equal rights and self-determination of peoples".

Basket Two, "Cooperation in the Field of Economic, of Science and Technology, and of the Environment", obligated the signatories to the expansion of trade relations and the reduction of trade barriers. Finally, Basket Three, "Cooperation in Humanitarian and Other Fields", urged the participating states to facilitate human contacts, trade and tourism, and to provide a freer flow of information and ideas, and to develop cooperation in the field of culture and education.

Although the Helsinki Final Act appeared to conflict with the Soviet interventionist doctrine, in practice the vocabulary of the document was interpreted differently by the contracting parties.³⁸ Principle VI on Non-Intervention, for

38 See F. A. M. Alting Von Geusau, "Detente After Helsinki. Attitudes and Perspectives," Yearbook of World Affairs

example, contained the anti-doctrine stipulation that it shall apply to all signatory states "irrespective of their mutual relations" (emphasis mine). The Soviet Union, however, provided a different interpretation of this principle, arguing that it should be regarded as primarily a prohibition on criticism of internal practices of the governments of the signatory states. According to one Soviet theorist, N. I. Lebedev, the Final Act was based on the acceptance by the signatory states that "no nation has the right to dictate to any other nation how to live and what its political and economic system must be."³⁹ Moreover, the Soviet Union's formal commitment to the Helsinki principles did not prevent the Soviet interventionist doctrine from being affirmed in the Soviet-GDR Treaty of October 1975.⁴⁰

(1978), pp.8-22, at p.15.

39 N. I. Lebedev, A New Stage in International Relations (Oxford: Pergamon, 1977), Chapter 3.

40 At the CSCE, Soviet diplomats had tried to write the Soviet interventionist doctrine into the Final Act to achieve explicit recognition from the West of its validity. Although unsuccessful in the Western arena, the Soviet Union signed the October 1975 treaty with East Germany that was basically identical to the 1970 treaty with Czechoslovakia, which had been made to lend legal status to the "Brezhnev Doctrine". Coming just two months after the conclusion of the CSCE, the objective was apparently to underscore Soviet control in Eastern Europe.

The "Brezhnev Doctrine" was also contained within agreements between the East European states: for example,

The Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies claimed that the Helsinki Final Act was a victory: it ratified the inviolability of Europe's territorial borders; and, it confirmed the immutability of the socialist blocs' political order.⁴¹ Moscow apparently believed, therefore,

the secret 1969 Hungarian-East German agreement restricted travel to third states. See the text of "The Agreement Between the Government of the Hungarian People's Republic and the Government of the German Democratic Republic concerning Exemption from the Visa Requirement for Purposes of Crossing the Frontier," in the American Journal of International Law, Vol.84, No.1 (January 1990), p.283.

In addition, the PUWP attempted to include the "Brezhnev Doctrine" in a new Polish constitution being drafted in late 1975. The party wanted to insert that "unshakeable fraternal bonds" existed between Poland and the Soviet Union and other socialist states (a similar phrase had already been adopted in the new constitution of the GDR); see G. Kolankiewicz and R. Taras, "Poland: Socialism for Everyman?" in A Brown and J. Gary (eds), Political Culture and Political Change in Communist States (London: Macmillan, 1977), p.119. After objections by lawyers from the Polish Academy of Sciences, who claimed that this clause meant an unacceptable restriction on Polish state sovereignty, the article in the constitution of 10 February 1976 was rephrased to "consolidations of friendship and cooperation with the USSR and other socialist states". Gierek noted that the controversy over the clause came at an inopportune time: it brought back to light the problem of Polish dependence on the Soviet Union. Moreover, a public discussion of such a matter raised concerns on both sides, particularly on the Soviet; see Rolicki, op. cit., pp.130-31 (author's translation).

41 At the 25th Party Congress (February 1976) Brezhnev praised the achievements of the CSCE. He stated that the results achieved were "worth the efforts expended", particularly as the Helsinki Final Act was a "confirmation of the inviolability of borders"; see Twenty-fifth congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 24 February-5

that the Helsinki Final Act was a multilateral affirmation of the validity of the Soviet interventionist doctrine.

Soviet confidence in the West's acceptance of the status quo may have been further strengthened by the "Sonnenfeldt Doctrine". In April 1976 the American press quoted (and was subsequently claimed by the US government as misquoted and misinterpreted) comments made by State Department counselor, Helmut Sonnenfeldt, at a closed meeting in London of American ambassadors in Europe in December 1975. According to a State Department summary, Sonnenfeldt stated that "The Soviets' inability to acquire loyalty in Eastern Europe is an unfortunate historical failure, because Eastern Europe is within their scope and area of national interest ... it is doubly tragic that in this area of vital interest and crucial importance it has not been possible for the Soviet Union to establish roots of interest that go behind sheer power." The United States, he said, should "strive for an evolution that makes the relationship between the Eastern Europeans and the Soviet Union an organic one." Many observers

March 1976: Stenographic Account, Vol.1 (Moscow: Politizdat, 1976), pp.41-42. Erich Honecker was quoted at the time as saying of the Final Act: "Inviolability of frontiers is the decisive point"; quoted in the New York Times, 19 November 1990.

pointed out that this formulation was obscure and subject to misinterpretation that the United States endorsed and supported Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe.⁴²

Undermining Factors From the Mid 1970s
to the Early 1980s

Although Brezhnev sought greater cohesion within the bloc while allowing at the same time a degree of domestic diversity and autonomy for each state, a number of factors - economic and political, international and domestic - undermined his policy in the region. By the mid-1970s East-West relations began to deteriorate, mainly as a result of Western apprehensions over Soviet military capabilities and intentions, the issue of human rights, NATO's emphasis on rearmament, and Soviet involvement in the Third World. Within the bloc, the impact of detente and the Helsinki process made the "Iron Curtain" porous and increased the exposure of East European elites and societies to Western, and especially West European, influences.

⁴² See the New York Times, 6 April 1976.

Moreover, the global economic recession undermined the growth strategies of the countries of Eastern Europe, which in turn threatened the delicate political balance which had been achieved. Ideological challenges to the primacy of the Soviet Union and fundamental premises of communist rule came from the "Eurocommunists" and other autonomous parties in the West, as well as from dissident groups within Eastern Europe. Therefore, by the decade's end, the key elements of Soviet and East European strategies for the 1970s - detente internationally, economic growth domestically, and integrationist efforts in mutual relations - were in disarray. Moreover, the unifying ideological principle of socialist internationalism was appearing increasingly irrelevant in light of pressing domestic and international concerns.

I. The Impact of Detente and the Helsinki Process

One aspect of detente - West Germany's policy of "Ostpolitik" and the ratification of the Eastern Treaties in the early 1970s - had a major impact on Soviet influence in Eastern Europe. The formal acceptance by Bonn of the postwar territorial status

quo effectively removed the fears of German revanchism.⁴³ This threat had been used by the Soviet Union to justify its claim as regional protector. The impact was felt most strongly in Poland, where the communist leaders had used the "German card" to justify their close relations with the USSR. Ostpolitik also resulted in an expansion of West German influence in Eastern Europe, primarily economic. Finally, it led to an intensification of relations and a proliferation of ties between the two Germanys.

Another major factor which undermined Soviet control over Eastern Europe was the impact of the Helsinki process. Although much of the Final Act was in the form of general statements of intent, the importance of Helsinki was the evolution of its ideas on Europe as a whole. In this case, as Hutchings argued, the search for new avenues of accord "held greater significance than its substantive results".⁴⁴ The Helsinki process helped to reduce some of the barriers between the two halves of Europe. Its impact was felt more strongly in the East: although the Helsinki process did not change the basic nature of the East European

43 See F. Stephen Larrabee, The Challenge to Soviet Interests in Eastern Europe (Santa Monica: Rand, 1984), pp.20-21.

44 Hutchings, op. cit., pp.96-97.

political system, the proliferation of East-West contacts made Soviet control of Eastern Europe more difficult. And in some countries, such as in Hungary and Poland, it contributed to greater social pluralization, liberalization, and dissent.

The Helsinki process also marked the beginning for East European countries as actors (although in a limited sense) in the international arena. Through CSCE and other efforts, the East European regimes were offered opportunities for separate diplomatic activity, even if it was not independent. This marked a significant change from the 1950s and 1960s. Some of the East European countries were involved in promoting European detente: they also attempted to revive detente a decade later when in the early 1980s they saw their contacts and investments with the West threatened by superpower conflict. Moreover, some of the regimes were backed by elements of their populations with which they had previously little in common.⁴⁵

Detente also brought long-term benefits for the East European economies. While the Soviet Union gained access to valuable technology and technical information via Eastern Europe: at the same time,

⁴⁵ See J. F. Brown, "The Soviet View of East European Detente in the Aftermath of the Polish Crisis," in Harry Gelman (ed), The Future of Soviet Policy Toward Western Europe (Santa Monica: Rand, 1985), pp.102-03.

detente brought the West into Eastern Europe in a more comprehensive way than in the past. Moreover, detente tended to make some East European regimes beholden to the West, particularly in economic terms. Consequently, these regimes became more tolerant of dissent than they might otherwise have been.⁴⁶ The Kremlin, for example, did not foresee the corrosive effect inter-German rapprochement would have on East Germany itself. Detente undermined the legitimacy of the GDR by ending its international isolation, increasing contacts between the two populations, and bringing scenes of freedom and prosperity from West German television into East German homes.⁴⁷

In addition, the period of good economic performance and growth of the early 1970s slowed dramatically, and had all but ceased by 1980. The East European leaderships were faced with rapidly rising prices for Soviet oil and Western finished products, but found it increasingly difficult to find Western markets for their exports. Moreover the integrationist schemes of the early 1970s proved largely irrelevant to the dilemmas which faced the regimes. The only way to avoid economic disaster

46 See Brown, Communist Rule, op. cit., pp.85-93.

47 See Angela Stent, "The One Germany," Foreign Policy, No.81 (Winter 1990-91), pp.53-70, at p.58.

was to run up enormous debts on Western financial markets. By the end of the 1970s economic deterioration was evident everywhere in Eastern Europe, with a growing debt burden and falling economic growth rates.⁴⁸ In addition, the "consumerism" policy had kindled in the local populations rising expectations; with its failure public hopes were dashed, leading to the potential for mass discontent.

Furthermore, economic deterioration and social discontent fueled the rise of dissident forces in Eastern Europe. Such groups as KOR in Poland, Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia, and "Helsinki Watch" organizations throughout the region emerged to challenge some of the fundamental premises of communist rule. The result was an upsurge of dissent throughout Eastern Europe in the latter half of the 1970s, which further complicated Moscow's efforts to maintain stability and control.⁴⁹ In addition, the Helsinki process had legitimized Western interest in the East European dissident

48 See, for example, Keith Crane, The Soviet Economic Dilemma of Eastern Europe (Santa Monica: Rand, 1986) and Jan Vanous, "East European Economic Slowdown," Problems of Communism, Vol.31, No.4 (July-August 1982).

49 See Thomas Heneghan, "Human Rights Protests in Eastern Europe," The World Today (March 1977), pp.90-100; and Walter D. Connor, "Dissent in Eastern Europe: A New Coalition," Problems of Communism (January-February 1980), pp.1-17.

groups, a development which Moscow might not have foreseen. Severe economic deterioration and mounting social discontent were matched only by the unwillingness or inability of the East European leaders to develop new approaches to meet the changing situations.

There was also the decline of ideology as a vital element in East European political life. Soviet-style socialism was beginning to be seen both within and outside the bloc as a "spent force", whose erosion could not be disguised. Moreover, any possibility of reform had been undermined by the crushing of the Prague Spring. In addition, the populations of Eastern Europe were looking for tangible political and economic reforms, not the "glory" of socialist internationalism.

Moreover, within the Soviet Union itself there was a debate concerning the principles on which Soviet-East European relations should be based. In the book Socialism and International Relations, published in Moscow in late 1975, there were articles written by both reformists and conservatives within the CPSU, whose views often contradicted one other. In the book, Alexander Bovin - a former Central Committee member and a columnist for Izvestiia at the time - posed a question regarding the "contradictions" within

socialism: "Is it really necessary to pass through the purgatory of contradictions in order to acknowledge the variety of paths to socialism and of forms of socialist society ... No, it is not necessary. But the historical experience, the practice of relations between the countries of socialism attests otherwise." He encouraged the Soviet Union to find other solutions whereby national interests would not always have to be in "harmony" with those of internationalism.⁵⁰

The role of ideology was eroded also by the growth of "Eurocommunism" during the mid-1970s. "Eurocommunism" was the term coined in 1975-76 to denote the current of Western European communism that stressed independence of action for each party. It also embodied varying degrees of democratic and pluralistic tendencies. The open criticism by the Western communist parties of the Soviet military action in Czechoslovakia, along with the desire to distance themselves politically from the Soviet Union, led them to increasingly criticize other aspects of Soviet inter-party, foreign, and even internal policies. The danger of Eurocommunism was

50 See Alexander Bovin, "Contradictions in the Development of the World System of Socialism and Means of their Resolution," in Anatoliy Butenko, et al (eds), Socialism and International Relations (Moscow: Nauka, 1975), pp.249-75; in Valdez, Internationalism, op. cit., pp.69-71.

that it offered an alternative model in how to attain state power as well as how to build socialism. It threatened Soviet legitimacy domestically and within the bloc by challenging the Soviet "monopoly on truth". Moscow feared that the impact of the Eurocommunists on Eastern Europe could lead to repetitions of the Prague Spring. While the Kremlin could have endured the loss of control over the Italian Communist Party, it could not tolerate the spread of its "heresies" to the bloc.⁵¹ Moreover, the appeals from the East European elites to Moscow to expel the Eurocommunist parties from the communist movement indicated the gravity with which they viewed the threat.⁵² Suslov launched an attack on the Eurocommunists in March 1976. In a

51 For further discussion, see Rudolf L. Tokes (ed), Eurocommunism and Detente (New York: New York University Press, 1978); Joan Barth Urban, "The West European Communist Challenge to Soviet Foreign Policy," in Roger E. Kanet (ed), Soviet Foreign Policy in the 1980s (New York: Praeger, 1982), pp.175-83; and Kevin Devlin, "The Challenge of Eurocommunism," Problems of Communism (January-February 1977).

52 Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany openly attacked the Eurocommunist position in their press; the Polish and Hungarian statements from this period were notably less critical than its other three allies; the Romanians endorsed the Eurocommunist-style of internationalism; and, Hungary refrained from overly harsh condemnation and continued to maintain warm relations with the movement; see Jiri Valenta, "Eurocommunism and Eastern Europe," Problems of Communism, Vol.27 (March-April 1978), p.49.

speech to the general meeting of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, he castigated the "opponents of Marxism ... who have begun more often to dress themselves in Marxist clothing," who misinterpreted Marxism-Leninism and attempted to rob it of its "revolutionary essence".⁵³

Brown argued that Soviet concern over the influence of Eurocommunism on Eastern Europe prompted Moscow to initiate the European Conference of Communist Parties in East Berlin (June 1976). He stated that the conference should be seen as concomitant to the CSCE. Both meetings were designed to consecrate Soviet supremacy: Helsinki was to confirm Soviet territorial gains; Berlin, to confirm Soviet supremacy over the whole European communist movement.⁵⁴ However, in both cases Moscow miscalculated because it had to make concessions which made the "prize they won considerably less valuable".⁵⁵ The document reached at the Berlin meeting contained no general line or ideological commitments. There was no mention of any special status for the CPSU or of "proletarian internationalism": only of voluntary cooperation. In addition, strong emphasis was laid on

53 See Pravda, 18 March 1976; in Valdez, op. cit., pp.74-75.

54 See Brown, Communist Rule, op. cit., p.83.

55 Ibid.

independence, equality, and noninterference. There was no mention of "dual responsibility" or "mutual assistance" which had been considered mandatory in earlier declarations.⁵⁶ Although the influence of Eurocommunism on Eastern Europe was limited, it complicated Moscow's efforts to maintain its hegemony, and aided Romania and Yugoslavia in their independent course.

Soviet "neglect", or at least political complacency, also played a key part in these developments. Though the Soviet leadership was aware of the geopolitical importance of the bloc, it showed signs of taking the region for granted. Having again stabilized Eastern Europe after the Prague Spring, in the second half of the 1970s the Soviet leadership seemed to ignore developments. There are several possible explanations. One reason may have been that after 1968 Moscow was satisfied with the normalization and integration processes and with economic growth. The Kremlin may have concluded that after years of trial and error it had found the correct formula for stability, cohesion

⁵⁶ *Pravda*, 2 July 1976. For details, see Hutchings, op. cit., pp.208-12.

After the meeting Moscow attempted to salvage some of its demands which were not met: for instance, it reasserted the principle of proletarian internationalism and strengthened ties with its loyal allies in Eastern Europe, such as Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Bulgaria.

and viability: consumerism, integration, and the "Brezhnev Doctrine".⁵⁷ Moreover, Brezhnev may have derived a false sense of security from detente in Europe and the Helsinki Final Act.

Soviet neglect may also have resulted from preoccupation with deteriorating relations with the United States or with the Third World.⁵⁸ In addition, Soviet will and determination to respond appeared to be lacking.⁵⁹ From 1976 on, the decline in energy of the leadership as a whole may also have had some effect on Soviet decisiveness in Eastern Europe: perhaps a "healthier" Soviet leader may have seen the danger signals emanating from Poland.⁶⁰ In addition, by the late 1970s there was increasing internal and external pressure on the Soviet leadership to find innovative measures to resolve the problems within the bloc. The Soviet elites, however, were unable or reluctant to address these

57 See Brown, Surge, op. cit., p.30.

58 See A. Ross Johnson, Eastern Europe Looks West, (Santa Monica: Rand, 1977).

59 See J. F. Brown, "The East European Setting," in Lincoln Gordon (ed), Eroding Empire: Western Relations with Eastern Europe (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1987), pp.15-16.

60 According to the Soviet academician, Georgiy Arbatov, Brezhnev toward the end of the 1970s was intellectually and physically incapable of making any political decision on his own; see Arbatov's interview with Russian journalist, Artyom Borovik, in Borovik, The Hidden War: A Russian Journalist's Account of the Soviet War in Afghanistan (New York: Atlantic Monthly, 1990), p.6; see also Gierek, pamietniki, op. cit., p.200.

issues.⁶¹

II. Afghanistan 1979

Until 1979 the Soviet interventionist doctrine was commonly believed to be limited to the Soviet bloc, although such a stipulation had never been established.⁶² The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan

61 See Neil Malcolm, "De-Stalinization and Soviet Foreign Policy: The Roots of 'New Thinking'," in Tsuyoshi Hasegawa and Alex Pravda (eds), Perestroika: Soviet Domestic and Foreign Policies (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1990), p.182.

62 The purpose of this study of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and, later, the Polish Crisis of 1980-1981 is not to retrace the history of these events, but: first, to gauge the extent to which the "Brezhnev Doctrine" was applied and adapted to these situations; and, second, to show how these crises revealed that the use of the doctrine did not, nor could not, resolve the problems which were more serious and fundamental than the Soviet leadership had estimated.

For a detailed discussion of the events surrounding the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, see Henry S. Bradsher, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union (Durham: Duke University Press, 1985); and Joseph J. Collins, The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan: A Study in the Use of Force in Soviet Foreign Policy (Lexington: Lexington, 1986). For an account of the war, see Borovik, op. cit.. For an examination of the impact of the invasion on Soviet socialist theory, and how the justification compared with that of other crises in Eastern Europe, see Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., pp.174-92; and Jiri Valenta, "From Prague to Kabul: The Soviet Style of Invasion," International Security, Vol.5, No.2 (Fall 1980), pp.114-41.

on 27 December 1979 led to speculation in the West that the doctrine had been extended in two principal ways: geographically and ideologically. Geographically, the invasion occurred in a territorial region outside Europe, where the "rules of the game" had not been settled by the superpowers. The Soviet invasion surprised the international community: Afghanistan was the first country to be invaded outside the East European security zone since the Second World War. Whereas Czechoslovakia belonged to the East European buffer zone and had been a socialist country for more than two decades, Afghanistan was a Third World Muslim country, part of Asia, and had a ruling Marxist party only since 1978.⁶³ At the same time, however, the northern tier of Afghanistan had traditionally been considered to be within the sphere of influence in both Russian and Soviet times.⁶⁴ Therefore, it may have been argued that the Soviet action in Afghanistan was not necessarily marking a new age of Soviet foreign policy, but was consistent with past interests.

Ideologically the Soviet interventionist doctrine

63 For a comparison and contrast of the Soviet invasions of Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan, see Valenta, *op.cit.*

64 Russian, and later the Soviet Union, had intervened in Afghanistan on a limited scale in 1885, 1928, and 1930, but never on a full-scale basis as in 1979.

was believed to have been extended to embrace regimes which were not members of the socialist community. At the time of the invasion Afghanistan was still a "non-aligned" country, despite its increasing dependence on Moscow. Moreover, Afghanistan did not have a mutual assistance treaty with the Soviet Union: the treaty signed between the two countries in December 1978 was a friendship treaty, not a military alliance.⁶⁵ In addition, Afghanistan was classified by the Soviet Union as a country of "socialist orientation", of a less developed country pursuing non-capitalist development in close cooperation with the socialist world.⁶⁶ Because communist power in Afghanistan still had to be consolidated, the Soviet Union, therefore, could not legitimately claim to be defending a stable and well-entrenched socialist government against subversion by "counterrevolution".

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan also raised the issue of whether the "Brezhnev Doctrine" made intervention more likely: Moscow had publicly

65 Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighbourliness, and Cooperation between the USSR and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, signed 5 December 1978; text of treaty in UNTS, Vol.1145, No.17976 (1979).

66 See A. Kiva, "Sotsialisticheskaia orientatsiia: nekotorye problemy teorii i praktiki," Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, No.10, (1976), pp.19-32.

proclaimed that there could be no retreat from socialism. After Czechoslovakia, Moscow may have been perceived as willing to intervene in the countries of Eastern Europe or other members of the "socialist community" to prevent "defection". Moreover, if Moscow appeared willing to intervene in the Third World to prevent a "socialist-aspiring" state from falling off its "historic path", how did this bode for other socialist countries like Yugoslavia or Romania? Should there have been global surprise at Soviet behavior since the "Brezhnev Doctrine" stated that there could be no retreat from socialism?

After the Afghan crisis, the Soviet leadership issued several statements which contained elements similar to the Soviet interventionist doctrine. However, the limited number of these statements, and the absence of Eastern bloc participation, appeared to suggest that Soviet policy toward Afghanistan belonged in a different category from the "fraternal assistance" lent to Eastern Europe. In addition, the Soviet leadership did not pursue policies - except for military intervention - normally associated with the doctrine's code words and phrases. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was primarily the result of security concerns (although ideological motivations were also part of security

considerations), varied in character from the East European crises, and was unsuccessful in promoting stability or suppressing opposition.

The resulting imbroglio raised a number of questions. Were there, for example, limits to Soviet military might? Was the Soviet interventionist doctrine no longer an effective means of defending "socialism"? Would the Soviet military be far more reluctant to become embroiled in future crises?

Soviet behavior toward Afghanistan may have been influenced by the Soviet perception of the favorable "correlation of forces" between the capitalist and socialist camps. While the focus of balance of power theories was upon military balance achieved through alliances between states, by contrast correlation of forces analysis covered many dimensions of power, not only military capabilities of states.⁶⁷ In practice, however, Moscow had laid greatest stress upon the military power of states in their assessments; therefore, the correlation of forces was similar to the "balance of power"

67 For details, see Julian Lider, Correlation of Force: An Analysis of Marxist-Leninist Concepts (London: Gower, 1986); Sh. Sanakoyev, "The World Today: Problem of the Correlation of Forces," International Affairs (Moscow), No.11, (1974), pp.40-50; and Michael J. Deane, "The Soviet Assessment of the 'Correlation of World Forces'," Orbis, Vol.20, No.3 (1976), pp.625-36.

concept.

In the early 1970s the Soviet leadership made numerous statements in which they argued that the correlation of forces favored socialism. From the Soviet perspective, Moscow was growing in strength relative to the United States. The Soviet Union believed that it was on the way to becoming the most influential state.⁶⁸ One Soviet commentator, Lebedev, stated that this favorable shift in the correlation of forces was "an objective natural law of world development".⁶⁹ This shift in power relationships was articulated by Brezhnev and other Soviet commentators from the mid-1970s.⁷⁰ At the 24th Party Congress in February 1976, for instance, Brezhnev stated that there was no place on earth where the USSR could be excluded from consideration.⁷¹

68 See V. V. Aspaturian, "Soviet Global Power and the Correlation of Forces," Problems of Communism (May-June 1980), pp.1-18.

69 See N. I. Lebedev, The USSR in World Politics (Moscow: Progress, 1982), p.141.

70 See, for example, Brezhnev's speech of 14 June 1974 in Pravda, 15 June 1974.

71 Pravda, 25 February 1976. By the late 1970s the Soviet Union was considered by many observers as a global power: it had a widening network of relationship with Third World countries; it had growing military strength, particularly in Soviet naval forces; and, it had supported revolutionary movements outside its geographical sphere, such as in Angola and Ethiopia. There had also been victories for socialism in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. For an examination of the

The United States, on the other hand, appeared preoccupied with the Iranian crisis, was suffering from the "Vietnam syndrome", and had vacillated during other Soviet interventions in the Third World of the 1970s. Moscow, therefore, may have reasoned that a Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan would have elicited little more than a rhetorical US response.⁷² The chances of direct confrontation were considered minimal, while the political costs were recognized to be considerable. Moreover, as security interests appeared overriding, considerations of a negative impact on Soviet relations with the US, Western Europe, or with the Third World probably were secondary. In addition, the United States was preoccupied with the Iranian situation. Moscow may have further reasoned that relations with Washington had deteriorated to the point where a SALT II Treaty ratification and other detente dividends were unlikely and, therefore, no longer a constraint on Soviet action in Afghanistan.⁷³

possible application of the Soviet interventionist doctrine by Vietnam in its invasion of Cambodia in 1977, see Dennis Duncanson, "'Limited Sovereignty' in Indochina," The World Today (July 1978), pp.260-68.

72 See, for instance, Valenta, "From Prague to Kabul," op. cit., p.140.

73 According to a report in the New York Times, Soviet officials with access to high-level thinking claimed that Moscow believed detente with the West faced an uncertain

Moscow had not resorted to force at the first opportunity: it had gone to great lengths to stabilize Afghanistan by political means, as well as through economic and military aid. When that approach failed, however, Soviet forces intervened.

The communists had initially seized power from Mohammad Daoud in April 1978 in a coup headed by Nur Mohammad Taraki. Taraki pressed for radical reforms which alienated tribes, religious leaders, and the small urban middle class: all this deprived him of both popular support and the loyalty of the thin stratum of administrators and technically trained personnel.⁷⁴ In addition, he intensified relations with Moscow, signing the December 1978 Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation.

By early 1979 Taraki had triggered an open rebellion against his reforms. There were also

future and, therefore, had little to lose by protecting Soviet interests on its southern border; see the New York Times, 15 January 1991. During this time, for example: the United States had supported an increase in defense spending, the deployment of the MX missile system, and the Trident submarine; Carter had announced the creation of the Rapid Deployment Force to counter problems in the Persian Gulf; NATO had agreed to deploy new medium-range missiles in Europe; and, the US had made attempts to improve relations with China.

74 For an examination of the impact of the Taraki regime on Afghanistan, including new archival evidence, see Odd Arne Westad, "Prelude to Invasion: The Soviet Union and the Afghan Communists, 1978-1979," The International History Review, Vol.XVI, No.1 (February 1994), pp.49-69.

widespread attacks on his regime. An April 1979 CPSU Central Committee document assessed the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan. It attributed the increasing success of the Islamic opposition to the "miscalculations and mistakes" of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). The regime's harsh social policies and "unjustified repression" were cited as the main factors responsible for the alienation of the army and the general population.

The report also revealed that the Soviet leadership had previously dismissed a PDPA request for military assistance during riots in the city of Herat, ironically because it had predicted "the serious political consequences which would have followed if the Soviet side had granted their request".⁷⁵ Moreover, the document noted that "the use of Soviet troops in repressing the Afghan

⁷⁵ See the English translation of the 1 April 1979 document in the Cold War International History Project Bulletin, Issue 3 (Fall 1993), pp.67-69. The document was signed by Gromyko, Ustinov, Andropov, and CC International Department head Boris Ponomarev. See also the transcript of a telephone conversation between Kosygin and Taraki (on 18 March 1979) in which the Afghan prime minister asked for Soviet assistance during the Herat unrest; see "Excerpts From CPSU Archives Televised," (on 14 July) in FBIS-SOV-92-138, 17 July 1992, pp.30-33. Furthermore, a report of a Politburo committee dated 28 June 1979 depicted Afghanistan as a backward, feudal country with incompetent, sectarian leadership; see the International Herald Tribune, 16 November 1992.

counterrevolution would seriously damage the international authority of the USSR and would set back the process of disarmament."

Taraki was replaced in September 1979 by his Deputy Prime Minister, Hafizullah Amin. For the next three months Amin pursued an even more aggressive policy than Taraki. According to Oleg Gordievsky, a former KGB chief in London, reports from KGB agents within the Afghan official establishment forecast that, unless Amin was removed, the communist regime would be replaced by an anti-Soviet Islamic Republic.⁷⁶ On 29 October, the Politburo committee on Afghanistan warned that Amin was trying to purge the party and state of all potential opponents. It also expressed concern over signs that the new leader was seeking to pursue a "more balanced" foreign policy.⁷⁷ Moscow apparently

76 See Christopher Andrew and Oleg Gordievsky, KGB: The Inside Story (New York: Harper Collins, 1990), p.574. The KGB reported in mid-October that the Iranian government aimed to weaken the PDPA in Afghanistan, and to prevent the spread of communism, partly by exerting its own influence on the Muslim republics of the USSR; KGB (G. Tsinev) to MO, 10 October 1979, report: "Rukovodstvo Irana o vneshnei bezopasnosti strani [The Iranian Leadership on the Country's Foreign Security], TsKhSD, f 5 0 76 d 1355, pp.18-20; in Westad, op. cit., p.63.

77 The report was signed by Gromyko, Ustinov, Andropov, and Ponomarev. For details on the archival revelations concerning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, see the International Herald Tribune, 16 and 17 November 1992; and Westad, op. cit..

decided that only military intervention, and the replacement of Amin with Babrak Karmal, could stabilize the situation in Afghanistan.⁷⁸

Archival evidence indicates that the decision to invade was made by a small group within the Soviet Politburo. Gromyko, Ustinov, Andropov, and Ponomarev had shaped policy toward Afghanistan prior to the invasion. Brezhnev at this time was increasingly incapacitated by strokes, while Kosygin was preoccupied with domestic affairs.⁷⁹ The decision to invade was made at a special Politburo session led by Brezhnev on 12 December 1979. With the exception of Kosygin - who had not attended the 12 December session and was believed to have opposed the decision to invade - all full Politburo members approved it.⁸⁰

There were a number of reasons why the Soviet Union intervened in Afghanistan. One factor was security: Moscow was always concerned with developments on its borders. Brezhnev, for example, stated two weeks after the Soviet intervention that

78 See the New York Times, 24 October 1989.

79 See the International Herald Tribune, 16 November 1992.

80 Ibid. Artyom Borovik reveals in his book how no official wanted to admit blame for the decision to intervene: the foreign ministry blamed the military; the military blamed Karmal; Karmal blamed the Soviet "failure to understand Afghanistan"; and, everyone appeared to blame the KGB. See Borovik, op. cit.

it had been necessary because of

a real threat that Afghanistan would lose its independence and be turned into an imperialist military bridgehead on our southern border ... To have done otherwise would have meant to watch passively the origination on our southern border of a seat of serious danger to the security of the Soviet state.⁸¹

Garthoff argued that the intervention was, therefore, a solution to a specific situation on the Soviet border which was threatening Soviet security.⁸²

For Moscow, the downfall of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul could also have altered the strategic balance in favor of the US or China. The Soviet leadership feared that the United States was attempting to "drive" Afghanistan into the "notorious strategic arc" which America "has been building for decades close to the USSR's southern borders".⁸³ The Iranian Revolution also increased the military and strategic importance of

81 Pravda, 13 January 1980. Soviet officials claimed in an article in 1991 that the Kremlin acted because detente with the West at that time was already on "shaky ground". They believed that the Soviet Union had little to lose by protecting its interests; see the New York Times, 15 January 1991.

82 See Garthoff, op. cit., pp.927-28.

83 Ye. Shaskov, "Milestone in the Struggle for Peace," Sovetskaia rossiia, 4 January 1980.

Afghanistan.⁸⁴

In addition, the fall of Afghanistan would have constituted (for Moscow) a loss of prestige. The collapse of a socialist-oriented country on the borders of the USSR would have undermined socialism's image of an upward and forward revolutionary movement. The Soviet Union may not have been satisfied with a "neutral" Afghanistan, particularly after a heavy investment in men, weapons, and military prestige. Claims that the gains of socialism were irreversible would also have been weakened.

Another consideration was that the success of Muslim fundamentalism in Afghanistan may have unsettled the community of 50 million Muslims within the Soviet Union (particularly in light of growing militancy among Islamic fundamentalists in Iran in 1978-79). As James Critchlow noted, the Soviet Muslims in Central Asia "share[d] proximity and historical experience" with the bordering Muslim countries.⁸⁵ Moreover, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tadzhikistan shared 800 miles of borders with Afghanistan.

⁸⁴ Control of Afghanistan permitted, for instance, surveillance of events in Iran; see Westad, op. cit., pp.65-66.

⁸⁵ James Critchlow, "Minarets and Marx," The Washington Quarterly (Spring 1980), pp.47-57.

Although the ascendancy of hard-liners in the Kremlin gave Soviet policy a decisiveness it had frequently lacked, there did exist opposition to the invasion. Yu. V. Gankovskiy, an employee of the Eastern Studies Institute, stated that the armed forces chiefs - Nikolai Ogarkov, Sergei Akhromoyev, and Valentin Varennikov - were against the intervention, but could not override Defense Minister Ustinov's wishes.⁸⁶ Soviet academician Oleg Bogomolov claimed in 1992 that his institute (Institute of the Economics of the World Socialist System) had published a report at the time which described the invasion as a mistake. The document also noted that an intervention would raise a number of problems internationally and economically. Bogomolov did not, however, receive any reaction to the report from the Politburo.⁸⁷ In a secret

86 Stated on 14 July 1992, in "Excerpts From CPSU Archives Televised," op. cit., p.32. See also Varennikov's comments - cited in an International Herald Tribune article - in which he stated that Ogarkov had expressed his reservations about the intervention; 27 January 1994. See also A. Oliinik and A. Efimov, "Vvod voisk v Afganistane: Kak prinimalos' reshenie," Krasnaia zvezda, 18 November 1989, p.4; in R. Craig Nation, Black Earth, Red Star: A History of Soviet Security Policy, 1917-1991 (Ithaca: Cornell, 1992), pp.279-80.

87 14 July 1992, in "Excerpts From CPSU Archives Televised," op. cit., p.32. See also the letter by Bogomolov, "Kto zhe oshibalsia?" in Literaturnaia gazeta, 16 March 1988, p.10, in which he claimed that the advice of Soviet area specialists was neither solicited nor accepted; in Nation,

message to senior party officials justifying the invasion, the Soviet Politburo acknowledged that there were "waverers" and "doubters", but insisted that they would be proved wrong.⁸⁸

The Soviet Union justified the intervention in a number of ways. First, Moscow claimed that the invasion had been launched in response to an official request by the Afghan government. Brezhnev in a Pravda interview of 13 January denied that there was a Soviet intervention: "we are helping the new Afghanistan at the request of the government to defend the country's national independence ... against armed aggressive actions from the outside." It was not clear, however, who requested the help of Soviet troops. The ensuing contradictions over who did further undermined Soviet rationale.⁸⁹ Moscow's original assertion was that it had been invited by Amin, but later claimed that the invitation came from Karmal on 28 December.⁹⁰

op. cit., pp.279-80.

88 See the International Herald Tribune, 17 November 1992.

89 See Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., pp.187-88.

90 Moscow made other contradictory statements, including that Amin was a CIA agent, and that there was no connection between Amin's fate and the intervention.

The request was first aired over Kabul Radio on 28 December. The message contained certain statements similar in content to those contained in the Soviet interventionist doctrine. For example, Afghanistan appealed to Moscow after "taking into consideration the continuing and widening interference and provocation of the country's external

Second, the Soviet Union asserted that it was fulfilling its legal obligations under the terms of the Soviet-Afghan Friendship Treaty of December 1978. On 28 December Karmal had invoked the Treaty on seizing power.⁹¹ However, the treaty was one of friendship, not a military alliance. It did not contain a mutual assistance clause of the type the Soviet Union had with the East European countries. Nor did the treaty refer to "socialist internationalism": it affirmed the independence of the two states. Various clauses suggested a patron-client relationship, particularly Article 4, which stipulated that the two sides would take "appropriate measures to ensure the security, independence, and territorial integrity of the two countries". The USSR interpreted this clause broadly: it subsequently was cited as providing a "firm legal foundation" for sending troops. The Soviet Union denied that the Soviet military action was an "intervention" or the use of the "Brezhnev Doctrine":

Recently the Western and especially the American media have been intentionally spreading deceptive rumors about the

enemies and in order to defend the gains of the April revolution ... "

⁹¹ Reuter, 28 December 1979.

'interference' of the Soviet Union in the internal affairs of Afghanistan ... All this, of course, is pure fabrication ... It is well known that relations between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan are based on a solid foundation of good-neighborly relations [and] non-interference in the internal affairs of one another ...⁹²

Moscow's TASS news agency reported on 3 January 1980 that Afghanistan's "request for help in repelling external threats was expressed to the Soviet Union. This is why all talk of a certain 'Soviet interference' is totally baseless." Brezhnev himself invoked Article 51 of the UN Charter as part of the justification. In an interview with Pravda on 13 January 1980, the Soviet leader asserted:

The Afghan Government and its responsible representative in the United Nations state for all to hear: Leave us alone, the Soviet military contingents were brought in at our request and in accordance with the Soviet-Afghan Treaty and Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

Another justification was that the assistance was an imperative of "fraternal obligations". In an 31 December article, A. Petrov wrote that in agreeing to the Afghan government's request the Soviet Union

⁹² Pravda, 23 December 1979.

was guided by its international duty.⁹³ On 6 February 1980, Grishin (the Moscow party boss who had invoked the "Brezhnev Doctrine" during the Czechoslovak crisis) wrote in Pravda that the Soviet Union's obligations to "socialist internationalism" required it to defend "revolutionary gains".⁹⁴ In another Soviet publication in January 1980 the doctrinal rationale was further explained:

To refuse to use the potential which the socialist countries possess would mean in fact avoiding fulfilling an international duty and returning the world to the times when imperialism would stifle any revolutionary movement with impunity as it saw fit.⁹⁵

Moreover, in October 1980 Brezhnev stated that the "revolutionary process in Afghanistan is irreversible."⁹⁶

There were similarities between Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan in the way the Soviet Union justified its intervention. Similar words and phrases, for example, were used which were contained within the Soviet interventionist doctrine. Although these statements echoed those of the

93 A. Petrov, "K sobytiyam v Afganistane," Pravda, 31 December 1979.

94 Pravda, 6 February 1980.

95 New Times, No.3 (18 January 1980).

96 The Washington Post, 17 October 1980.

doctrine, their use by the Kremlin may perhaps have been meant as a quick justification, rather than a developed strategy.⁹⁷ In addition, how could socialism be defended in a country which was not categorized as "socialist"? Furthermore, the Afghan crisis did not contain the usual elements associated with the "Brezhnev Doctrine": statements enforced with official visits by delegations; "invitations" to Moscow; military maneuvers; involvement of socialist allies; and, letters and declarations threatening the use of "fraternal assistance". In the case of Afghanistan, the local elites had been the ones requesting military assistance, which the Kremlin had refused. Therefore, the differences between the two interventions - an East European versus a Third World country, a "people's democracy" versus a "socialist-aspiring" state, among others - discounted the validity that the "Brezhnev Doctrine" had been applied and extended to the Third World. The intervention was also unsuccessful in suppressing dissent or regaining stability, the

⁹⁷ Moreover, the invocation of "socialist internationalist" responsibilities may have been primarily designed for the benefit of communist parties which were beginning to question the degree of Moscow's commitment to the cause of national liberation movements. Such an inference can be drawn from such arguments appearing primarily in Marxist journals such as New Times; see, in particular, New Times, No.3 (February 1980).

first major failure for Moscow in the 1970s.

The United States condemned the Soviet intervention as a violation of international law and a threat to international stability.⁹⁸ The invasion of Afghanistan seemed to prove the point that many in the US Administration had been arguing: that the Soviet Union was an aggressive, expansionist power that ignored detente. Washington's strong reaction appeared to signal that the hegemonic "rules of the game" did not apply to countries outside the Eastern bloc. As a result, the United States strengthened its military position by: increasing its defense budget; enacting various sanctions against the Soviet Union; and, delaying the ratification of the SALT II treaty. The intervention also resulted in the formulation of the "Carter Doctrine", which warned that any attempt by an outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region would be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States, and one which could invoke a military response.⁹⁹

Although the West European governments criticized the Soviet action, their response was not as harsh as that of the United States. In a period of

98 See Presidential Documents, Vol.16 (14 January 1980), p.25.

99 Carter enunciated this doctrine in his State of the Union address on 23 January 1980.

economic recession, few Western nations were eager to restrict their trade with the Soviet Union. Many Europeans favored the continuation of arms control talks with Moscow in the hope of preventing a breakdown in detente. The Third World countries in general protested the Soviet invasion. Many of these countries were ones which Moscow had tried to "win over" throughout the years, hoping to foster relations based on shared interests and mutual understanding. The non-aligned movement was particularly discouraged by the invasion: it was aimed against one of the founding members.

Moscow also encountered resistance from some socialist countries. While Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany gave the invasion their full support, Romania, China, Yugoslavia, and Albania condemned it. Hungary and Poland, both apparently worried about detente as well as new precedents for Soviet intervention, were slow in their endorsement.¹⁰⁰ The West European Communist parties either broke with Moscow over the invasion (Italy) or suffered humiliating defeats at the polls (France).

¹⁰⁰ Gierek, for example, was proud of the fact that Poland under his rule had never supported the Soviet invasion; only when Kania and Jaruzelski came to power did Poland openly support the action. See Rolicki, op. cit., p.112.

III. The Polish Crisis of 1980/81

The Polish crisis of 1980/81, and the military crackdown by General Wojciech Jaruzelski on 13 December 1981, further undermined Soviet control in Eastern Europe, as well as the effectiveness of the Soviet interventionist doctrine. The Polish regime had self-administered the intervention in order to make an invasion by the Soviet Union unnecessary (Because the essence of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" was a justification of the right of foreign military intervention, it cannot be said that the doctrine was "applied" or "imposed" by Jaruzelski; rather, that it was "administered" by the Polish regime in order to make external action unnecessary). The Soviet interventionist doctrine, however, proved to be far less successful than in the past in suppressing opposition. In addition, Polish events appeared to suggest that the Soviet Union was increasingly reluctant to intervene. The impact of the Polish crisis on the Soviet Union and the East European states will be discussed in the next chapter; however, but the crisis revealed that the use of the doctrine no longer guaranteed or sufficed to remedy the growing problems in Eastern Europe.

As in the rest of Eastern Europe, the 1970s witnessed economic growth in Poland. By the mid-

1970s, however, escalating costs of oil imports worsened the balance-of-payments situation; party privilege, corruption, and mismanagement of public enterprises alienated the working class; and poor grain harvests resulted in higher prices and a lower standard of living. In June 1976 strikes protesting an increase in food prices resulted in arrests, repression, and further alienation of the "proletariat". In July 1980 the Polish government's announcement of price increases precipitated a wave of strikes. By August Polish workers in Gdansk had formed an ad hoc Inter-factory Strike Committee and presented a long list of economic and political demands to the authorities, including the right to strike and form free trade unions. The Polish leadership eventually conceded the need to set up self-governing labor unions.¹⁰¹

101 For a detailed examination of the Gdansk events, see William F. Robinson (ed), August 1980: The Strikes in Poland (Munich: Radio Free Europe Research, October 1980).

Although the Polish regime had made concessions to the workers, it was also able to include within the document aspects of the Soviet interventionist doctrine. In the Gdansk agreement of 31 August 1980, the workers agreed that their unions "do not intend to play the role of a political party", and that the communist party would continue to play "the leading role" in Poland. The workers also declared that they did not desire to tamper with Poland's "existing system of international alliances", an acknowledgement that Poland must remain within the Soviet camp and the Warsaw Treaty Organization; see Glos Pracy and Zycie Warszawy, 2 September 1980.

Therefore, what had originated primarily as an economic protest rapidly developed into a mass movement of political and social renewal.¹⁰² Solidarity had won 10 million members in 12 months and as such mounted the first mass, nonviolent challenge to Soviet domination in the region. The Communist Party, in turn, was demoralized and appeared incapable of initiating economic or political reforms.¹⁰³

While the Soviet Politburo appeared ready to maintain control over Poland by force if necessary, it appreciated the risks and political costs of an invasion. The Polish Politburo had more at stake in preventing a Warsaw Pact invasion: their positions would be threatened and their so-called "independence" from Moscow unmasked.

Poland was in a vital strategic position. As part of the northern tier of the Warsaw Pact, it had always occupied an important place in Soviet

102 On the origins of Solidarity, see Neal Ascherson, The Polish August: The Self-Limiting Revolution (London: Allen Lane, 1981); Timothy Garton Ash, The Polish Revolution (New York: Vintage, 1985); and Jan de Weydenthal, Bruce Porter, and Kevin Devlin, The Polish Drama, 1980-1981 (Lexington: Lexington, 1983).

103 For a detailed examination of the situation within the PZPR during the Solidarity crisis see Weydenthal, Communists of Poland, op. cit., pp.183-205; and the minutes of the Polish Politburo sessions in Tajne dokumenty Biura Politycznego: PZPR a "Solidarnosc" 1980-1981 (London: Aneks, 1992).

strategic thinking. Although there were only two Soviet divisions in Poland, its central position was vital to Soviet communications lines to its 19 divisions in East Germany. In addition, Polish forces had been earmarked for a rapid offensive role in any conflict in Europe. Any erosion of cohesion and discipline within the Polish army would have had a direct impact on Moscow's ability to conduct coalition warfare in a conflict in Europe.¹⁰⁴ As Czechoslovakia learned in 1968, membership in the Warsaw Pact was a necessary condition of Soviet tolerance, but not the only one. The political and ideological stake that Moscow had in Poland was also important. The Soviet Union wanted not only a stable Poland on its borders, but one that was ideologically secure.

The nature of Solidarity's challenge to communist rule posed a serious threat to the cohesion of the entire socialist bloc. Foremost, the movement questioned the communist party's monopoly on power. Solidarity's success would have had serious implications for the rest of Eastern Europe, and hence for Soviet security interests. This "bacillus" may have spread to the rest of the bloc,

¹⁰⁴ See F. Stephen Larrabee, "Soviet Crisis Management in Eastern Europe," in David Holloway and Jane M. O. Sharp (eds), The Warsaw Pact: Alliance in Transition? (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), pp.127-28.

where other leaders could have faced similar pressures. This fear was accentuated in Soviet eyes by Solidarity's appeal at its first congress in September 1981 for other East European countries to establish independent trade unions. Although no country answered Solidarity's call, the general economic deterioration throughout the bloc, and the fact that attempts had previously been made to set up trade unions in several bloc countries (including the Soviet Union), gave Moscow ground for concern.

The underlying cause of the Polish crisis was the regime's lack of legitimacy. This condition derived from a number of factors.¹⁰⁵ First, the Polish government was still regarded by many Poles as an alien element forced upon the country, one which prevented self-determination. Second, the Catholic Church provided an alternative focus of popular loyalty: it symbolized Poland's historical links with the West. In addition, the PUWP was not able to justify its leading role in Polish society. Kolakowski noted that because the official ideology lacked any legitimacy or meaning, leaders sought to justify their policies by appealing to the national interest and the German threat, rather than to

¹⁰⁵ For details, see Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., pp. 194-95.

Marxist-Leninist values.¹⁰⁶ The existence of a sophisticated and active intelligentsia also undermined party authority.

Finally, the regime's legitimacy was diminished by the weakness and incompetence of the governing elite. According to Sarah Meiklejohn Terry, the Polish party was divided into essentially three factions: those who recognized the need for genuine compromise and reform; those who favored only cosmetic changes and were hostile to the trade union; and the moderates, who saw the necessity of some policy change, but at the same time were conscious of "geopolitical realities". The main struggle within the Polish leadership was between the moderates and the hard-liners.¹⁰⁷ There were also elements within the party which, if not initially, then over time grew to support a Soviet military solution.¹⁰⁸

The Polish leadership was divided and incapable

106 Kolakowski, Marxism, op. cit., p.467.

107 See Sarah Meiklejohn Terry, "The Future of Poland: Perestroika or Perpetual Crisis?" in William Griffith (ed), Central and Eastern Europe: The Opening Curtain? (Boulder: Westview, 1989), pp.178-217, at p.191.

108 For instance, see the interview with Jan Labecki - a member of the Polish Politburo during the Solidarity crisis - in which he stated: "Within the party there were many comrades who only waited for the entry of the Russians. Some would have even gone to fight [with them]", Gazeta Wyborcza, 12-13 February 1993 (author's translation).

of engineering and implementing successful economic programs and political reforms which would have increased its legitimacy. After each crisis - in 1970, 1976 - the government initiated only minimum reform in order to buy time: however, the problems only accumulated, making the situation worse every time. Each economic crisis was answered with appeasement, rather than by addressing the problems which were the origin of the unrest.

What were the factors which made the Polish crisis of 1980-81 different than those which preceded it?¹⁰⁹ Unlike in the Prague Spring of 1968, which was essentially a "revolution from above" led by the party and disaffected intellectuals, the Polish challenge was a genuine "revolution from below". It was led by workers and had widespread support throughout society, including the lower ranks of the party. This factor was different from the earlier uprisings of 1968 and 1970, where students and workers had not acted in unison.

During the Prague Spring the Soviet leadership

109 For a detailed discussion, see Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., pp.196-97. For a comparison and contrast of Poland 1956, Hungary 1956, Czechoslovakia 1968, and Poland 1980-81, see Jiri Valenta, "The Soviet Union and East Central Europe: Crisis, Intervention, and Normalization," in Rakowska-Harmstone, Communism, op. cit.

was faced with a Czechoslovak Party which had embarked upon a program, of what Moscow believed, was dangerous reform. "Digression" from the "path of socialism" was halted by the replacement of the top party leadership. In Poland, however, the Soviet leadership was faced not with a renegade party, but with a massive rejection of the PUWP by society as a whole. From Moscow's point of view, not only was the party's power being challenged, its loyalty was also increasingly in doubt as one million of the PUWP's three million members had joined Solidarity. Another contributory factor was that the party and its ineffective policies had finally out-tested the population's patience. Moreover, most Poles thought these problems could not be easily rectified, but were part of the system's inherent defects.

The 1980/81 crisis was different also in that there existed a credible alternative to the party, at first the Catholic Church and later Solidarity. Whereas the party was weakened by factional struggle, the opposition was growing in strength and was better united and coordinated.¹¹⁰ Finally, there was little tolerance for the continued close

¹¹⁰ Discipline was stressed to avoid outbursts which the Polish government or the Soviet Union could use as a pretext for military intervention.

and dependent relationship with the Soviet Union. With the decline of the German threat in the 1970s, Soviet justification for its alliance with Poland to protect its borders rang hollow.¹¹¹ Therefore, the population began to question why Polish-Soviet relations had to be so encompassing.

The Polish crisis was ended (albeit only temporarily) by a self-administered "Brezhnev Doctrine" by Jaruzelski on 13 December 1981.¹¹² The imposition of martial law was achieved by the Polish army with Soviet support, but without the need for Soviet troops. Martial law was justified in a statement made by Jaruzelski on 13 December. The document declared that in advancing an anti-

111 After the events of Fall 1989, however, Poland was more reluctant than Czechoslovakia and Hungary to have Soviet troops removed. It demanded further guarantees from both Germanys that the Oder-Neisse border would remain permanent.

112 For Jaruzelski's account of how the final decision for martial law was reached, see Jaruzelski, Stan Wojenny, op. cit., pp.1-10; on the same topic, see General Czeslaw Kiszczak's account (Minister of Internal Affairs during the Solidarity crisis) in Witold Beres and Jerzy Skoczylas, General Kiszczak Mowi ... Prawie Wszystko (Warsaw: BGW, 1991), pp.129-36.

Various revelations or accounts made by individuals or contained within memoirs, as well as archival documentation, do not necessarily represent the whole truth or facts about an event. The disclosure of such information can be selective to give an overall impression desired by those who reveal it; this particularly can be the case in memoirs. One, therefore, must take into consideration a number of factors to confirm if a certain line of thinking or argument is correct.

socialist counterrevolutionary program, Solidarity created a direct threat to Poland's fulfillment of its alliance commitments under the Warsaw Treaty, affecting the security of all signatories.¹¹³

In the Polish crisis of 1980/81 the military-dominated Council of National Unity subsequently pacified Poland, but was unable to "normalize" the situation.¹¹⁴ Although the "self-administration" of the Soviet interventionist doctrine by the Polish leadership appeared - initially - to be successful, in the long run Soviet policy was unable to resolve critical problems.

Throughout the Polish crisis, the Soviet Union made numerous statements that were contained within the "Brezhnev Doctrine". The content of Soviet messages included: the danger of "bourgeois

113 The English translation of the radio address by Jaruzelski can be found in the New York Times, 14 December 1981. In February 1992, the Polish parliament (Sejm) declared Jaruzelski's declaration of martial law illegal; see RFE/RL Daily Report, No.22 (3 February 1992).

The legality or morality of the decision to impose martial law has continued to be a sensitive and contentious issue in Poland. An April 1994 public opinion poll found, for example, that 71 percent of the respondents believed that Jaruzelski should not be punished for initiating martial law; only 15 percent believed that criminal procedures should be carried out. See Gazeta Wyborcza, 9-10 April 1994.

114 This inability to "normalize" Poland and the effectiveness of the Soviet interventionist doctrine as an instrument of Soviet policy will be discussed in the following chapter.

restoration" by "counterrevolutionary forces" from both inside and outside Poland; Western penetration and aggression; attacks on the concept of "independent" trade unions; assurances of Soviet support for the protection of "socialist gains" and the inviolability of Poland's existent alliance obligations; the implications of the unrest in Poland on Eastern Europe and elsewhere; the permanence of the socialist community and the duty of all of its members to defend the gains of socialism; and the rejection of alternative models of socialism.¹¹⁵

The Kremlin supplemented its statements with: top-level multilateral and bilateral meetings; visits by official delegations; "invitations" to Moscow; military maneuvers; letters from Soviet leaders to the Polish elites; authoritative articles published in the Soviet press; and, direct contacts between the Soviet and Polish military elites.¹¹⁶

The function that the Soviet interventionist doctrine served during the Solidarity crisis was as follows: as a means of signaling growing Soviet concern; as a warning device that excessive

115 See Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., p.199.

116 For further discussion, see Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., pp.201-05. For Jaruzelski's account of what transpired at the various Soviet-Polish meetings, see Jaruzelski, op. cit., pp.124-366.

compromise to Solidarity's demands be stopped; as a way of mobilizing support within the bloc, as well as within the USSR; as a method of conveying the acceptable ground rules of behavior; and, as a threat of military intervention (this was the doctrine's chief function throughout the crisis).

Initially, Moscow pursued a dual strategy of support for the PUWP and attacks upon "anti socialist elements".¹¹⁷ Later it attacked the revisionists within the party. In September 1980, an article by A. Petrov in Pravda described that "anti-socialist" elements in the Gdansk factories were using economic problems as a pretext for "counterrevolutionary" activity.¹¹⁸ On 20 September Petrov once again warned of anti-socialist subversion in Poland and German revanchist efforts to revise Poland's Western borders.¹¹⁹ During a Soviet-Polish meeting on 30 October, Stanislaw Kania - the PUWP First Secretary - was warned by Brezhnev that the "enemies of socialism" were active in Poland. The Soviet leader cautioned that the paralysis of the Polish party worked in the

117 See Bruce Porter, "The USSR's Dual Approach Towards Poland," Radio Liberty Research (29 December 1980), pp.1-4; and Richard D. Anderson, "Soviet Decision-Making and Poland," Problems of Communism, Vol.21, No.2 (1982), pp.22-36.

118 Pravda, 1 September 1980.

119 Ibid, 20 September 1980.

"enemy's" favor. The Soviet elite, he argued, did not see the situation in Poland as a conflict between the party and the workers, but one in which the workers were striking against the political mistakes of the previous leadership. Brezhnev viewed the situation as serious: "This is the deepest of crises, such which has not existed in other [socialist] countries."¹²⁰ He assured Kania that Poland could count on unlimited support from the Soviet Union.

In the minutes of the CPSU Politburo meeting following Kania's visit, Brezhnev expressed concern over the concessions that the Polish elites had made to Solidarity. He discussed the possibility of declaring martial law. Ustinov, during the same session, indicated that if martial law was not introduced, matters "will get complicated" and more "difficult". Andropov, however, was cautious about introducing such a measure, particularly so soon after Kania's visit; however, he added that "We cannot lose Poland".¹²¹ He also expressed concern that Polish events were having an impact on the

120 See the Polish Politburo minutes of 31 October 1980 in "Protokol nr 42 z posiedzenia Biura Politicznego 31 pazdziernika 1980 r," in Tajne Dokumenty, op. cit., pp.151-52 (author's translation).

121 Excerpts from the minutes of the CPSU Politburo meeting of 29 October 1980 can be found in Rzeczpospolita, 12-13 December 1992 (author's translation).

western republics of the USSR, particularly Belorussia.

At a Warsaw Pact meeting in Moscow on 5 December, the allies affirmed Poland's status within the WTO, and stated that "Poland was, is and will remain a socialist state, a firm link in the family of socialist countries."¹²² In his report to the PUWP following the meeting, Kania admitted that, although he did not agree with the socialist allies' perception of the Polish situation, the PUWP would have to take their views into consideration because of "geo-political realities". The socialist allies warned Poland that its situation had a bearing on the internal conditions of the "fraternal" countries; that is why they had a right to have a grim view of Polish developments.¹²³ Jaruzelski in his memoirs noted the amount of political pressure exerted on the PUWP at the Warsaw Pact meeting, as

¹²² Pravda, 6 December 1980.

¹²³ See the Polish Politburo minutes of 6 December 1980 in "Protokol nr 53 z posiedzenia Biura Politycznego KC PZPR 6 grudnia 1980 r," in Tajne Dokumenty, op. cit., pp.188-90 (author's translation).

In secret documents made public from the archives of the SED, Brezhnev appeared at the meeting sympathetic to the call for military intervention. The documents quote Brezhnev as telling the Communist leaders: "The situation in Poland and the danger emanating from Poland are not simply Polish matters. They affect all of us." The Soviet leader, at the same time, expressed fears that an invasion might upset moves toward better relations with the West. See the International Herald Tribune, 11 January 1993.

well as the serious warning that it implied.¹²⁴

In February 1981 Kania attended the Twenty-sixth Congress of the CPSU. There he heard Brezhnev speak ominously about the Polish situation:

In fraternal Poland enemies of socialism, helped by foreign forces, have been instigating anarchy, thus trying to turn the course of events in a counterrevolutionary direction ... [But] the Polish Communists and the working class can fully rely on their friends and allies ... Let no one doubt our firm resolve to protect our interests and safeguard the socialist achievements of our nations.¹²⁵

Moreover, in a communiqué published after the Soviet-Polish meeting of 4 March there were statements which resembled the Soviet interventionist doctrine: namely, that "the socialist community cannot be torn apart" and that its defense "is not only the concern of each country, but that of the entire socialist community". According to Jaruzelski, the Polish elites understood these words and phrases as a confirmation of the continuing validity of the "Brezhnev Doctrine".¹²⁶

124 Jaruzelski, op. cit., pp.44-45.

125 Twenty-sixth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Vol.1 (Moscow, 1981), p.26.

126 See Jaruzelski, op. cit., p.56.

There were also high level delegation visits to Poland. Suslov and Konstantin Rusakov - party secretary for bloc relations - visited Warsaw at the end of April 1981 (shortly after the Polish Party Plenum).¹²⁷ Their visit had possibly two reasons: to provide Moscow with a first-hand report about developments in Poland; and, to impress upon the Polish leadership the need to reassert the party's leading role. According to Jaruzelski's account of the visit, Suslov invoked Soviet interventionist-type words and phrases, such as "the counterrevolution is grabbing the party by the throat", and the "great alarm" that the Polish developments were having on the Kremlin.¹²⁸

Moreover, on 5 June 1981 the Soviet leadership sent a letter to the Polish leadership. The letter was similar in tone and content to the Warsaw Letter of 1968. It warned the Polish elites that the state of the PUWP had "recently become a subject of special alarm". The document claimed that the situation in Poland had reached a "critical point". The PUWP leadership was "retreating step by step under the onslaught of the internal counterrevolution". It called on the "healthy

127 Suslov's visit was reminiscent of the intermediary role he had played with Mikoyan in the Hungarian crisis of 1956.

128 Jaruzelski, op. cit., pp.124-31 (author's translation).

forces" within the party to prevent a national catastrophe. The letter also described that "Soviet and Polish communists fought hand-in-hand against fascism ... and we cannot not be uneasy about the mortal danger that currently is hanging over Polish revolutionary achievements." Finally, the letter warned that "We, in no less degree than the fraternal parties, are uneasy about the enemy's anti-socialist offensive in Poland which endangers the interests of [our] entire community, its coherence, integrity, and security of borders." Mention was also made of "anti-Sovietism" in the media. The aim of such statements was to eliminate the "gains of the party" and to "sow the seeds" of nationalism and anti-Sovietism within Polish society.¹²⁹

A second letter was issued in September 1981 by the Soviet Central Committee, which also called upon the Warsaw regime to stop manifestations of "anti-Sovietism" - a reference to Solidarity's National Congress and the movement's pledge to support independent trade unions elsewhere in the bloc.¹³⁰ It stated, "The Soviet people, which has made vast sacrifices to liberate Poland from fascist bondage

129 The text of the letter can be found in Tajne dokumenty, op. cit., pp.392-96 (author's translation).

130 See the Solidarity weekly Jednosc, 11 September 1981.

... has the full moral right to demand that an end be put to the anti-Soviet impudence in Poland."¹³¹

Another Soviet tactic was naval maneuvers in the Baltic close to northern Poland in August 1981, followed by troop movements in Belorussia and the Baltic States in September. As in Czechoslovakia in 1968, these maneuvers seemed to have had several purposes: to intimidate Solidarity; to increase the pressure on the Polish leadership to take a more resolute stand against Solidarity's demands; and, to bring Soviet troops up to a high state of readiness in case the crisis could not be resolved by political means.

Another "Petrov" article appeared in Pravda on 13 October which called for decisive measures against "counterrevolution" as the internal events within Poland were no longer its own concern, but was intertwined with that of the entire socialist community. Jaruzelski recounted that the Polish elites understood - by the language that was used - that the "Brezhnev Doctrine" was still relevant.¹³²

There has been much debate about when the plans

131 Text reprinted in The Times, 19 September 1981. Archival evidence indicated that Brezhnev considered the Solidarity pledge a "dangerous and provocative document"; see the Minutes of the CPSU Politburo meeting of 10 September 1981; in Rzeczpospolita, 12-13 December 1992 (author's translation).

132 See Jaruzelski, op. cit., p.321.

for the December 1981 coup were prepared. One theory revolves around the revelations of former Colonel Ryszard J. Kuklinski, a member of the working group which drew up the initial plans in the fall of 1980. In an interview published in the Paris Kultura in April 1987, Kuklinski stated that Jaruzelski was all along determined to crush Solidarity. The Polish general, however, was anxious that such a measure be done by the Poles, not the Soviet Union.¹³³ This view is supported by disclosures made by the Mazowiecki Government in December 1990, as well as archival evidence. They revealed that martial law had been in planning since August 1980.¹³⁴ Kuklinski presented details of Moscow's campaign of escalating military intimidation, as well as the extensive preparations

133 See Kultura, No.4/475 (April 1987), pp.3-57. The English translation of the interview can be found in "Ryszard Kuklinski: The Suppression of Solidarity," in Robert Kostrzewa (ed), Between East and West: Writings from Kultura (New York: Hill and Wang, 1990), pp.72-98. See also Douglas L. Clarke, "The Warsaw Pact's Plans to Invade Poland in 1980/1981," RFER (16 January 1990).

134 See the New York Times, 22 December 1990. Zycie Warszawy published excerpts of documents entitled "Lato 80" (Summer 1980) on 12 May 1994, and additional material supporting Kuklinski's revelations on 25 May 1994. These documents, taken from the Polish Ministry of Internal Affairs, described in detail the preparations for martial law. They appeared to suggest that the Polish political and military elites had planned with "unusual intensity" for sixteen months, from August 1980 to December 1981.

for direct Soviet military involvement.¹³⁵

The role of the East European elites during the crisis was significant. The East Germans and Czechoslovaks took the lead in criticizing Polish developments and tried to insulate their countries from "contagion".¹³⁶ The principle themes enunciated in commentaries were that counterrevolutionary forces were active in Poland, and that the principle of communist rule was under attack.¹³⁷ Kiszczak, for example, argued that the PUWP could not reach a comprehensive understanding with Solidarity because "they" [the hard-liners] would not allow it; the conservative forces within the PUWP, the SED, and the CPCz were very strong, he claimed. Poland could not have been more independent in its policy toward Solidarity because the "fraternal neighbors", in Kiszczak's words, would "devour them".¹³⁸

135 Kuklinski cited, for example, the introduction of Soviet reconnaissance teams starting in February 1981, the selection of potential deployment sites for Soviet troops, and detailed plans for the deployment of Soviet, East German, and Czechoslovak divisions in Poland; see Kostrzewa, op. cit.

136 In the autumn of 1980, for instance, travel and currency exchange restrictions were imposed by East Germany and Czechoslovakia (respectively) in an effort to isolate Poland.

137 See Patrick Moore, "Poland's Allies Rally Behind the Healthy Forces," Radio Free Europe Report (RFER) (Eastern Europe), 13 July 1981, pp.1-3.

138 See his interview in Beres and Skoczylas, op. cit.,

Moreover, the SED archives appeared to suggest that Poland in the 1980s was a "second front" for the East German State Security Service ("Stasi").¹³⁹ Husak, the Czechoslovak leader, drew parallels between Polish events and the Prague Spring. He implied that Poland faced the same fate.¹⁴⁰ The Bulgarians and Hungarians were initially restrained in their comments, but after July 1981 joined in condemning Polish developments. Romania criticized the Polish party for its errors and for attacking the independent union concept. It, however, opposed a policy of military intervention. Yugoslavia supported the reform process and opposed the use of force.¹⁴¹

Moreover, recent evidence appears to suggest that some of the socialist bloc armies were to participate in an invasion of Poland. The Czech daily, Mlada Fronta Dnes, published an article in

p.116 (author's translation).

139 See an interview with Klaus-Dietmar Henke, head of the Education and Research Department subordinated to the federal commissioner for the Archives of the State Security Service of the former German Democratic Republic; in Kjell Engelbrekt, "Germany's Experience with the 'Stasi' Archives," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol.3, No.18 (6 May 1994), pp.11-13.

140 Rude Pravo, 16 February 1981; in RFER (Czechoslovakia), No.4 (24 February 1981), pp.1-15, at p.2.

141 See Patrick Moore, "Sharp Editorial in Scinteia on Poland," RFER (Romania) (30 September 1981), pp.1-4; and Peter Raina, Poland 1981. Towards Social Renewal (London: Allen & Unwin, 1985), p.8.

June 1993 which indicated that the Czechoslovak army's action was to take place on the pretext of Warsaw Pact maneuvers; the attack on Poland, however, was canceled by the Warsaw Pact command "for technical reasons".¹⁴² Recent evidence from East German archives appears to suggest that the East German army was to invade Poland in December 1980 under the pretext of maneuvers.¹⁴³ Honecker wrote an appeal to Brezhnev on 26 November, in which he stated that "counterrevolutionary forces are on a constant offensive in Poland ... Any hesitation will mean death - the death of socialist Poland."¹⁴⁴ Moreover, documents revealed that Honecker favored allowing the East German army to march into Poland, along with other Warsaw Pact troops in December 1981; only the declaration of martial law prevented this from occurring.¹⁴⁵ A report by the Czechoslovak Civic Forum daily Forum - issued in November 1990 - stated that Czechoslovak troops were poised to invade in December 1981, but were halted when Jaruzelski convinced the Soviet leadership that

142 Mlada Fronta Dnes, 12 June 1993; cited in Gazeta Wyborcza, 14 June 1993.

143 See the International Herald Tribune, 11 January 1993.

144 Ibid.

145 See "Wir Bruederlaender stehen fest," Der Spiegel, 12 October 1992, pp.95-99; in the Cold War International History Project Bulletin, Issue 2 (Fall 1992), p.39.

the Polish army could control the situation.¹⁴⁶

Therefore, throughout the Polish crisis there were numerous statements issued which were contained in the "Brezhnev Doctrine". The use by the Kremlin of specific words and phrases was apparently understood by the Polish elites as proof of the continuing validity of the Soviet interventionist doctrine. These statements were supplemented with official visits, meetings, Warsaw Pact maneuvers, and authoritative letters expressing socialist "concern".

The function that the "Brezhnev Doctrine" served was: as a signaling device of growing Soviet and socialist ally concern; as a warning device against continued compromises with Solidarity; as a method of conveying the acceptable "ground rules" of behavior; and, as a way of unifying and mobilizing support within the bloc. The most important - and most apparent - function was the threat of military intervention. The danger of such a Soviet-led action homogenized the internal cleavages within the PUWP to take decisive action.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ See RFE/RL Daily Report, No.227 (30 November 1990).

¹⁴⁷ The United States, throughout the Polish crisis, indicated its concern to the Soviet Union. When US intelligence indicated in December 1980 that a Soviet invasion appeared imminent, President Carter sent a message to Brezhnev on 3 December 1980 outlining the consequences of a measure on relations. On 5 December, Carter issued a

There was also Soviet concern about the "spillover effect" of Polish events on the USSR, specifically the western border republics. The greatest threat was to those republics with shared historical experiences, such as Lithuania, Belorussia, and Ukraine. Although, as Roman Solchanyk argues, the degree of influence was not easily determined, Polish events had evoked some sympathy and understanding within the border populations.¹⁴⁸ Moscow, for example resumed in August 1980 the jamming of radio stations, and removed all Polish newspapers and journals from sale in Latvia and Lithuania.¹⁴⁹

The Soviet media emphasized the dangers of "Western" influence, urging increased vigilance against attempts to subvert the socialist community and the Soviet system from within. An article by Vitalii Fedorchuk, at the time head of the Ukrainian KGB, wrote

public statement on Poland. He and contacted other heads of state in order: to deprive the Kremlin of surprise; to encourage Polish resistance; to calm the situation; and, to deter Moscow through intense international pressure. See Zbigniew Brzezinski, Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Advisor 1977-81 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1983), especially pp.466-77.

148 See Roman Solchanyk, "Poland and the Soviet West," in S. Enders Wimbush, Soviet Nationalities in Strategic Perspective (London: Croom Helm, 1985), pp.158-59.

149 See, for example, The Economist, 30 August 1980, p.39; and Newsweek, 13 August 1981, p.19.

the primary objective of counterrevolutionary forces, supported morally and materially from the outside, is to disorient the masses, ideologically disarm and disorganize the Communist Party, and remove it from the leadership of society with the aim of seizing power in the country and creating conditions for the restoration of capitalism.¹⁵⁰

At the CPSU Twenty-sixth Congress, Petras Griskevicius - First Secretary of the Lithuanian Party - mentioned specifically the developments in Poland, noting the "anxiety" with which developments were being followed in the USSR.¹⁵¹ An additional concern was the increase in nationalist and patriotic sentiment among the Polish populations within the western republics.¹⁵²

As in other previous crises the Soviet Union had used various means, short of force, to resolve deviation. In the Polish crisis Moscow was

150 See V.V. Fedorchuk, "Vysoka politychnis pyl'nist radians'kykh liudei - nadiinyi zaslin pidryvnyim pidstupam imperializmu," Kommunist Ukrainy, No.10 (1980), pp.10-26, at p.13; in Solchanyk, op. cit., p.166. See also Borys Lewytzkyj, "Political and Cultural Cooperation between the People's Republic of Poland and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic," in Peter J. Potichnyj (ed), Ukraine and Poland: Past and Present (Edmonton: Canadian Institute for Ukrainian Studies, 1980), pp.209-10.

151 See Pravda, 26 February 1981.

152 See, for instance, The Daily Telegraph, 17 November 1980.

particularly reluctant to intervene militarily. Although the events leading up to the crisis had been slowly building for several years, the Soviet Union's "benign neglect" since the mid-1970s resulted in its being caught off-balance by the crisis.¹⁵³ Second, Moscow might have believed that the PUWP would be able to control developments and reassert its dominance. Third, far more than any other country in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union wanted to avoid military intervention in Poland. Because of Poland's size and its history of insurrection, there was a serious possibility that the Poles would have fought. Poland had avoided military intervention in three previous crises (1956, 1970, 1976). In addition, were other reasons why the military step was not taken: the Afghanistan war had been launched a year earlier; the Iranian crisis had been creating new security concerns on the Soviet Union's southern flank; and, the United States had been taking some decisive measures in opposing a Soviet intervention.

The nature of Solidarity's challenge was also an important deterrent. Because it was a mass non-violent movement, Solidarity may have appeared less amenable to a swift military solution than previous

¹⁵³ See Hassner, op. cit., p.298; and Brown, Communist Rule, op. cit., pp.53ff.

crises. Moreover, there was no "outrage" or violent incident which would have made justification easier. There were also the lessons of the 1968 intervention. There was widespread recognition in Moscow that the invasion of Czechoslovakia had been very costly in terms of international opinion; and, that the political order established after "normalization" was not convincing. In his book The Liberators, "Viktor Suvorov" wrote about how the lesson drawn from the intervention was that the Red Army would never intervene in such a way again. "The sad lesson of liberation had been learned: and all of us realised that, for the next ten years, regardless of what happened in the world, nobody would dare send us to liberate any country with a higher standard of living than our own."¹⁵⁴

In addition, Polish socialism had special features: the party-state had not been able to dominate society as completely as in other Eastern European countries; the Church had provided a powerful focus of loyalty and national identity; Polish agriculture remained largely in private hands; and, popular unrest had been a significant factor in Polish politics, precipitating changes in the party leadership in 1956, 1970 and 1980.

¹⁵⁴ Viktor Suvorov, My Life in the Soviet Army: The Liberators (New York: Berkley, 1988 ed.), p.222.

While Moscow may have refrained from military intervention, there could have been benefits from employing force. In weighing the costs and benefits of military intervention, some members of the Soviet leadership might have concluded that a renewed demonstration of resolve in Eastern Europe could have had an intimidating effect on the West and on the bloc. Soviet concerns over the costs of military intervention - namely the final death blow to a detente greatly weakened by Afghanistan, as well as a bloody and prolonged fight in Eastern Europe - appeared to have convinced the Soviet leadership to find an alternative.¹⁵⁵ There was also Soviet concern about the consequences of even a limited military conflict in the heart of Europe.¹⁵⁶ In addition, the "self-administration" of the Soviet interventionist doctrine by Jaruzelski carried less risk.

There has been extensive debate over the past five years as to whether Soviet threats of military intervention were genuine.¹⁵⁷ There are basically two schools of thought. One school, represented by

155 See Gordievsky's account of the Polish crisis, op. cit., pp.578-81.

156 See Johnson, Impact, op. cit., pp.13-14.

157 The purpose of this section is not to examine in detail the various factors and revelations concerning whether or not the Soviet Union was going to invade Poland, but to briefly summarize the arguments.

Jaruzelski and his supporters, argues that the threat was genuine; only PUWP resolve in declaring martial law prevented the Warsaw Pact from invading Poland. It stresses that the Polish general was justified in his action because he picked the "lesser of two evils". The second school, which is represented by some Polish political elites, and is supported by Soviet archival evidence, argues that the Soviet Union, for all its threats, had no intention of militarily intervening in Poland.

Jaruzelski defended his declaration of martial law by asserting that there was no other alternative to a full Warsaw Pact invasion. His decision was a "lesser evil" if one looked at the alternative (namely a potential for bloody conflict in the middle of Europe). During a September 1992 hearing of the Sejm's Constitutional Accountability Commission (on whether Jaruzelski, along with other members of the Council of National Unity, should be put before a State Tribunal), Jaruzelski stated that "Given the internal and external realities of those days this was choosing the lesser evil and saving the country from a national tragedy." He accepted responsibility for its declaration.¹⁵⁸ In his testimony before the same commission in November

158 See excerpts of Jaruzelski's 22 September testimony in Gazeta Wyborcza, 23 September 1992 (author's translation).

1992, he cited his motives: to prevent an economic catastrophe; to put a halt to anarchy and the dissolution of society; to avert fratricidal conflict; and, to avoid foreign intervention. Moreover, the date of the action was designed to happen before the Solidarity protest scheduled for 17 December.¹⁵⁹

In an International Herald Tribune article of 5 March 1993, Jaruzelski stated that the threat of Soviet intervention "was real". He then listed various factors to substantiate his claim: the threatening resolutions passed by the CPSU; the pressure from hard-liners within the PUWP; tense meetings with various Soviet leaders; Warsaw Pact exercises along the Soviet and East German border; and, reports that army hospitals in East Germany and the USSR were being prepared to receive casualties.¹⁶⁰ In April 1994 Jaruzelski, again testifying before the Sejm Commission, changed his argument. He stated that martial law could have been avoided - no longer citing the threat of Soviet armed intervention - if Solidarity had met the government's proposed compromises.¹⁶¹ The next day

¹⁵⁹ This information is based on notes taken by the author, who was present at the hearing on 24 November 1992.

¹⁶⁰ See the International Herald Tribune, 5 March 1993.

¹⁶¹ See Zycie Warszawy, 20 April 1994 (author's translation).

Jaruzelski added that there was no scenario if the Polish army had failed; the operation "just had to be successful".¹⁶²

Jaruzelski's fear of Soviet intervention was supported by various members within the PUWP, as well as within the Polish and Soviet military. Kazimierz Barcikowski, a member of the PUWP Politburo in the early 1980s, argued that the threat of foreign intervention in 1981 was real. Its avoidance became the chief political objective of the party leaders.¹⁶³ General Florian Siwicki, Chief of Staff in the 1980s, stated that the Soviet Union had plans for invading Poland as early as December 1980, which they only "perfected" under the pretext of military exercises.¹⁶⁴ There was additional speculation that the Soviet Union may have recruited elements within the PUWP and the Polish military to overthrow Jaruzelski and seek "fraternal assistance".¹⁶⁵ Viktor Dubynin, commander of the former Soviet Army's Northern Group of Forces, said in March 1992 that Moscow had been

¹⁶² See Gazeta Wyborcza, 21 April 1994. For further examination of the evolution in Jaruzelski's arguments regarding martial law, see Rzeczpospolita, 25 May 1994.

¹⁶³ See Gazeta Wyborcza, 14 January 1993.

¹⁶⁴ See Gazeta Wyborcza, 12 May 1994.

¹⁶⁵ See *ibid.* For additional examples of this line of argument, including claims that a Soviet map existed outlining the invasion plan, see Zycie Warszawy, 25 May 1994.

ready in 1981 to send the Soviet Army into Poland if martial law had not been declared. "If General Jaruzelski had not acted, our divisions would have entered Polish territory on 14 December. Everything was ready."¹⁶⁶

Those who questioned the possibility of Soviet intervention included PUWP members and Soviet political officials. Information from selective documents and CPSU Politburo minutes from Soviet archives support their views. Gierek, for example, pointed out that some of the evidence that the "Jaruzelski" school presented in its defense was questionable. For example, a state of readiness of the Warsaw Pact forces was "routine practice" in a crisis. Moreover, he argued, Brezhnev's ill health and the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan prevented Moscow from undertaking such an option.¹⁶⁷ The Soviet documents concerning the deliberations of the "Suslov commission" (appointed by the CPSU Politburo to study Polish developments in 1980-81) suggested that the CPSU had ruled out military intervention.

¹⁶⁶ See Gazeta Wyborcza, 14 March 1992. For further examination of Soviet accounts detailing the invasion plans, see Maj.-Gen. Vladimir Dudnik, "Dark Room' Secrets," Moscow News, English edition, No.15 (3522) (12-19 April 1992), p.13.

¹⁶⁷ See Gierek, pamiętniki, op. cit., pp.237-39 (author's translation). Gierek could have been motivated by the fact that he was removed from the PUWP leadership in 1980 by Jaruzelski and Kania.

Rusakov was quoted as telling a 10 December 1981 Soviet Politburo meeting that Jaruzelski had said "that if the Polish forces do not manage to contain the Solidarity resistance, then the Polish comrades hope for the help of other countries in introducing their armed forces into Polish territory." Andropov reportedly responded that "there can be no introduction of armies into Poland," and other Politburo members agreed.¹⁶⁸

Moreover, the resident KGB head in Poland from 1973 to 1984, General Vitali Pavlov, claimed that neither in 1980 or 1981 was Soviet military intervention a threat.¹⁶⁹ Gorbachev, in an interview in October 1992 with PAP reporters, also stated that Soviet troops under no condition were going to intervene in 1981. He recalled a conversation that Suslov had with the Polish leadership in 1981. Suslov reportedly said at the time "We sympathize, we ourselves are living through this, but our army and the Northern Group Army cannot meddle in the internal affairs of Poland."¹⁷⁰

168 For the text of the minutes see Rzeczpospolita, 26 August 1993 (author's translation).

169 See Gazeta Wyborcza, 10 February 1993.

170 See Zycie Warszawy, 23 October 1992 (author's translation). A similar recollection about a phone call to Suslov from someone within the Polish leadership was cited by Eduard Shevardnadze; see Eduard Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom (New York: Free Press, 1991), p.121.

In addition, a panel of Polish historians noted that the evidence of the Suslov files and other documentation appeared to suggest that the Soviet Union had not intended to intervene in Poland; it had preferred "the Polish comrades" to take care of Polish affairs. It did note, however, that the documents could not be trusted "indiscriminately", as Russian authorities may have deliberately selected the documents for political or historical reasons.¹⁷¹

Whether or not the threat of Soviet military intervention was genuine, the PUWP leadership appeared to believe that the threat was real declared martial law. This issue highlighted the value of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" for the Soviet leadership: its use made the threat appear credible, whether or not it was. Alternatively, an East European country, like Poland, could not afford to gamble or challenge whether Moscow was serious in its intentions. The value of the Soviet interventionist doctrine, therefore, was in its uncertainty. At the same time, its value was not unlimited; other problems within the bloc were surfacing which could no longer be resolved by the Soviet interventionist doctrine.

¹⁷¹ See Zycie Warszawy, 20 April 1994 (author's translation).

Conclusion

The period 1970 to 1981 witnessed, therefore, the actual decline of the Soviet interventionist doctrine. What appeared to Moscow in the early 1970s as consolidating factors in Eastern Europe - integration within the bloc, general economic growth, and detente with the West - actually laid the groundwork for future divisive tendencies and, ultimately, a reduction of Soviet influence.

Moscow's strategy of "socialist integration" was unable to prevent Western influences penetrating the region from detente and the Helsinki process: indeed, those contacts created dissident movements within the East European countries. At the same time, the Soviet model of socialism was beginning to be challenged by the Eurocommunists, and questioned overall as a vital element in East European political life. The global economic recession raised financial problems for the bloc regimes, which appeared unwilling or incapable of resolving these issues. Moreover, the populations began to view these problems as inherent in socialist-style systems. Added to all these factors was Soviet

"neglect" of the region (whether intentional or not) which kept Moscow blind to the danger signals emanating from Poland.

In the first half of the 1970s the Soviet interventionist doctrine appeared to be effective in maintaining stability in Eastern Europe. Its ideological components were contained in various bilateral treaties and other legal documents. The doctrine may also have helped the detente process by providing stability in the East to enable Moscow to pursue its policy with the West. But in the second half of the decade the effectiveness of the doctrine began to decline. The Soviet Union was slowly losing control over the international communist movement, along with its role as the "socialist model" to emulate. The slogan of "proletarian internationalism" included in previous declarations and communiques, was increasingly shunned by various socialist parties (Western Europe), and its meaning ringing hollow for others (Hungary, Poland).

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, although not a genuine application of the Soviet interventionist doctrine, left the impression of military failure; and, if not the reversibility of "socialist gains", at least their contestation. The challenge of Solidarity was temporarily stayed by a self-administered "Brezhnev Doctrine", but the

"normalization" of Poland was difficult. The region where the doctrine had originated and was apparently most successful was no longer willing or able to be controlled. For Moscow, the Polish crisis was to mark an important milestone in Soviet policy toward Eastern Europe and the effectiveness of the doctrine.¹⁷²

The Soviet interventionist doctrine, therefore, had evolved from what was considered by many Western observers its peak in the early 1970s to its gradual decline in the mid-1970s. The one exception - and then only to a certain extent - was the Solidarity crisis: the doctrine's use as a threat of military intervention was very effective, particularly as the Polish leadership believed the threat to be genuine. However, the success of the doctrine was short-lived: numerous economic problems, domestic instability, demands for reform, and the inability of the local regimes to gain acceptance or legitimacy, undermined its value as a solution to the problems Moscow faced in Eastern Europe.

In the Afghan crisis Moscow's primary concern appeared to be security. Although similar statements to the doctrine had been used to justify the invasion, the measures associated with the

¹⁷² See the following chapter for further discussion.

doctrine were not evident. During the Solidarity crisis, the security issue was primary, but ideological concerns were also a factor. Poland's important strategic position, and the potential impact of its developments on the rest of the bloc (as well as on the Soviet republics), necessitated deep deliberation by Moscow: the loss of Poland, as Andropov said, was unthinkable. Also, the role of ideology cannot be discounted. The Solidarity movement was a shock to the Kremlin: a large portion of Polish society was rejecting Soviet-imposed socialism (albeit with Polish modifications). It was not a case of a terminally divided party quarreling with itself (Hungary 1956) or the communist elites leading the reform process (Czechoslovakia). Neither proclamations of "proletarian internationalism" nor the threat of force sufficed to subdue the "masses". The Kremlin, therefore, mistakenly believed that by using the Soviet interventionist doctrine, the Polish crisis would be resolved; and if total unity could not be restored, then at least ideological "harmony". The doctrine was successful in influencing the local elites to arrest developments, but it failed in resolving the problems which made its use necessary.

During the 1970s the countries of Eastern Europe in general were permitted a certain degree of

autonomy in their domestic affairs and, to a lesser degree, foreign policy. But the two constants of Soviet-East European relations - membership of the WTO, as well as the continued monopoly of power by the local communist party - remained. In the Polish crisis, the limits of deviation appeared not to have changed. The Soviet leadership urged the Polish elites throughout the crisis to "take charge" of events, to reign in the trade union movement, and to suppress anti-Soviet commentary in the media.

The "socialist commonwealth" appeared, after the invasion of Afghanistan, to be extended beyond the borders of Eastern Europe. In reality, however, the Soviet intervention and all that preceded it was not a genuine application of the "Brezhnev Doctrine". Moreover, it was evident in the 1970s to which countries the Soviet interventionist doctrine still applied (Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland) and in which its application appeared unlikely (Albania, Romania, Yugoslavia).

It appeared that two Soviet domestic factors - the Kremlin's "neglect" of Eastern Europe, and the "spillover effect" from Polish developments to western border republics - played a significant role in the reactions of the Soviet leadership to the Polish crisis. The Soviet leaders' apparent belief that the correct formula had been found for

maintaining stability in Eastern Europe led them to ignore the degree of discontent in Poland (as well as in the rest of the bloc) and the extent of political and economic problems faced by the local elites. Moreover, their misunderstanding convinced them that Jaruzelski's "quick fix" would suffice.

The function of the Soviet interventionist doctrine varied in both the Afghan and Polish crises. In Afghanistan the only element similar to the "Brezhnev Doctrine" was the ideological justification used after the invasion. During the Polish crisis, on the other hand, various functions were evident, primarily the threat of intervention. As R. A. Jones put it, "The Brezhnev Doctrine was the principal reason why the Polish revolution was 'self-limiting'".¹⁷³ Both Jaruzelski and Gierek claimed to be cognizant of the warning signals of the "Brezhnev Doctrine". It, therefore, constituted an important psychological component for uniting the party to take action.

In a manner similar to France and the United States, the Soviet Union sought - in the 1970s - to control its sphere of influence. Brezhnev's policy of "integration" was designed to secure stability within Eastern Europe, so that the Soviet Union

¹⁷³ Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., p.193.

could pursue detente with the West. The Helsinki Final Act was to mark the highlight of Soviet domination by the West's recognition of the permanence of the postwar borders. Furthermore, the policy of integration was to combat any detrimental influences which could emanate from detente.

The Soviet Union's predominance, however, began to be challenged by the effects of the detente process and the increasing autonomy of the East European states. Like other great powers, the USSR had historical precedent for involvement in both Afghanistan and Poland. Interference in both crises was explicit - military invasion or military maneuvers - and implicit - economic threats or political coercion.

There was also a degree of "push and pull" between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan and Poland. The Afghan elites asked for weapons, advisers, and ultimately military intervention to prop up their regime; Moscow wanted, in turn, a secure, stable, and fully-socialist state on its border. In the Solidarity crisis, the Polish elites requested economic assistance to prop up their regime; Moscow, in turn, wanted a stable northern tier country and the elimination of a trade union movement which could spread to the USSR.

Like France and the United States, the Soviet

Union was constrained in certain ways in its behavior toward its sphere of influence. The prime example of this was Moscow's restraint in invading Poland: such an intervention was possible and had the support of the other socialist countries (particularly the GDR and Czechoslovakia). The Kremlin leadership apparently concluded that the political cost would have been high: the Afghan intervention had caused great outcry, the US was more active and decisive in its warnings against intervention, and what was left of detente would have been shelved. Moscow, therefore, realized that its hegemony could not be exercised without impunity.

CHAPTER X

DEMISE OF THE SOVIET INTERVENTIONIST DOCTRINE: 1982-1989

By the mid-1980s it was becoming increasingly evident that Soviet domination of Eastern Europe, and the utility of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" as an instrument of policy, was being undermined. The USSR faced rising domestic problems which were further exacerbated by the ongoing debate within the Soviet leadership on the "contradictions" of socialism. In Eastern Europe the lack of legitimacy on the part of the local regimes, and growing dissent among the populations were creating instability, particularly in light of developments within the Soviet Union. Added to this confusion was the lack of leadership from Moscow, particularly with the deaths of Leonid Brezhnev (November 1982), Yuri Andropov (February 1984) and Konstantin Chernenko (March 1985).

Mikhail Gorbachev's appointment to the top party post promised hope for the resolution of these various problems. While the Soviet leader initially sought to reform socialism within the region, he was

eventually forced by both internal and external factors to surrender Soviet control over the bloc and, with it, the interventionist doctrine.¹

I. The Soviet Union in the Early 1980s

When Gorbachev came to power in March 1985 he inherited a country in a state of political, economic, and ideological crisis. In political terms, the USSR was suffering from growing apathy on the part of the population as well as within important segments of the party. Economically, the model of growth had reached its limits and its effectiveness rapidly diminishing. These growing internal problems were further aggravated by

1 For a detailed discussion of Gorbachev's policy toward Eastern Europe, see Charles Gati, The Bloc That Failed: Soviet-East European Relations in Transition (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990); Glenn R. Chafetz, Gorbachev, Reform, and the Brezhnev Doctrine: Soviet Policy Toward Eastern Europe, 1985-1990 (Westport: Praeger, 1993); Karen Dawisha, Eastern Europe, Gorbachev, and Reform: the Great Challenge (Cambridge University Press, 1988); Ronald D. Asmus, J. F. Brown, and Keith W. Crane, Gorbachev's Dilemmas in Eastern Europe (Santa Monica: Rand, forthcoming); Mark Kramer, "Beyond the Brezhnev Doctrine: A New Era in Soviet-East European Relations?" International Security, Vol.14, No.3 (Winter 1989/90), pp.25-67; and J. M. Gwozdzowski, The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe: A Gorbachev Doctrine? (Santa Monica: Rand, 1989).

international economic trends. Moreover, the technological gap between Moscow and the capitalist countries was widening, and with increasing momentum.

Ideologically, particularly after the Polish crisis of 1980/81, the Soviet Union began to reassess the structure of Soviet-bloc relations, as well as the nature of socialism in the USSR.² Although martial law had appeared effective in the short run in Poland, in the long term "normalization" proved far more difficult than in Czechoslovakia: there was continuing resistance, and the ongoing economic stagnation further exacerbated existing problems. In addition, the leaders of Solidarity were neither physically liquidated as Nagy in Hungary 1956, nor forced to capitulate such as Dubcek in Czechoslovakia 1968-69. Lech Walesa and Solidarity remained a symbol of continuity and resistance. Adam Michnik, a prominent Polish dissident, noted:

² See, for example, Elizabeth Teague, "Perestroika: The Polish Influence," Survey (October 1988), pp.39-59; and Alfred B. Evans, Jr., "The Polish Crisis in the 1980s and Adaptation in Soviet Ideology," The Journal of Communist Studies, Vol.2, No.3 (September 1986), pp.263-85. For the East European reaction to the Solidarity crisis, see Brown, Communist Rule, op. cit., pp.158-99.

In 1980 the totalitarian state gave in and signed an agreement which allowed for the existence of the first legal and independent institutions of postwar Polish political life. They lasted but a short time; long enough, however, to convince everyone that after December 1981 it was not possible to speak again about "socialism with a human face". What remains is communism with its teeth knocked out.³

In Moscow's assessment of the Polish crisis a number of conclusions were drawn. First, the crisis was not unique to Poland; therefore, it was necessary to examine what methods, steps, or reforms would be needed to avert similar developments, whether in Eastern Europe or in the Soviet Union. Second, that the threat to socialism in Poland, while partially attributable to domestic circumstances, had been worsened by "subversive" Western influences under detente.⁴ This view was shared also by some members of the East European regimes. One Polish observer stated that the West had promoted "an expanded network of economic, trade, financial, cultural, and political relations" with Poland in an effort "to separate the socialist countries from their Soviet ally and link them with

3 Adam Michnik, "Does Socialism Have Any Future in Eastern Europe?" Studium Papers, Vol.13, No.4 (October 1989), p.184.

4 See Soviet commentary in Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., pp.199-204, particularly p.201.

the West."⁵

Finally, the developments in Poland raised questions about the character and future of socialism: namely, the relationship of the Party to the people; the role of the military in Communist states; and, the persistence of "contradictions" in societies moving towards Communism.⁶

Subsequent analyses of the Polish crisis by Soviet and East European ideologues appeared to suggest the seriousness with which they viewed the event. In the 1970s Poland, along with other socialist countries in Eastern Europe, had been categorized in ideological terms as having completed the "transition to socialism". This assessment was revised, and Poland was proclaimed to be still in a "pre-socialist" phase. This was an unprecedented acknowledgment of the failure of the socialist system to take root.⁷

5 See Z. Lachowski, "United States Policy towards Poland in the CSCE Process," Sprawy Miedzynarodowe (July-August 1984).

6 For these issues, see Johnson, Impact, op. cit., pp.16-23; and Van Oudenaren, Options, op. cit., pp.56-61.

7 See, for example, R. Kosolapov, then chief editor of Kommunist, in Pravda, 4 March 1983. One of the most important recurring phrases in this literature was the term "dvoevlastie" or "dual power". Lenin used this term to indicate a temporary sharing of power with the Kerenski Government in 1917. Although at that time sharing power was seen as a necessary step toward communist rule, such a development occurring thirty-five years later was an unthinkable historical regression. In Soviet usage the word implied that socialism was being dismantled. See also

In the ensuing Soviet debate on the "contradictions" of socialism, a group of Soviet academicians - primarily from the Institute of Economy of the World Socialist System (IEWSS) - called for far-reaching economic and social reforms in the USSR to avoid the danger of a Polish-like crisis.⁸ They rejected the argument that "vestiges of capitalism" explained Poland's crisis. They also warned of the danger of "non-antagonistic" contradictions becoming "antagonistic" under socialism.⁹

Piotr Fedoseev - vice-president of the USSR Academy of Sciences - wrote an article in World Marxist Review, for instance, in which he warned that "the development of socialism cannot be seen as 'unalloyed' progress, as a smooth ascent to higher stages". He remarked that socialist countries were not "fully guaranteed against some mistakes and

Sidney Ploss, The Polish Crisis and the USSR (Washington: Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, 1984).

⁸ For examples of this line of argument, see A. Butenko, "Sotsializm: formy i deformatsii," Novoe vremia, No.6 (1982), pp.5-7; and E. A. Ambartsumov, "Analiz V. I. Lenninym prichin krizisa 1921g i putei vykhoda iz nego," Voprosy istorii, No.4 (1984), pp.15-29.

⁹ According to Soviet theory, "antagonistic contradictions" existed only between classes with different interests. In socialist societies, contradictions were "non antagonistic" and could be solved through cooperation. See Ernst Kux, "Contradictions in Soviet Socialism," Problems of Communism (November-December 1984), pp.1-27.

miscalculations", when decisions adopted did not "correspond to objective uniformities, to the existing conditions". It was, therefore, important to analyze and solve problems that arose in a socialist country "to prevent these from piling up, from leading to painful social phenomena and crisis situation."¹⁰

The proponents of orthodoxy, on the other hand, rejected both the premises and the conclusions of the reformers. They claimed that the USSR had reached the stage of "developed socialism" and was, therefore, qualitatively different from Poland. Attempts were made to explain the Polish crisis in terms of "subjective" factors, such as the errors and mistakes of the PUWP elites, and the activities of the internal and external enemies of Polish socialism.¹¹ They argued that Poland was at a lower stage of development than the USSR and, thus, was more susceptible to imperialist penetration. While

10 Piotr N. Fedoseev, "The Dialectics of Social Life," World Marxist Review, Vol.24, No.9 (September 1981), p.24.

11 In December 1983, for example, A. V. Kuznetsov in Voprosy filosofi attacked the Director of the Polish Party's Marxism-Leninism Institute - Jerzy Wiatr - for claiming that Poland's recurring problems were the result of fundamental systemic weaknesses, and particularly the Soviet model on which Polish socialism was based. See A. V. Kuznetsov, "O teoreticheskikh kontseptsiiakh odnogo Pol'skogo politologo," Voprosy filosofi, No.12 (1983), pp.26-39; in Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., p.208.

improvements might be needed in the Soviet system, the fundamental principles were sound. They argued, therefore, that socialism within the USSR was immune to serious crisis. R. Kosolapov, for instance, criticized those Soviet ideologists who argued that, unless certain reforms were undertaken, unresolved problems would lead to a similar crisis in the Soviet Union.¹² With the deaths in quick succession of both Andropov and Chernenko, the resolution of this debate was passed on to Gorbachev.

While such debates among Soviet scholars may have had little influence on Soviet policy at the time, they did serve as a precursor for much of the subsequent reform debate that was to emerge under Gorbachev. Moreover, they served to legitimize growing discussion among East Europeans over their specific situations and interests. In particular, they triggered debates on how best to maintain domestic stability at a time of increasing tension within the bloc and in East-West relations.¹³ Furthermore, R. A. Jones noted that these debates revealed that Marxist-Leninist ideology could not explain the sources of systemic weaknesses, indicating the beginning of a "retreat" from

¹² See Pravda, 4 March 1983.

¹³ For details, see Kux, op. cit.

ideology.¹⁴

The Soviet Union was also confronted with a deterioration in its international position. The "favorable" correlation of forces of the late 1960s and early 1970s had by the early 1980s dissipated. Moscow's strategy of detente with Western Europe had failed by the early 1980s in its objectives. First, the increase in political and economic ties between Western and Eastern Europe exposed the latter to the "Western way of life". Such contact encouraged dissent, increased economic dependence, and gave the East Europeans a stake in the continuation of relations with the West. While the Soviet Union thought it could exploit and influence Western Europe to help maintain its hold on Eastern Europe, by the early 1980s the Atlantic countries were increasing their ties and actually diminishing Soviet influence.

For Moscow these developments revealed a greater trend: Western Europe had the means and ability to help Eastern Europe, while the Soviet Union faced declining capabilities. Moreover, Gorbachev was more interested in sustaining a successful Westpolitik policy than maintaining discipline in a region whose value was decreasing. In addition,

14 See Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., p.210.

good relations with the West were based on Soviet non-interference in Eastern Europe.

Second, by the beginning of the 1980s relations among the NATO countries had been strengthened. The political leaders of Great Britain, France, Italy, and West Germany worked to bolster NATO and Western unity.¹⁵ In addition, the Kremlin's "peace policy" did not prevent the implementation of NATO's 1979 dual-track INF decision involving the stationing of cruise missiles in Western Europe.¹⁶ Brezhnev's military buildup (particularly the development of the SS-20 medium range missile) also proved to be a strategic blunder. Although Soviet intent might have been to provide important military advantages for Moscow, the buildup resulted in mobilizing NATO toward missile deployment.¹⁷ Moreover, the Soviet Union's "walking out" of the November 1983 Geneva talks appeared to suggest that Moscow was the main obstacle to arms control.

Therefore, by 1984 the main divisive elements in US-West European relations - East-West sanctions

15 See Brown, Communist Rule, op. cit., pp.95-97.

16 See John Van Oudenaren, The "Leninist Peace Policy" and Western Europe (Cambridge: MIT Center for International Studies, 1980).

17 F. Stephen Larrabee, "The New Soviet Approach to Europe," in Nils H. Wessell (ed), The New Europe: Revolution in East-West Relations (New York: Academy of Political Science, 1991), pp.1-2.

over Afghanistan and Poland, the oil pipeline deal with Moscow, the feasibility of stationing medium-range missiles in Europe, and doubts about the loyalty and reliability of some allies - had receded in importance or disappeared.

Finally, the Soviet Union was faced with the growing political and economic success of Western Europe.¹⁸ In the 1970s the increased self-confidence and assertiveness of the West European states had for the most part been welcomed by Moscow as undermining US influence within NATO. But as the 1980s progressed Soviet officials and analysts acknowledged that West European assertiveness did not always work in Moscow's favor.

All of these factors - increasing Soviet isolation from Western Europe, and the latter's political, economic, and military successes and self-assertion - may have led Moscow to the conclusion that the United States and Western Europe were moving forward in an integrated way, while the Soviet system appeared - by comparison - increasingly antiquated and muscle-bound.

In addition, the cost of maintaining the East

18 See Robbin F. Laird, "The Soviet Union and the Western Alliance: Elements of an Anticoalition Strategy," in Robbin F. Laird (ed), Soviet Foreign Policy (New York: Academy of Political Science, 1987), pp.100-03.

European empire was becoming prohibitive.¹⁹ Moscow sold, for instance, its raw materials to Eastern Europe at a lower price than it would receive on the world market; consequently, it was deprived of a profit needed to purchase essential advanced technology. Moreover, the Soviet Union accepted inferior goods which were unsuitable for sale in world markets. Such protection further reduced the incentives of the East European regimes to modernize.

Militarily, the potential contribution of the East European allies to Soviet war-fighting was limited. In a wartime situation Moscow could only rely on select East European elite units to supplement Soviet forces. In a protracted war Moscow faced the possibility of diverting Soviet forces to ensure the bloc's political reliability. Moreover, advances in weapons technology had long reduced the military value of the region as a security buffer. The East European allies had become less cost effective, particularly as they were unable or unwilling to share more of the financial military burden. The Soviet military establishment, however, did not necessarily share

19 For a brief and prophetic summary of this topic, see Richard Davy, "The Strain on Moscow of Keeping a Grip on its European Empire," The Times (London), 18 December 1980.

this assessment: they still believed in the security value of the bloc, particularly Poland and East Germany.

Politically, the Eastern bloc was an embarrassment and hindrance to the Soviet Union. Moscow after forty years had still not achieved acceptance by the East Europeans of its domination; nor had the Soviet Union been able to prevent occasional crises which required the use of force. Soviet policy in the region hindered detente with the West as well as solidifying relations between Western Europe and the United States. Soviet domination had also undermined the CPSU's leading role in the international Communist movement and aided the spread of Eurocommunism.

Finally, the countries of Eastern Europe represented the failure of "socialism" as an ideology and model for the future. In the past, the "building of socialism" in the those countries had been justified by Moscow in the pursuit of a "higher" objective. Over time these rationalizations, however, began to ring hollow. The threat of "imperialist aggression" or "German revanchism" appeared less credible. There was no indication that the prosperity of the future would arrive soon, if ever. Rather, the populations of Eastern Europe saw corruption and high living

standards of the elites as proof that their sacrifices were being exploited by the Party.

The Soviet Union also appeared to be suffering from symptoms associated with the theory of "imperial overstretch". In his book The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers, Paul Kennedy examined the relationship of economic to military power, and how it affected the rise and fall of empires. He argued that states projected their military power to defend their broad economic interests, using the economic resources available to them. Kennedy pointed out, however, that the expense of promoting such a military force indefinitely exceeded that state's ability to pay. At the same time, new technologies and new centers of production shifted economic power away from the established Great Power.

While spending more on defense than before, the Great Power would discover that the world was a less secure environment because other states had grown faster and had become stronger: "Great Powers in relative decline instinctively respond by spending more on 'security', and thereby divert potential resources from 'investment' and compound their long-term dilemma."²⁰

20 Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000 (New York: Random House, 1987), p.xxiii.

Aspects of this theory could be applied to the Soviet Union of the early 1980s.²¹ While the USSR sought, for example, to ensure security along its borders, it was unyielding towards its neighbors' strategic concerns. This led to a worsening of relations with both Western and Eastern Europe, which subsequently made the Soviet leadership feel "encircled" and less secure. In addition, the Soviet Union's bureaucratic structure, its Party elite privileges, its restriction on access to knowledge, and, its lack of worker incentives resulted in stagnation.

Finally, Moscow continued to allocate too high a share of its economy to the military sector: this kept the Soviet Union from competing successfully in international markets. All these factors suggested that the Soviet Union's days as an empire were numbered.

By the mid-1980s, therefore, the USSR was in a state of internal decline and external over-extension. The Soviet domestic crisis, combined with its shrinking status in the international arena, required an urgent reassessment of Soviet policy. Moreover, Eastern Europe appeared less necessary as a defensive zone. The region was seen

21 For details, see *ibid*, pp.488-514.

as potentially more valuable if it could become both economically more advanced, and a politically supportive link with the West.

II. Eastern Europe in the Early 1980s

By the mid-1980s the countries of Eastern Europe were also undergoing a crisis. The incompatibility between Soviet interests and East European national aspirations became increasingly evident. For forty years the Soviet Union had failed to develop a system for the region that was both viable and cohesive.

The most important factor which undermined Soviet control over Eastern Europe was that the bloc regimes lacked legitimacy. In this case legitimacy can be defined as popular acceptance of - or even identification with - the political, international, and economic goals of the regime. None of the regimes in Eastern Europe had gained the degree of legitimacy needed to make the threat or actual use of force unnecessary.²² They lacked legitimacy in

²² For a discussion on legitimacy in Eastern Europe, see Sarah Terry, "The Implications of Economic Stringency and Political Succession for Stability in Eastern Europe in the Eighties," in East European Economies: Slow Growth in the

two ways: first, their populations did not accept Soviet domination; and, second, they did not accept the right of their rulers to rule. While authentic communist revolutions, such as those which occurred in Russia and China, were fused with nationalism and national interests, the "revolutions" in the East European states lacked these essential ingredients.²³

The local regimes had tried to achieve legitimacy through dynamic economic performance, improvements in the standard of living, and appeals to nationalism. However, economic difficulties tended to become translated by the populations into political ineptitude. Political criticism, in turn, led to increasing social unrest and instability. Moreover, the disaffection of the population - and even parts of the party elite - with communist rule had acquired a strength of its own. It brought

1980s, Vol.1: Economic Performance and Policy, Joint Economic Committee, 99th Congress, 1st session (Washington, DC: GPO, 1985), pp.502-40.

23 Albania and Yugoslavia were partial exceptions. Brown offered additional conditions for legitimacy: the local regime needed to have a commonly shared ideology or set of values between the rulers and the ruled; it needed a minimum and increasing standard of welfare and prosperity; the creation of conditions for social and professional mobility; an increasing degree of freedom of expression and association; and a general belief that the condition of society will steadily improve. See Brown, "East European Setting," op. cit., pp.23-24.

together - though in different degrees of unity and cooperation - intellectuals, workers, and other sectors of society.

In certain East European countries the political elites appeared to be aware of the various factors which threatened to undermine socialist control. Mieczyslaw Rakowski - the Polish premier in the late 1980s - wrote a private memorandum on the state of socialism in Poland sometime in 1987 (it was subsequently leaked to the West in 1988). In the document he argued that most socialist countries faced a deep crisis. They were likely to be left behind by the revolution in high technology in the West. Rakowski expressed concern over the East European populations' growing admiration with capitalist societies. He warned that unless the local regimes fundamentally changed society, they were likely to face revolutionary explosions. His solution to the problems - an ideological revival of the Communist Party - indicated the depth of lack of understanding on the part of the Polish leadership.²⁴

In addition, the dominant role played by Moscow in the affairs of the bloc countries began to be questioned. The revelations about Soviet stagnation

²⁴ See "Secret Referat," Wydawnictwo Mysl (October 1987).

and past crimes reinforced East European skepticism about their regimes. Finally, the length of Communist rule, and the unfulfilled promises of major reform, made the East Europeans lose all hope that any socialist regimes could solve the problems facing the countries. The nature of the political crisis in Eastern Europe, therefore, went beyond the policies of the Party: it questioned the socialist system.

Moreover, the East European regimes - challenged by their opponents and deserted by their supporters - began to lose confidence in their ability to rule. In many cases they were reluctant to use any means necessary to prevent a loss of power. Most importantly, the populations became aware of their rulers' insecurities.

Another factor was the improvement in East-West relations during the 1970s. Detente exposed communism in Eastern Europe to criticism. East Europeans, for instance, began to compare their lifestyles to their West European counterparts. In addition, a number of Moscow's allies had developed an economic stake in continuing detente, regardless of Moscow's relations with the West. The smaller and more advanced economies increasingly saw access to trade, technology, and credits from the West as vital, especially as Moscow could no longer prove

the degree of past subsidies or economic assistance. For a number of these countries a measure of Western contact, travel, and limited internal liberalization had also become an integral part of their efforts to enhance domestic legitimacy.²⁵ Consequently, bloc leaders began to express their fears that Soviet policy jeopardized their political and economic ties with the West.²⁶

The conflicting views between the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe over detente was evident in discussions over the relationship between "national and international interests" and the "role of small and medium-sized countries". A definitive example of this debate was an October 1983 article by Matyas Szuros, who was then Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (HSWP) Central Committee Secretary for International Affairs.²⁷ Under the title "The Reciprocal Effect of National and International Interests in the Development of Socialism in

25 The reform-minded Party leaderships in Budapest and Warsaw were the most outspoken in underlining the importance of maintaining political and economic ties with the West. They found themselves increasingly dependent upon the West because of heavy debt burdens and a slowdown in economic growth, this at a time when they appeared threatened by the sudden downturn in US-Soviet relations. See, for instance, Crane, Economic Dilemma, op. cit..

26 See Charles Gati, "Soviet Empire: Alive But Not Well," Problems of Communism (March-April 1985), pp.73-86.

27 Tarsadalmi Szemle, No.1 (January 1984), pp.13-21.

Hungary", Szuros gave an ideological justification for the continuation of East-West contacts. First, while conceding that the interests of individual socialist countries in Eastern Europe had been subjugated to those of the Soviet Union in the past, he maintained that this was no longer the case: "There is no question of this type of subordination today." Second, Szuros claimed that each East European country had the right to take advantage of the possibilities it enjoyed resulting from "historical tradition". Such relations could and should continue to develop, despite a deterioration in the overall East-West climate. Finally, "small and medium-sized countries" could play a bridge-building role over the differing views between East and West, as well as facilitating dialogue during times of tension.²⁸

There was also disagreement on how relations should be structured between Moscow and its East European allies. At a Comecon summit in June 1984 there was conflict between the Soviet delegation - which called for a closer integration (sblizheniye) between member states - and the East Europeans, who

²⁸ These comments were being advanced by Hungary, a country which had been allowed a certain measure of latitude in internal affairs and was not regarded as a "problem country" by Moscow. It had been viewed as a future model of socialist relations.

desired greater attention to national differences. In the resulting communiqué the bloc delegates prevailed: there was no reference to "sblizheniye" as a universal law.²⁹

In addition, some East European countries conducted foreign policies that actually ran counter to Soviet dictates. The German Democratic Republic, for instance, refused in 1984 to fully support a renewed campaign of hostility towards NATO in general, and West Germany in particular.³⁰ Such a departure from the Soviet line was important. It revealed that "factionalism" existed within the bloc over important foreign policy issues.

One possible reason why the bloc states were able to pursue such an independent course was the succession crisis in the Soviet Union. The diversion in 1984 of Soviet attention relaxed the constraints that normally restricted East European impulses toward foreign policy autonomy. Moreover, the bloc leaders gambled that through a combination of Soviet indecision and an anticipated shift by Moscow toward improved relations with the West, they could promote their interests while avoiding a clash with the Kremlin.

²⁹ Pravda, 16 June 1984.

³⁰ See, for instance, Ron Asmus, "The Soviet-East German Dispute Revisited," Radio Free Europe Report (10 December 1985), pp.1-10.

III. Gorbachev and Eastern Europe

By the middle of the decade, therefore, the Soviet empire was - as Gati put it - "alive, but not well".³¹ With conditions worsening in both the Soviet Union and the East European states - and in relations between them - there began a reevaluation in Moscow of both domestic and foreign policy tenets.

A factor in the re-evaluation of Soviet thinking was the generational change of the Soviet elite. Their postwar experiences, particularly Khrushchev's "secret" speech and the Prague Spring, influenced their perceptions of the domestic situation as well as international relations. This "Gorbachev" generation saw reform at home, and a less confrontational approach in foreign policy, as the only way to extricate the Soviet Union from its domestic crisis.

The Khrushchev and Brezhnev leaderships were greatly influenced by the Second World War; they viewed the East European bloc as vital to Soviet security. The Gorbachev generation, however, saw Eastern Europe more as an "enforced extension of the Stalinist command system" than a strategic defense

31 Gati, "Empire," op. cit..

zone.³² Eduard Shevardnadze, the Soviet foreign minister expressed on several occasions his regret for past Soviet behavior, particularly the use of force.³³ Soviet policy-makers - such as Alexander Yakovlev and Georgii Shakhnazarov - aimed to transform Moscow's sphere of influence from a liability to an asset.

This new generation believed that the East European countries could have a new political role. They could serve as "conduits" for Soviet policies with the West, as useful channels for technological, managerial, and political innovations. In order to utilize the Eastern bloc in this way, relations had to be restructured.³⁴

The debates over policy had a profound impact on Soviet views of socialism and security. They concerned what types of reforms were needed for

32 See Alex Pravda, "Soviet Policy Towards Eastern Europe in Transition: the Means Justify the Ends" in Alex Pravda (ed), The End of the Outer Empire: Soviet-East European Relations in Transition, 1985-90 (London: Sage, 1992), pp.1-34, at p.2.

33 See, for instance, Pravda, 8 February 1990; and on Soviet television, 7 July 1990, in FBIS-SOV, No.131-s (1990), p.48.

34 This sentiment was later expressed by Shevardnadze in an interview with Michnik on Polish developments in 1989: "We might not fully like the fact that it is non-Communists who are in the leadership of Poland, but we respect the will of the Polish nation ... We want our Polish friends to develop their ties with the West. Your experience regarding cooperation with the West might also be of use to us." See the Washington Post, 28 October 1989.

dealing with the crisis, the legitimization of an array of alternative concepts previously rejected as unacceptable, and, inevitably, what constitutes "socialism". In addition, under Gorbachev, domestic and foreign policy became more inter-connected than during any previous stage in Soviet development. Gorbachev stated the importance of this relationship: "Our foreign policy today stems directly from our domestic policy to a greater extent than ever before."³⁵

In his Political Report to the Twenty-seventh Congress of the CPSU Gorbachev emphasized the need to restructure relations:

A turning point has arisen not only in internal but also in external affairs. The changes in the development of the contemporary world are so profound and significant that they require a rethinking and comprehensive analysis of all its factors. The situation of nuclear confrontation calls for new approaches, methods, and forms of relations between different social systems, states, and regions.³⁶

35 Speech at dinner for Mrs. Thatcher, Pravda, 1 April 1987.

36 Kommunist, No.4 (1986), pp.5-80, at p.6. For an examination of these changes, see Tsuyoshi Hasegawa & Alex Pravda (eds), Perestroika: Soviet Domestic and Foreign Policies (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1990); Seweryn Bialer, "Domestic and International Factors in the Formation of Gorbachev's Reforms," Journal of International Affairs, Vol.42, No.2, pp.282-97; Robert Legvold, "The Revolution in Soviet Foreign Policy," Foreign

The debates over restructuring had a major impact on Gorbachev's approach to foreign policy. Since Stalin the control of Eastern Europe had been dictated by the inter-relatedness of security and ideological interests. Gorbachev, however, had adopted a more flexible approach to security issues, particularly in the area of arms control. These policies appeared to suggest a reevaluation of security concerns in general and on the role of Eastern Europe in Soviet military thinking.

Gorbachev attempted to adjust Soviet perceptions of security to the realities of international relations.³⁷ First, he emphasized the idea of "nuclear sufficiency", which proclaimed that any nuclear buildup beyond mutual assured destruction was meaningless. Second, the concept of "common security" expressed that United States' reactions to perceptions of military insecurity endangered Soviet military security and, consequently, did not serve

Affairs, America and the World, 1988/89, pp.82-98; and David Holloway, "Gorbachev's New Thinking," Foreign Affairs, Vol.68 (November 1989), pp.66-81.

37 The traditional Soviet concept of "national security" saw the the Soviet Union as surrounded by hostile, aggressive, capitalist powers. Although Khrushchev added at the 20th Party Congress the ideological innovation that war was no longer inevitable, the basic concept of security remained. Even with strategic parity of the 1970s, there was no major redefinition of what was meant by "security". See Seweryn Bialer, "'New Thinking' and Soviet Foreign Policy," Survival (July-August 1988), pp.291-309.

Soviet interests. Both sides had to consider the impact of their defense policy on each other. Changes in the Soviet approach to arms control were also evident. Gorbachev admitted that there were asymmetries, and accepted the idea of strict verification. He announced deep unilateral cuts, and was restructured Soviet forces to a more defensive posture.³⁸ Yakovlev reiterated Gorbachev's new approach when he stated that "only scientific-technological progress can secure the well-being of peoples." The technological revolution

does not require a repartition of the world by military means as it did in the past. Nuclear weapons have forced mankind to look at the problem a different way. It is obvious that security cannot be selfish. It is either for everybody or for nobody. Security cannot be guaranteed by the very military means which are capable of destroying it.³⁹

While Gorbachev favored a restructuring of relations with the East European states, he still

38 These changes were perhaps partially attributed to the increased Soviet concern over US high technology weapons, and their impact on conventional warfare.

39 See Seweryn Bialer, "Interview: Aleksander Yakovlev, Redefining Socialism at Home and Abroad," Journal of International Affairs, Vol.42, No.2 (Spring 1989), pp.333-55.

envisioned some form of "socialist community", not a dissolution of the bloc. The Soviet leader apparently believed that the political and economic problems could be remedied by "perestroika" (restructuring) and "glasnost" (openness). Gorbachev wanted to create more acceptable forms of socialism in the region, ones adapted to national peculiarities. He may have assumed that all that was necessary was for the regimes to change their policies and if not, their replacement by new leaders.⁴⁰ Most importantly, the policy that Moscow pursued had to keep the region stable so as not to distract Soviet attention from addressing its domestic problems.

The Soviet leader, however, failed to appreciate the depth of East European disillusionment with socialism. The imposed postwar political and economic order lacked legitimacy and was, therefore, inherently unstable. Furthermore, the Soviet leadership was limited by its domestic problems in the tools that it could employ to influence East European behavior. As Alex Pravda argued, perestroika placed "enormous strains on East European stability by catalysing developments that were not susceptible to the limited range of

40 See Gati, Bloc, op. cit., p.65.

instruments Moscow was willing to deploy."⁴¹ Moreover, Gorbachev's liberal policies toward the bloc inadvertently stimulated the nationalists within the USSR - particularly in the Baltic States - to press for reformed relations.⁴²

For the East European ruling elites, Gorbachev's policies lit the match to an already flammable situation. He demoralized the conservative regimes, which viewed his policies as removing traditional Soviet safeguards. Not only was Gorbachev a reformist leader, but one who may not heed calls for intervention to save a regime. This realization increased the East European peoples' confidence, while undermining the leaderships' control. In addition, dissenters within regimes could use Moscow's reforms to exploit their positions. Thus, the result of Gorbachev's policies was to strengthen the resistance of conservative regimes to his reforms, while confusing the reformists (who were not sufficiently certain of Soviet support) who feared introducing dramatic change. Moreover, Gorbachev galvanized various elements within East

41 See A. Pravda, "Soviet Policy," op. cit., p.10.

42 For further examination of this issue, see Gail W. Lapidus, Victor Zaslavsky, and Philip Goldman (eds), From Union to Commonwealth: Nationalism and Separatism in the Soviet Republics (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

European societies: youth, opposition, and dissident groups, as well as reformist factions within the regimes. Shevardnadze expressed the Kremlin's concern:

... we clearly saw that in almost all the countries of Eastern Europe the political leadership was rapidly losing control over the situation and was not finding adequate responses to demands for democratic changes. In some instances, stubbornly rejecting reform, conservatives employed methods and measures that, against their intention, solidified the unorganized opposition, facilitating its formation into a broad, nationwide democratic movement.⁴³

Once the socialist community began to unravel in 1989, Gorbachev apparently acknowledged the failure of socialism in the area as inevitable and decided to accept change, rather than stopping the process by force. The Soviet leader's acquiescence to the dissolution of the bloc resulted possibly from a number of factors. First, Gorbachev recognized that the USSR was in the midst of a profound political and economic crisis that commanded all of its domestic and foreign resources. The character of the East European regimes, as long as not against Moscow, was of a lesser concern. Moreover,

⁴³ Eduard Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom (New York: Free Press, 1991), p.116.

political or military intervention would not only have undercut or destroyed Moscow's efforts toward detente with the West, but would also have diverted Soviet resources away from its domestic needs.

In addition, Gorbachev may have felt confident that after forty years of rhetoric the West would feel "obligated" to aid Eastern Europe economically in its move toward "democracy". Gorbachev may have preferred to be bordered by stable, legitimate, prosperous countries, than with reluctant and unreliable allies who were economically in ruins, politically unstable, and military unreliable. Such a situation would ultimately have weakened a USSR that was already torn by ethnic strife, economic ills, and political disillusionment.

Gorbachev did not appear to have had a "grand design" for Eastern Europe. His policy toward the region emerged gradually, and was not an improvised reaction to events. In his initial period as General Secretary, Eastern Europe was not a predominant concern and the new Soviet leader held a traditional view of the region. However, Gorbachev's thinking on Eastern Europe evolved with time. By 1989 Moscow found itself managing the effects of policy rather than shaping events. There were three discernible phases in Gorbachev's policy toward Eastern Europe.

Phase I: "traditional relations"

This phase, from approximately March 1985 to November 1986, reflected only a slight modification in traditional Soviet policy. Although the Soviet leader restated the importance of Eastern Europe to the Soviet Union, he appeared to be preoccupied with defusing military tensions with the United States, as well as creating better relations with the West. Moreover, Gorbachev needed stability in the East in order to promote his reforms at home.

Gorbachev's initial public statements emphasized the need for unity, to harmonize national and international interests, and to create a "new quality" of relations.⁴⁴ In his maiden speech as CPSU General Secretary, Gorbachev emphasized that the "first priority" of Soviet foreign policy would be "to protect and strengthen in any way the fraternal friendship with our closest comrades-in-arms and allies, the countries of the great socialist community."⁴⁵ The Warsaw Treaty Organization was officially extended in April 1985

44 See in particular, his report to the CPSU Central Committee on 23 April 1985, M. S. Gorbachev, Izbrannye rechi i stat'i, Vol.6 (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1989), pp.152-73; quoted in A. Pravda, "Soviet Policy," op. cit., p.14.

45 Pravda, 12 March 1985.

for a thirty-year period, with the Soviet Union and its allies vowing "to increase their close cooperation in international affairs."⁴⁶

At the 27th Party Congress in February 1986 Gorbachev told delegates that "radical reform is necessary".⁴⁷ By criticizing fundamental aspects of its own system of economic management and planning, Moscow was admitting what certain East Europeans had been saying for years: that the Stalinist system was outdated and needed to be reformed. Furthermore, the Congress was significant for what Gorbachev did not say. There was no mention, for instance, of the principle of socialist or proletarian internationalism; instead, Gorbachev emphasized "unconditional respect in international practice for the right of every people to choose the paths and forms of its development." Also missing was mention of common scientific principles underlying socialist construction within all of the various socialist states; rather, the Soviet leader stated that "unity has nothing in common with uniformity, with a hierarchy" and urged the CPSU to "find mutually

46 The agreement was for 20 years plus an automatic 10-year renewal; see Vladimir Kusin, "Impending Renewal of the Warsaw Pact," Radio Free Europe Research (22 April 1985); and Vladimir Socor, "Warsaw Pact Summit Renews the Warsaw Treaty," *ibid*, (19 June 1985).

47 Pravda, 26 February 1986.

acceptable solutions to even the most difficult problems". Similarly, in his address to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Gorbachev declared that the large socialist states should avoid teaching others, to overcome the "prejudice, arbitrariness and rigidity" of traditional relations.⁴⁸

During the months following the 27th Party Congress, Gorbachev made a number of personnel changes to expedite the implementation of perestroika. Medvedev's appointment as Central Committee Secretary responsible for intra-bloc affairs reflected Soviet approval for greater flexibility in Soviet policy towards Eastern Europe. Medvedev's decision in the fall of 1986 to replace Oleg Rakhmanin - a conservative - with Shakhnazarov - a prominent reformist - was a hopeful sign for supporters of perestroika within Poland and Hungary.

Under Gorbachev, the Soviet Union gave several indications that it rejected the use of force as a means of imposing a social system on other states. Such a rejection had been contained in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act. It was reasserted in the Final Document of the Stockholm Agreement of 19 September 1986. Nine of the one-hundred four articles of the

48 See his speech at the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 23 May 1986, Vestnik Ministerstva inostrannykh del SSSR, No.1 (1987), p.5; quoted in A. Pravda, "Soviet Policy," op. cit., p.14.

Document of the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe related to the renunciation by all participating states to the threat or actual use of force in international relations. Article 15 stated: "They [the signatories] will abide by their commitment to refrain from the threat or use of force in their relations with any state, regardless of that state's political, social, economic, or cultural system and irrespective of whether or not they maintain with that state relations of alliance." In addition, Article 12 stated that "They [the signatories] will refrain from any manifestation of force of the purpose of inducing any other state to renounce the full exercise of its sovereign rights." The Stockholm Agreement also linked the non-use of force to international law, even in relations between two communist countries. Article 16 stipulated: "they [the signatories] stress that noncompliance with the obligation of refraining from the threat or use of force as recalled above, constitutes a violation of international law."⁴⁹

49 See "the Conference on Disarmament in Europe: Final CDE Document," The Arms Control Reporter, September 1986, 402.D.35-42. For analysis regarding the Soviet interventionist doctrine, see Vladimir Kusin, "Brezhnev Doctrine Rejected in Stockholm Agreement?," Radio Free

At the same time, Gorbachev reaffirmed Soviet commitment to the socialist regimes of Eastern Europe. Speaking at the Tenth Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party in June 1986, Gorbachev stated that "socialist gains are irreversible", thereby asserting the continuing validity of the Soviet interventionist doctrine:

to threaten the socialist order, try to undermine it from the outside and tear one country or another from the socialist community means encroachment not only on the will of the people, but also on the entire postwar order and, in the final analysis, on peace.⁵⁰

Gorbachev's statements may have been due in part to the ongoing Soviet debate on socialism. The Soviet leader wanted to avoid exposing Soviet-East European ties to intense scrutiny and criticism which could undermine the region's political elite. Moreover, he wanted to maintain stability in the region in order to pursue perestroika at home.

Certain Soviet political elites have claimed retrospectively that a fundamental restructuring of relations with Eastern Europe started as early as in

Europe Research (29 September 1986).

50 For the text, see FBIS-EEU, 1 July 1986.

April 1985.⁵¹ Whether or not this is true, there was serious discussion within the Soviet leadership over the future of socialist relations. During this period, a number of articles were published reflecting different viewpoints. The orthodox perspective was voiced by Oleg Rakhmanin, the First Deputy Head of the Department for Liaison with Ruling Workers' and Communist Parties. In an article written under the pseudonym "O. Vladimirov", Rakhmanin attacked the Soviet reformist position:

The theorists of anti-communism and opportunists, slandering proletarian internationalism, proclaim that it is "obsolete", attempt to portray themselves as the pioneers of some kind of "new unity", accuse internationalist communists of lacking patriotism, and ascribe to them indifference toward their motherland and nation ...⁵²

He warned: "V. I. Lenin demanded that those who only pay lip service to internationalism be exposed," particularly now, "when various kinds of revisionist, nationalistic, and clerical concepts are coming to the surface of ideological life." According to Rakhmanin, such "errors" were

⁵¹ See, for example, Shevardnadze, Pravda, 8 February 1990, translated in BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, SU/0684 C/19, 9 February 1990; and Ligachev's comments to the Washington Post, 15 October 1990.

⁵² Pravda, 21 June 1985.

particularly dangerous at a time when the imperialist camp was intensifying its efforts to divide the socialist countries, as well as exploiting "ideological weakness" through a policy of "differentiation". Stress was laid on the "common responsibility of all the socialist countries for the fate of world socialism". Finally, the author declared that "on all major international issues the foreign policy of the USSR and of the Marxist-Leninist core of world socialism is identical."

The reformist response to the "Vladimirov" article came from Oleg Bogomolov - then Deputy Director of IEWSS - who argued in Kommunist that only by respecting the differing interests of other states could socialist internationalism be an operative principle: "Specific national and state interests cannot, of course, be ignored. That would not further the realization of our common international interests, nor would it strengthen the unity of the socialist countries."⁵³

From this debate it emerged, therefore, that the reformist element within the Soviet leadership was promoting a critical analysis of Soviet-East

53 Kommunist, No.10 (July 1985), p.91. See also Elizabeth Teague, "Kommunist Speaks Out in Defense of East European National Interests," Radio Liberty, (12 August 1985).

European relations, as well as ties based more on state equality and bloc diversity than Soviet dictates. The conservatives within the Kremlin, however, were stressing the importance of the "class content" in relations between socialist states, and the continued validity of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" (at least as a threat if no longer the actual use of force). The conservatives in this way were perpetuating the ambiguity of the doctrine on whether it still applied.

Phase II: "unity in diversity"

The second phase, from approximately November 1986 to the end of 1988, appeared to suggest a substantial shift in the substance and tone of Soviet commentary on Eastern Europe. Gorbachev endorsed the concept of separate roads to socialism as long as stability in the region was maintained. He also stressed the equality of all communist parties, thereby rejecting the Soviet claim to the CPSU's leading role. Terms in declarations such as "responsibility" were replaced by ones indicating "respect" for the experiences and interests of allies. A ruling party's responsibility was now

limited to its own country; it was necessary only to show "concern" for the "common cause of socialism". According to Alex Pravda, while the comments of 1987 undermined Soviet justifications for intervention (particularly in Czechoslovakia 1968), those of 1988 witnessed their repudiation.⁵⁴ From the spring of 1988 on unambiguous support was given for radical socialist reform in the region.

During this period Gorbachev permitted the East European leaders greater flexibility and independence in the management of their affairs; however, their freedom was limited to behavior which did not threaten or contradict Soviet interests. The bloc regimes were allowed greater initiative in disarmament matters and relations with Western Europe. Moreover, consultation between Moscow and its allies became regular and appeared genuine.

There were also attempts made toward an official reevaluation of past interventions, such as the invasion of Czechoslovakia. An increasing number of Soviet officials raised doubts about the wisdom of the intervention, as well as condemning the "Brezhnev Doctrine" (whose existence had previously been denied).

Mark Kramer attributed the shift in Gorbachev's

⁵⁴ Pravda, "Soviet Policy," op. cit., pp.16-17.

thinking to five factors.⁵⁵ First, Gorbachev by this time had consolidated his political power. This enabled him to undertake bolder reforms - both at home and in Eastern Europe - than he previously would have risked. Second, Gorbachev apparently concluded that economic revitalization for both the Soviet Union and its socialist allies would not be possible without initiating necessary political reforms. Third, other aspects of Gorbachev's domestic policy, such as the reorganization of the central party apparatus in 1988, were also conducive to a change of policy.

Fourth, internal developments within Eastern Europe prioritized the need for both political and economic reform. Riots in Romania and Poland, for example, threatened to expand, which could have undermined Gorbachev's perestroika at home. This perception was reinforced by the increasing tensions between the republics within the USSR, especially Armenia and Azerbaijan. Finally, the relaxation of tensions in East-West relations enabled Gorbachev to focus his attention on domestic problems. He also launched several international initiatives, including the announcement of initial troop withdrawals from Afghanistan, and the attempted

55 See Kramer, "Brezhnev Doctrine," op. cit., pp.36-38.

breakthrough in Reykjavik concerning arms control.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan - and the resulting imbroglio - had a significant impact on the Kremlin leadership.⁵⁶ The Soviet decision to pull out of Afghanistan (an agreement was signed in April 1988 for withdrawal of all Soviet troops by February 1989) was prompted by the lack of prospects for victory over the mujahedeen, as well as the war's increasingly high economic and political costs.⁵⁷ When the Soviet Union issued the statement announcing the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in April 1988, it made no reference to "defending socialism"; instead, it emphasized "traditional friendship" between the two countries.⁵⁸

A resolution to the Afghan crisis, Moscow believed, would lead to improved relations with

56 For an examination of the impact of Afghanistan on the Gorbachev leadership, see Tad Daley, "Afghanistan and Gorbachev's Global Foreign Policy," Asian Survey, Vol. XXIX, No. 5 (May 1989), pp. 496-513.

57 De-classified Kremlin top-secret archives appeared to suggest that Gorbachev, Shevardnadze, and Gromyko persuaded other Politburo members to abandon the Afghan "quagmire". Politburo minutes of the 13 November 1986 meeting revealed that the Soviet leadership agreed to a two-year deadline for the withdrawal from Afghanistan. See the International Herald Tribune, 17 November 1992.

58 See "Joint-Afghan statement," 7 April 1988, Soviet News, 13 April 1988, p. 133. The Soviet invasion was declared illegal in 1989: Shevardnadze told the Soviet legislature on 23 October 1989 that the Soviet role in Afghanistan had violated Soviet law and international norms of behavior; see the New York Times, 24 October 1989.

China and the Muslim world. It would also undermine Western propaganda aimed against the Soviet Union. Shevardnadze wrote of the high price that the Soviet Union paid for its invasion:

It had been an incredibly difficult problem, and if it had not been resolved, perestroika would have lost heavily. Our involvement [in Afghanistan] was perceived by the majority of countries of the world as an effort to exploit regional conflicts to expand our sphere of influence. The presence of our troops in Afghanistan not only hindered relations with many countries but also sowed doubt as to the sincerity of our desire to conduct international affairs in a new way.⁵⁹

In addition, two articles in Literaturnaya gazeta in February and March 1988 described the invasion as a mistake. A. Prokhanov questioned the purpose of the Soviet troop presence in Afghanistan: it was not a socialist country, and appeared unlikely to become one.⁶⁰ He asked whether "a socialist political structure [was] really possible in a country consisting of innumerable tribes, nomadic peoples, agglomerations, chieftains, and satraps? ... In this medieval mash ... a plan was conceived to build a

⁵⁹ See Shevardnadze, Freedom, op. cit., pp.68-69.

⁶⁰ A. Prokhanov, "Afganskije voprosy," Literaturnaya gazeta, 17 February 1988; in Jones, Brezhnev Doctrine, op. cit., pp.191-92.

socialist edifice on that swampy bog."⁶¹ In a subsequent article he remarked that, if there was not a true Marxist-Leninist regime in Kabul to defend, "the presence of Soviet troops in the country loses its point. Their departure is inevitable and logical".⁶²

The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan raised several important issues regarding the irreversibility of "socialist gains" and the "Brezhnev Doctrine". It represented the reversal of the Soviet commitment to render "fraternal assistance" to a "socialist" state. Moreover, the East European states may have interpreted the Soviet promise of withdrawal as a precedent: perhaps Soviet troops would also leave their countries. In addition, Moscow's promise revealed that Soviet power was no longer omnipotent. For the socialist elites it signified that Moscow was no longer willing or able to support their regimes. The East European populations' cognizance of the latter further undermined the elites power.

Soviet scholars have pointed to two events in the autumn of 1986 - the issuing of a Politburo memorandum on Soviet-East European relations and the

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² See the Prokhanov article in Ogonyok, 23 July 1988, p.26; quoted in Daley, "Afghanistan," op. cit., p.503.

CMEA summit in Moscow - as the turning point in Soviet thinking and the decision to apply "restructuring" to Soviet-bloc relations. According to Medvedev, the Comecon meeting "formulated the principles of cooperation between the socialist countries in the new conditions and mapped out its main lines." In addition, Vacheslav Dashichev, a Soviet historian, stated that Gorbachev called for "liquidating the burden of the past from all mutual relations, improving political and economic relations, and improving the mechanisms of economic relations among socialist countries on the basis of equality of all countries." The fundamental principles of equality, mutual advantage, and noninterference in internal affairs were stressed and the practice of foisting experience on one another was seen as inadmissible.⁶³

Soviet speeches and commentaries on Soviet-East European relations during this period stressed the themes of greater autonomy, plurality, and diversity. Specifically, the speeches at the January 1987 Central Committee Plenum and the 70th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution marked not only a more radical approach to Soviet-bloc

63 See Medvedev, "Socialist Cooperation: New Stage," World Marxist Review, Vol.31, No.5 (May 1988), pp.29-37; and an interview with Dashichev, Yomiuru Shimbun, 21 January 1988; in RFE/RL Daily Report (22 January 1988).

relations, but showed that this new thinking was now becoming official policy.⁶⁴ The themes of unity in diversity, unconditional and total equality, noninterference in internal affairs, respect for sovereignty, and independence in choosing a more appropriate socialist model to national conditions were elaborated.⁶⁵ Toward the end of the speech Gorbachev stated what could be interpreted as free rein to Eastern Europe: "All [Communist] parties are fully and irreversibly independent. We said that as long ago as the 20th Congress. True it took time to free ourselves from habits. Now, however, this is an immutable reality."

He qualified these statements, however, by stipulating that relations among the socialist states had to be based on "the practice of socialist internationalism".

We know damage can be caused by weakening the internationalist principle in the mutual relations of socialist states, by deviating from the principles of mutual benefit and mutual assistance, and by failing to heed the common interests of socialism in action on the world scene.

64 Alex Pravda noted a radical advance on past approval of limited diversity; see Pravda, "Soviet Policy," op. cit., p.17.

65 See especially Gorbachev's speech delivered before the socialist and social democratic parties in FBIS-SOV, 3 November 1987; and the speech by Medvedev in Pravda, 9 December 1987, translated in FBIS-SOV, 10 December 1987.

In addition, while the "Brezhnev Doctrine" was not officially repudiated, Gorbachev intimated that it would not be applied to inhibit gradual change in Eastern Europe. In 1987 and especially 1988 official statements eroded the obligation of subordinating national to international interests.⁶⁶ This, in turn, encouraged some bloc regimes which pressed for change to quicken their pace beyond that of Soviet restructuring.

In his book Perestroika (published in 1987), Gorbachev further outlined the basic premises among which socialist countries based their relations. He argued that the entire framework of political relations between the socialist countries had to be based on absolute independence: "The independence of each Party, its sovereign right to decide the issues facing its country and its responsibility to its nation are the unquestionable principles."⁶⁷ Gorbachev stated that the reliance of the socialist states on the Soviet example resulted in their failure to "consider their own specifics". Moreover, while there might be more models and paths to socialism, the improvement, not demise, of socialism was the goal.

⁶⁶ See A. Pravda, "Soviet Policy," op. cit., pp.16-18.

⁶⁷ Mikhail Gorbachev, Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), p.165.

Gorbachev, however, qualified that independence with the need to consider interests of the entire community. He stated

we are also firmly convinced that the socialist community will be successful only if every party and state cares for both its own and common interest, if it respects its friends and allies, heeds their interests and pays attention to the experience of others. Awareness of this relationship between domestic issues and the interests of world socialism is typical of the countries of the socialist community. We are united, in unity resides our strength ... 68

The Soviet leader also used a series of visits to Eastern Europe during 1987 and 1988 to distance himself from the policies of his predecessors. During his April 1987 visit to Czechoslovakia, for example, Gorbachev declared that Soviet-East European relations "can and must be built on the basis of equality and mutual responsibility". Moreover, the CPSU was not calling on other countries to copy the Soviet experience:

No one has the right to claim special status in the socialist world. We consider the independence of every party, its responsibility to the people of its own country, and its right to decide the questions

68 Ibid, pp.162-64.

of the country's development to be unconditional principles.⁶⁹

This statement was particularly significant because it undermined the philosophical basis of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" - that the Soviet Union's model of socialism was to be emulated by others. Moreover, when Gorbachev's press spokesman, Gennadi Gerasimov, was asked to explain the principal difference between Gorbachev's policies and those of Dubcek, Gerasimov replied, "Nineteen years".⁷⁰ This statement appeared to suggest that the reforms which Dubcek had tried to initiate were now considered acceptable; and that Moscow was indirectly admitting that its suppression was a mistake.

During Gorbachev's visit to Warsaw in July 1988 the Soviet leader assured Poland that it had the sovereign right to decide how to build socialism. In a joint communiqué both countries agreed to the "unconditional recognition of the objective character of the national differences existing in every country." The document declared that relations between Poland and the USSR would be based

⁶⁹ Mikhail Gorbachev, "For a 'Common European Home', For a New Way of Thinking," Speech by the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee at the Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship Meeting, Prague, 10 April 1987 (Moscow: Novosti, 1987), p.10.

⁷⁰ See the New York Times, 12 April 1987.

"on the principle of full observance of the sovereign right of every state to independently determine [its own] methods and forms of socialist construction, the pace of [its] social and political transformation, and [its] approach to solving problems and overcoming contradiction."⁷¹ Moreover, in Gorbachev's speech to the United Nations in December 1988, he stated that "Freedom of choice is a universal principle to which there should be no exceptions", and that the use of force was no longer an option in international relations. "Everyone, and the strongest in the first instance, is required to restrict himself, and to exclude totally the use of external force."⁷²

Although Gorbachev spoke in liberal terms about the independence of fraternal parties, he had not denounced explicitly the Soviet interventionist doctrine. The joint Soviet-Yugoslav Declaration issued on 18 March 1988 affirmed the content of earlier pronouncements about the sovereign rights of all countries and all parties; but it stopped short of issuing a complete renunciation of past doctrines. The declaration restated "mutual respect for different paths in building socialism", and

71 RFE/RL Daily Report (15 July 1988).

72 Pravda, 8 December 1988; in FBIS-SOV, 8 December 1988, pp. 12-13.

repeated that there was no one single model of socialism. All countries were to be accorded independence and equal rights "regardless of their ... sociopolitical system, the conviction they are guided by, the forms and nature of their international alliances, or their geographic position." In addition, "the threat or use of force in international relations" was condemned.⁷³

The Soviet statement was welcomed by some of the East European regimes, but it fell short of an unequivocal denunciation of the doctrine.⁷⁴ When asked in an interview in May 1988 about the Belgrade statement and its implication that force would not be used (as in Czechoslovakia in 1968 or Hungary 1956), Gorbachev answered that "Interference from any side is impermissible." He clarified, "When you speak about interference, I understand what you have in mind. But when I recall the situation, I had something else in mind. I have in mind that before what you are talking about happened, another kind of interference had occurred."⁷⁵

73 Pravda, 19 March 1988; English translation of the Declaration and further analysis in Vladimir Kusin, "The 'Yugoslavization' of Soviet-East European Relations?" RAD Background Report/57 (Eastern Europe) 29 March 1988.

74 In addition, the two previous Soviet-Yugoslav declarations - containing similar clauses - had failed to stop Soviet tanks from invading Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968.

75 Interview with the Washington Post, 22 May 1988.

In May 1988 an article was published in Literaturnaya gazeta which suggested that the Soviet Union was responsible for the problems it encountered in Eastern Europe: "what came to the fore after the Second World War was the spread of Stalinist socialism wherever possible and its standardization in all countries regardless of their national features."⁷⁶ This line of argument was further developed by Dashichev in an IEWSS paper.⁷⁷ He wrote that Soviet "hegemonic aspirations" and sponsorship of "stagnant neo-Stalinism" in Eastern Europe had been the prime cause for continuing political crises. The only remedy for the present situation and dilemma was to pursue the reforms outlined in Gorbachev's "new thinking". Bogomolov reiterated this view in July 1988:

I believe the point is that many socialist countries have begun to build a new society while strongly influenced by the model of socialism prevailing in the Soviet Union, which today is in need of restructuring. This model is of the lowest type, based on command-edict principles which preclude the

76 Vacheslav Dashichev, "Vostok-zapad: poisk novykh otnoshenii - O prioritetakh vneshnei politiki Sovetskogo gosudarstva," Literaturnaya gazeta, No.20 (18 May 1988), p.14; in Kramer, "Brezhnev Doctrine," op. cit., p.39.

77 Published in the West as "East-West Relations and Eastern Europe: The Soviet Perspective," Problems of Communism, Vol.37, No.3 (May-August 1988), pp.60-67.

development of real commodity-money relations and a genuine market ... There is no doubt that this model was not only an example, but that to a certain extent it was foisted upon them, because the same principle of democratic centralism was in force in relations between socialist countries as was proclaimed in domestic policy developments - subordination to the center imposition of [Soviet] experience, and the desire to unify the socialist world.⁷⁸

Although Gorbachev had not officially repudiated the "Brezhnev Doctrine", some Soviet commentators indicated that its prescriptions were no longer valid. Leonid Yagodovskiy of IEWSS stated in February 1988 that the 1968 military invasion was a "mistake":

... if a situation similar to that in Czechoslovakia in 1968 developed today, our Party would make a decision different from that in 1968 ... The reason is that no one has the right to monopolize the truth.

He "totally denied the thesis" that the sovereignty of an individual country could be restricted in the common interests of the entire socialist community. "No party of any socialist system in the world has the right to decide that another party's decision is

⁷⁸ See Bogomolov's interview in Sovetskaya Kultura, 12 July 1988; in JPRS-UIA-88-015.

incorrect."⁷⁹

Moreover, Bogomolov told the Washington Times in July 1988:

We have completely changed our relations with the East European countries ... [Today the] "Brezhnev Doctrine" is completely unacceptable and [its application] unthinkable ... We gave too much advice before to our partners, and it was actually very damaging to them. It's time to keep our advice to ourselves.⁸⁰

He later confirmed that the shortcomings of past relations were being remedied:

the deformities and elements alien to the nature of these relations, which the West calls the Brezhnev doctrine of limited sovereignty, are now being eliminated. The command method which prevailed in relations between the socialist countries has been ended.⁸¹

Bogomolov's statements were followed by those of Georgii Korniyenko, then first deputy chief of the CPSU International Department. He said that the Soviet Union had "given up the Brezhnev principle of limited sovereignty" and that a state's sovereignty

79 See Yagodovskiy's interview with Japan's Akahata, 5 February 1988; in FBIS-SOV, 23 February 1988, pp.1-2.

80 See the Washington Times, 8 July 1988.

81 See his 4 September 1988 interview, Moscow World Service; in FBIS-SOV, 8 September 1988, pp.71-72.

"must not be limited by anything or anyone, whatever its nature."⁸² Similar views were expressed in subsequent articles with prominent commentators - such as Aleksandr Bovin - maintaining that the interventions in both 1956 and 1968 were "mistakes".⁸³

Although Gorbachev had not officially repudiated the Soviet interventionist doctrine, these statements and developments indicated that Soviet policy toward the countries of the region was under serious review. It is difficult to determine when the Soviet leadership actually decided to reject the use of force in Soviet-East European relations (irrespective of the retrospective claims of 1985). Some evidence suggests that the leaders determined in late 1986 to reject force. Some have argued that the socialist states were informed of such a change in Soviet policy during the CMEA meeting in November 1986.⁸⁴ Perhaps such a statement was meant to send a message to the East European elites who favored reform that there were no obstacles - at least from

82 See Moskovskie novosti, No.35 (28 August 1988), pp.6-7; quoted in Kramer, "Brezhnev Doctrine," op. cit., p.42.

83 See, for instance, "USSR's Bovin Views Mistakes of 56, 68"; in FBIS-EEU-89-068, 11 April 1989, p.34.

84 I. Aboimov, the deputy Foreign Minister in charge of East European affairs, referred in his speech at the July 1988 Ministry Conference to a key Politburo decision being communicated at this meeting; see International Affairs (Moscow), No.10 (1988), p.38.

Moscow - in pursuing a progressive policy. Gorbachev's approach had two basic effects on Eastern Europe: it gave the "green light" to the reformists and removed any concern about "national deviations" that they had; and, it fostered further anxiety in the conservative regimes, which feared that any reform or relaxation of a "Moscow" guarantee would undermine their power.

In the West some analysts noted that there was some reasonable grounds - right up to 1989 - for skepticism about the real meaning and extent of the Soviet Union's renunciation of the "Brezhnev Doctrine". They, as some perhaps in the East, believed that Communist systems were unchangeable.⁸⁵ Those who saw Gorbachev's reforms as revolutionary still had doubts how far they would affect Eastern Europe. Furthermore, the Soviet leader apparently remained an advocate of single-party rule as late as November 1989.⁸⁶ William H. Luers argued that there was no prospects for fundamental change in relations between the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.⁸⁷ Such

85 See, for example, Jeanne J. Kirkpatrick, Dictatorship and Double Standards: Rationalism and Reason in Politics (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982).

86 On 26 November 1989 Gorbachev published, for example, an article in Pravda defending the retention of single-party rule in the USSR.

87 See William H. Luers, "The US and Eastern Europe," Foreign Affairs (Summer 1987), pp.977-87.

caution was based on the belief that the region was a vital and permanent element for Soviet security.

Those who believed that reform was possible in Eastern Europe still remained cautious in their assessments. Charles Gati, for example, pointed out that Gorbachev had been the Soviet leader for only a few years with an uncertain future; the socialist elites, however, had held power for an average of twenty-four years.⁸⁸

There were several factors which influenced Western skepticism about the extent of reform and the disavowal of the Soviet interventionist doctrine. There was doctrinal ambiguity in the statements made by the CPSU and the state leaderships. There was also an apparent lack of real change in the Red Army's doctrine. Doubts also existed as to whether Moscow would observe the principles which its leaders had enunciated. Uncertainty also existed in Western minds that Gorbachev's concepts of a "defensive doctrine" and a "common European home" may have been designed for propagandistic purposes.

The goal of Soviet promises may have been to undermine NATO or to obtain Western aid and technology. In addition, there was a widespread

⁸⁸ Charles Gati, "Gorbachev and Eastern Europe," Foreign Affairs (Summer 1987), pp.959-60.

sense that Gorbachev was a new and relatively insecure leader, who had been in office for a far shorter time than his East European counterparts, and who may not outlast them. Moreover, he faced resistance from the conservatives within the CPSU. Finally, Gorbachev, by not completely renouncing the "Brezhnev Doctrine", kept an element of uncertainty in East European minds.

Of all the socialist countries, Gorbachev was most sympathetic to the two reformist states of Poland and Hungary. Unlike Brezhnev, the Gorbachev leadership viewed Poland's terminal case of unrest as genuine national protests against an imposed model of socialism.⁸⁹ Gorbachev appeared to appreciate Jaruzelski's skill in "resolving" the Solidarity crisis. He also approved of the need to improve relations by, for example, addressing the "blank spots" in Soviet-Polish history. In May 1987 a commission was formed between the two states to clarify, for instance, the questions regarding Katyn.

While Hungary was viewed as a laboratory for Soviet economic perestroika, Kadar's leadership impeded the adoption of other necessary reforms. His replacement by Karoly Grosz in May 1988 was

89 See Shevardnadze, "Ubezhdai' pravdoi," *Ogonek*, 11 March 1990, p.4; in A. Pravda, "Soviet Policy," op. cit., p.18.

engineered within the Hungarian Party, an act indicative of the changing times. Moreover, the Soviet Union refrained from intervening in the Hungarian debate reassessing the events of 1956. In January 1989 a Hungarian Communist Party subcommittee declared that the country's 1956 rebellion was a "popular uprising" rather than the accepted line of "counterrevolution".⁹⁰

The conservative East European regimes presented Moscow with the greatest challenge, as their chief concern was stability rather than viability. They feared that any amount of reform threatened their positions. Moreover, they were so distanced from their populations that they did not recognize that in order to retain power, they had to submit to peoples' demands for reform. Shevardnadze later complained that these elites were "cut from old cloth" and proved unwilling and incapable of change.⁹¹

Gorbachev's plans were further complicated by the close links between the East European conservative elites and Soviet hard-liners. This may have led to Gorbachev being more reluctant and cautious in pressing the conservatives: if their hold on power was as tenuous as believed, then such pressure could

⁹⁰ See the Washington Post, 29 January 1989.

⁹¹ Shevardnadze, Pravda, 8 February 1990.

have de-stabilized their regimes. Indeed, the conservative elites used their regimes' "fragility" as protection against pressure for change.

Romania remained defiant because of its past record of nationalist independence, as well as its being considered outside the "core" area of Soviet influence. The GDR's Honecker was arrogant, arguing that his road to socialism was correct and did not need perestroika. Shevardnadze later recalled that the East German leaders "doggedly adhered to their viewpoint: 'We have built socialism, we do not need any amendments, we are proceeding along the right path'".⁹²

Bulgaria reassured Gorbachev that it was initiating perestroika, but the limited reforms that were introduced brought confusion rather than improvements. Czechoslovakia took a particularly grim view of perestroika: its leaders were more vulnerable than those in other bloc countries because of their role in ending "socialism with a human face". Any reassessment of the Prague Spring or the "Brezhnev Doctrine" threatened to undermine the regime. Gorbachev appeared conscious of their concern, and did not address this issue until the new Prague government was formed in late 1989.

⁹² See Shevardnadze, *Izvestiia*, 20 February 1990; quoted in A. Pravda, "Soviet Policy," op. cit., p.21.

Phase III: "crisis management" and the "demise" of the "Brezhnev Doctrine"

The third and final phase, lasting approximately from the spring of 1989 until the end of that year, was one of Soviet "crisis management" in Eastern Europe. Soviet policy was increasingly driven by events in the region, rather than by any long-term strategy. Whether Gorbachev anticipated the consequences of his policies is unknown, but it is highly unlikely that he foresaw the dissolution of the bloc, and with such speed. As Gati notes, while Gorbachev may have expected his policies to prompt reform of the region's orthodox communist regimes, he could not have foreseen revolutions against communism itself.⁹³

There were a number of catalysts which indirectly or directly laid the groundwork for the collapse of the East European regimes. Within the Soviet Union, the election of a Congress of People's Deputies in March 1989, growing public debate, and political pluralism enabled more radical developments within

⁹³ Gati, Bloc, op. cit., pp.163-64.

Eastern Europe to be viewed as acceptable. The increase in ethnic and social unrest within the boundaries of the USSR made avoiding instability in Eastern Europe all the more necessary. At the same time, the international reaction to the Tienanmen Square massacre indicated that the use of force would raise a high degree of criticism.

Another important development was the decline in the role of ideology in Soviet society.⁹⁴ Concepts which had previously been viewed as anathema to orthodox Marxism-Leninism - such as private property, a free press, market competition, a multi-party system - were being considered as serious alternatives to the traditional Soviet system. As a result of glasnost, the ideology which was intended to guide every aspect of life no longer served the Communist Party. According to Alfred B. Evans, within a few years a whole series of doctrines - which for generations had been regarded in the USSR as articles of faith - were "left in shambles".⁹⁵

94 For an examination of this topic, see for instance Terry L. Thompson, Ideology and Policy: The Political Uses of Doctrine in the Soviet Union (Boulder: Westview, 1989).

95 Alfred B. Evans, Jr., "The Crisis of Marxism-Leninism," in White, et. al., Developments in Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics, op. cit., pp.22-42. at p.41. Evans noted, however, that the credibility of ideology was already in decline before Gorbachev came to power; his policies of socialist renewal were not, however, able to overcome its deficiencies.

Because Gorbachev attempted to preserve an ideological system without an ideology, the Soviet Union began an inevitable decline.⁹⁶ This undermining of the role of ideology impacted on the Soviet republics, where the populations, increasingly conscious of their own national identities shunned "proletarian internationalism".⁹⁷ The explanation, for instance, that the Baltic States had joined the Soviet Union voluntarily was incompatible with the publication of the secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

Another catalyst for the rapid pace of developments was, according to Gati, the result of Gorbachev's unilateral military reductions announced during his December 1988 UN speech.⁹⁸ Moscow's withdrawal of some of its forces from Eastern Europe - independent of any corresponding measures by NATO - not only appeared to suggest a fading military commitment, but also relayed an important political message: that the Soviet Union was no longer willing to protect unpopular regimes from their own people. While the "gang of four" - Romania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany - chose to maintain

96 See The Wall Street Journal, 20 September 1991.

97 See, for example, Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Will the Soviet Empire Self-Destruct?" New York Times Magazine, 26 February 1989, pp.38-41.

98 Gati, Bloc, op. cit., pp.161-64.

repressive one-party rule, the Polish and Hungarian parties interpreted the Soviet message to mean that they, like Gorbachev, should reassess the past, blame current problems on their predecessors, and move toward the adoption of reform.⁹⁹

In the end, the countries of Eastern Europe experienced rapid revolutions rather than gradual reform. The reasons for this type of change were numerous: because the old regimes had delayed in making the necessary concessions; because Moscow and its regimes in Eastern Europe had seriously underestimated the populations' resentment toward the Soviet-imposed system; and, because the Soviet leadership failed to see that the bloc countries would interpret Soviet military retrenchment as a political retreat. Once the dissolution process seemed inevitable (and, indeed, had begun), Gorbachev - by doing nothing to prevent the defections - essentially surrendered Soviet control. The East European revolutions of Autumn 1989, and the Soviet inaction in response to those events, therefore, were the final death blows to the Soviet

99 In Poland the PUWP leadership was aware that Soviet help was not forthcoming in the resolution of the country's problems. In the "Rakowski" memorandum, the Polish premier urged his colleagues not to assume that the Soviet Union would rescue the Polish regime if it were to lose control; see "Secret Referat," op. cit.

interventionist doctrine.

During this phase there was an increase - in both number and intensity - of statements about non-intervention. Soviet commentators explicitly denounced previous interventions as examples of "imperialist thinking", and proclaimed the "Brezhnev Doctrine" as "dead".¹⁰⁰ Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Varkony, for instance, told a London audience in March 1989 that he regarded the "Brezhnev Doctrine" as "dead".¹⁰¹ Throughout the summer and autumn of 1989, official statements conveyed the same message about the renunciation of the use of force.¹⁰²

The swiftness of the reform process not only forced the Soviet leadership to react to events, but raised concern regarding the unity of the socialist bloc. In his speeches to Kiev workers during February 1989, for example, Gorbachev warned that the reform process must not be counterproductive or

100 Criticisms first appeared in foreign media and later in Soviet publications. See Evgenii Ambartsumov, for instance, in La Repubblica, 13-14 August 1989.

101 See RFE/RL Daily Report, No.54 (20 March 1989).

102 See, for example, an article by Andranik Migranyan - then senior scientific associate at the IEWSS - entitled "For Discussion: An Epitaph to the Brezhnev Doctrine: The USSR and Other Socialist Countries in the context of East-West Relations," published in Moscow News, No.34 (27 August - 3 September 1989), p.6; in FBIS-SOV-89-181, 20 September 1989, pp.20-22.

threaten the stability of Eastern Europe.¹⁰³ While Gorbachev acknowledged the sovereign right of each people to choose their social system, he reiterated his conviction that the countries of Eastern Europe would remain "socialist". He also warned the West that any attempt to roll back Europe's ideological frontier could lead to confrontation.

Speaking at the Warsaw Pact summit held in Bucharest in the summer of 1989, Gorbachev again reiterated the main points of what could be called the "Gorbachev doctrine": there was no model for the building of socialism; each communist party had to pursue its own strategy in line with its national conditions; socialist pluralism was acceptable; and each communist party enjoyed total independence in its internal affairs. The model for the socialist community was "unity in diversity": a more pluralistic socialist alliance in which each country was free to pursue policies in accordance with national conditions, while learning from the experience of its fraternal neighbors.¹⁰⁴ He also affirmed the

103 Kiev speech in Krasnaya Zvezda, 24 February 1989; in FBIS-SOV, 24 February 1989, pp.67-68. Gorbachev's comments were particularly significant in light of events occurring in Poland at the time.

104 Tass, 7 July 1989.

inadmissibility of direct or indirect interference in the internal affairs of other states. No country should dictate the course of events inside another country or claim the role of judge or arbiter.

Addressing the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly in Strasbourg in July, Gorbachev again implicitly renounced the use of force. "Any interference in domestic affairs and any attempts to restrict the sovereignty of states - friends, allies or any others - are inadmissible." Moreover, while sketching his visions of a "common European home" stretching from the Atlantic to the Urals, Gorbachev ruled out "the very possibility of the use of force or threat of force, alliance against alliance, inside the alliances, wherever." But the Soviet leader also warned against efforts to overcome the division of Europe by "the overcoming of socialism", saying that this was "a course toward confrontation, if not worse."¹⁰⁵

Even hard-liners within the CPSU elite, such as Ligachev, denied that the Soviet leadership would think about intervening by force in Eastern Europe:

Gorbachev himself has announced more than once

¹⁰⁵ Soviet television, 6 July 1989; in FBIS-SOV, No.129 (1989), p.29.

that one must not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries and that one must believe that the people themselves and their party can resolve the problems, and that everybody decides freely on the path of developments. Therefore I support this policy in its complete entirety ... There is no need for anxiety whatsoever. It is out of the question that we are preparing for intervention because, after all, we ourselves have enough problems ...¹⁰⁶

During Gorbachev's visit to Finland on 25 October, the Soviet leader again declared that Moscow had no moral or political right to interfere in the affairs of its East European neighbors:

The events that are now taking place in the countries of Eastern Europe concern the countries and people of that region. We have no right, moral or political right, to interfere in events happening there. We assume others will not interfere either.¹⁰⁷

Gennadi Gerasimov, Gorbachev's press spokesman, added to the Soviet leader's comments by stating that Moscow had adopted "the Sinatra doctrine" in Eastern Europe: "You know the Frank Sinatra song, 'I Did It My Way'? Hungary and Poland are doing it their way." He also said that the "Brezhnev

¹⁰⁶ See Ligachev's interview with the Hungarian program "Panorama" of 13 July 1989; in RFE/RL Daily Report, 14 July 1989.

¹⁰⁷ The New York Times, 26 October 1989.

Doctrine" was "dead". Gerasimov's comments appeared to suggest that each East European country was free to carry out political and social changes "their way" without influence from the USSR. The timing of these statements of "noninterference" was significant in light of developments in the region: Hungary at that time was joining Poland in a retreat from orthodox communist rule, and there were increasing demands within the GDR for political liberty.¹⁰⁸

During this phase there was also an increase in pressure from Soviet commentators on the Gorbachev leadership to officially denounce the "Brezhnev Doctrine". For instance, in September 1989 Izvestiia published readers' letters attacking the Soviet-led invasion, including one from Jiri Hajek, the former Czechoslovak foreign minister.¹⁰⁹ On 14 October it published another article in which a leading Soviet scholar stated that "the time has

¹⁰⁸ This was not the first time that Gerasimov had used the "Sinatra" doctrine analogy. On the eve of Gorbachev's visit to Bonn in June 1989, Gerasimov declared that Moscow had supplanted the "Brezhnev Doctrine" with "the Frank Sinatra doctrine"; see the New York Times, 13 June 1989.

One observer, Ralf Dahrendorf, noted that the "Sinatra" analogy had an ironic twist: "Sinatra's song was actually a sad little piece about an old man's 'final curtain' when 'the end is near'." See Dahrendorf, Reflections on the Revolution in Europe (New York: Random House, 1990), p.16.

¹⁰⁹ See the Washington Post, 16 September 1989.

come publicly and clearly to admit our responsibility for the 'Brezhnev Doctrine'". The author, Viktor Sheinis, warned that until Moscow took such action, the rest of the world would not believe that "new political thinking" had taken root in Soviet foreign policy. Nor, he added, would it be possible to cure Soviet society of its present "comprehensive economic, social, ideological, and moral crisis."¹¹⁰

Another Soviet commentator, Andranik Migranyan, stated:

The Brezhnev doctrine is dead. The central idea of this doctrine was the unique nature of the Soviet model of socialism. No deviations from the model were allowed. But we ourselves are now changing the model - and others are changing it at an even faster rate.¹¹¹

In November 1989 at a session of the Supreme Soviet, several Soviet deputies put forward a proposal condemning the invasion.¹¹² In addition, Andrei Grachev of the CPSU CC International Department stated on French radio that the suppression of the Prague Spring was a "mistake worse than a crime" and should be condemned by the

¹¹⁰ See RFE/RL Daily Report, No.201 (20 October 1989).

¹¹¹ See the Washington Post, 10 November 1989.

¹¹² See RFE/RL Daily Report, No.226 (29 November 1989).

USSR Supreme Soviet.¹¹³

The final and formal renunciation of the Soviet interventionist doctrine occurred in December 1989. Although the doctrine was not condemned officially by name (largely because the Soviet leadership had never officially acknowledged that it had existed), the repudiation of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 was synonymous. The revamped Presidium of the Czechoslovak Communist Party declared on 1 December that the invasion that ended the Prague Spring was wrong: "We are of the opinion that the entry onto our territory of five armies of the Warsaw Pact in 1968 was not justified, and the decision to do so was wrong."¹¹⁴ In a communiqué of 4 December 1989 the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies jointly condemned the invasion. The Soviet Union also issued a separate declaration, its first official admission that the invasion was a mistake:

In 1968, the Soviet leadership of that time supported the stand of one side in an internal dispute regarding objective pressing tasks. The justification for such an unbalanced, inadequate approach, an interference in the affairs of a friendly country, was then seen in an acute East-West confrontation. We share the view of the Presidium of the Central

113 Ibid.

114 See the text of the statement in the New York Times, 2 December 1989.

Committee of Czechoslovakia and the Czechoslovak Government that the bringing of armies into Czechoslovak territory in 1968 was unfounded, and that that decision, in the light of all the presently known facts, was erroneous.¹¹⁵

Gorbachev gave his own epitaph to the Soviet interventionist doctrine in a speech in December 1989, in which he described "the major changes in Eastern Europe". He noted that "the truth, about which we spoke so often in the past few years, has been reaffirmed once again: Where there is a delay in dealing with overripe problems, excesses are inevitable." Gorbachev confirmed that "any nation has the right to decide its fate itself, including the choice of a system, ways, the pace and methods of its development ..."¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Tass, 4 December 1989; in the New York Times, 5 December 1989. The Soviet Union waited so long to officially denounce the doctrine because it did not want to undermine the Jakes regime in Czechoslovakia, as well as whatever vestiges of socialism remained in Eastern Europe. Once that government fell, however, Moscow gave an official statement.

Comments made by one Soviet academician in late summer 1989 appear to confirm this explanation: "That doctrine has already been buried. All that is lacking is the official death certificate ... The acts clearly show that Gorbachev is against the logic, method, and the system that led to the tragic events of 1968 ... In practical terms Gorbachev cannot today allow himself to adopt a position that would then be rejected by the political leadership of an allied country. This is an objective condition and it is the reason why one cannot ask of Gorbachev more than he can and must do". See Ambartsumov, La Repubblica, 13-14 August 1989.

¹¹⁶ Speech by Gorbachev to the Soviet Communist Party

How and when the final chapters occurred in the collapse of the East European regimes depended to a certain degree on both Soviet behind-the-scenes policy.¹¹⁷ Poland became the first East European country to move towards non-Communist government when on 4 June 1989 Solidarity candidates overwhelmingly beat the Communist candidates in elections for the Sejm. On 24 August the National Assembly elected as prime minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki of Solidarity. His proposals for a new coalition Council of Ministers dominated by Solidarity was endorsed on 12 September. Gorbachev played a crucial role in persuading Rakowski to agree to power-sharing arrangement in which the Communists settled for retaining four key posts, including defense and security.¹¹⁸

Central Committee; see the New York Times, 11 December 1989.

The final episode was the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact in July 1991. The five East European presidents and the Soviet vice-president signed a protocol on 1 July in Prague formally dissolving the political and military alliance; see RFE/RL Daily Report, No.124 (2 July 1991). See also Douglas L. Clarke, "The Warsaw Pact's Finale," RFE/RL Report on Eastern Europe, Vol.2, No.29 (19 July 1991), pp.39-42.

117 For an examination of the sequence of events in specific countries, see Brown, Surge, op. cit..

118 According to Jan Bisztyga, the PUWP Central Committee spokesman, Gorbachev had a forty-minute telephone conversation with Rakowski in which he urged a PUWP compromise; see the minutes from the 22 August 1989 news conference in FBIS-EEU-89-162 (23 August 1989), pp.40-41. For the Polish elites' reactions to the events of 1988-1989, see the Polish Politburo and Central Committee Secretariat

During the 1980s Solidarity had demonstrated its skill in restraining or unleashing its followers during deliberations with the PUWP. There were, at the same time, evolutionary changes within the Polish Party and Government organs, which had recognized the fact that the Communist system was morally and politically bankrupt. Proposals for political pluralism - originally articulated by Solidarity - were adopted by the PUWP on 17-18 January 1989, providing the necessary basis for the elections in June and the formation of a mainly non-Communist government in the autumn of 1989.

The changes in Hungary were characterized by an early and gradual evolution of ideas within the Party and population. The evolution was strongly influenced by the memories of the 1956 Rebellion, as well as the need for economic reform. By 1988 political and economic pluralism became increasingly identified as a Hungarian goal.

In July 1988 Prime Minister Karoly Grosz said he could "envisage any sort of system" in Hungary, including a multi-party system.¹¹⁹ On 13 November a coalition of opposition groups called for democratic elections.¹²⁰ On 11 January 1989 the Hungarian

minutes in Tajne dokumenty Biura Politycznego i Sekretariatu KC: Ostatni rok wladzy 1988-1989 (London: Aneks, 1994).

119 The New York Times, 28 July 1988.

120 The Times (London), 14 November 1988.

parliament passed a law enabling citizens to establish independent associations. In June various new political parties were established. Imre Pozsgay - the reformist leader of the HSWP - stated on 21 June that the Party accepted the principle of a democratic electoral political system based on free elections and contested by rival political parties. According to Miklos Nemeth - a member of the reformist wing of the HSWP - Gorbachev had accepted the Hungarian Party's explanation in February 1989 that it had decided to abandon its leading role, to initiate a multi-party system, and hold competitive elections in 1990.¹²¹ A compromise agreement on 18 September between the Party and the opposition organizations provided for new presidential elections, a new constitution, and new electoral laws.

A very important Hungarian development was the opening in May 1989 of the country's border with Austria. This decision enabled East German refugees to escape from their country via Hungary. It also questioned the permanence of the Iron Curtain in other East European countries.¹²²

¹²¹ See Nemeth's account of his 2-3 March discussions with Gorbachev in Moscow, MTI Budapest, 3 March 1989; in FBIS-SOV, No.42 (1989), pp.31-32.

¹²² The Hungarian decision was undertaken by Budapest, but only after close consultations with Moscow; see the

The radical changes in the "reformist" countries of the bloc had a profound impact on the conservative regimes in the GDR and Czechoslovakia. In East Germany, throughout the summer of 1989, there was mass emigration and demonstrations of various kinds. The flood of refugees had forced many close to the regime to rethink key policies. In October and early November huge protests in East Berlin, Leipzig, and other cities offered further proof that the regime was losing its control over the population.

Honecker was reprimanded by Gorbachev during the Soviet leader's visit in October 1989.¹²³ In a speech in East Berlin on 6 October Gorbachev had stressed that "matters affecting the GDR are decided not in Moscow but in Berlin." He purportedly urged the East German Politburo to replace Honecker, which occurred shortly after his visit.¹²⁴ In addition, Moscow encouraged Egon Krenz, then second in command in East Germany, to countermand Honecker's orders to shoot at protesters during demonstrations in Leipzig on 8 October.¹²⁵ On 18 October Honecker resigned

Washington Post, 17 September 1989.

123 For an account of Gorbachev's role in the undermining of the GDR, see Jeffrey Gedmin, The Hidden Hand: Gorbachev and the Collapse of East Germany (Washington: AEI, 1992).

124 See the International Herald Tribune, 13 November 1989.

125 See S. Kondrashov, Izvestiia, 30 April 1990; cited in Adam Roberts, "Civil Resistance in the East European and

and was succeeded by Krenz.

Honecker, later in an interview with The European, blamed the Soviet leadership for "intriguing" to bring about the collapse of the governments in Eastern Europe. Although he mentioned neither the Soviet Union nor Gorbachev, he said "The intrigues that were aimed at destroying our party are already pretty transparent, and they have done a lot of harm. It was the same scenario in all the formerly socialist countries."¹²⁶ Under the leadership of the opposition movement - New Forum - demonstrations continued while the refugee wave swelled. Both the Government and the Politburo resigned. On 9 November travel restrictions were lifted, thereby opening the Berlin Wall.

The "velvet revolution" in Czechoslovakia in November-December 1989 occurred with remarkable speed. On 17 November - the anniversary of a Nazi assault on Czechoslovak students - police attacked demonstrators in Prague. On 19 November Civic Forum was formed from various Czechoslovak opposition groups. Mass demonstrations and strikes followed,

Soviet Revolutions of 1989-91," in Odd Arne Westad, Sven Holtsmark and Iver B. Neumann (eds), The Soviet Union in Eastern Europe, 1945-1989 (London: Macmillan, 1994), p.186. Honecker's order - National Defense Council order number 9/89 - was published in the German press on 13 May 1991; see RFE/RL Daily Report, No.90 (13 May 1991).

¹²⁶ See The European, 2 November 1990.

On 3 December President Husak swore in a new Federal Government and announced his resignation on 9 December. On 29 December Vaclav Havel was elected president, becoming the first non-Communist head of state since 1948.

The Warsaw Pact states had waited until the day after the new Prague government had condemned the invasion before they formally declared the 1968 action a "mistake". By this time Poland, Hungary, and the GDR had already officially criticized the invasion.¹²⁷ In addition, the Soviet Union had been warning the Czechoslovak elites in November that further delay in introducing political change could have serious repercussions.¹²⁸ Excessive caution or half-heartedness in putting political changes into effect, Moscow reportedly said, could lead to an uprising such as the one in East Germany.¹²⁹

In Bulgaria Zhivkov - the First Secretary of the Communist Party - was ousted on 10 November 1989. His successor - Foreign Minister Petar Mladenov - had allegedly met with the Soviet leadership in Moscow in late October, and secured its backing. Added pressure came from a pro-democracy demonstration by 4000 people on 3 November.

127 See RFE/RL Daily Report, No.228 (1 December 1989).

128 See the Los Angeles Times, 25 November 1989.

129 See the New York Times, 16 November 1989.

Although popular participation was more limited than in other East European countries, the timing and direction of change was decisively influenced by events in other socialist countries.

The December 1989 revolution in Romania was apparently triggered by the peaceful protest at Timosoara on 19 December against the Government's efforts to exile an ethnic Hungarian Protestant pastor. The protest was eventually suppressed. Two days later protesters in Bucharest chanted "Down with Ceausescu", which led the dictator to flee in panic. The killing of the Ceausescus on 25 December was the only occasion in the East European revolutions when former leaders were summarily tried and executed.

Romania had earlier tried to invoke the "Brezhnev Doctrine" against Poland. On 19 August 1989 the Romanian Foreign Ministry issued a statement expressing concern over Polish developments; that a Solidarity-led government served "the most reactionary imperialist circles, and was a matter of concern for all socialist countries." The document warned that the Romanians would seek unspecified Warsaw Pact action to "defend socialism and the Polish nation".¹³⁰ The Polish prime minister

¹³⁰ See Gazeta Wyborcza, 29 September 1989.

Mazowiecki stated in 1991 that Poland had indeed faced a "Nicolae Ceausescu calling on the Warsaw Pact members to mount armed intervention against Poland."¹³¹

IV. The "Loss" of Eastern Europe

Following the events of the Autumn 1989, there was much debate within the Soviet Union regarding who to blame for the "loss" of Soviet control over Eastern Europe.¹³² At the Central Committee Plenum in February 1990, for example, Gorbachev and his advisers - particularly Yakovlev and Shevardnadze - were blamed for contributing to the "loss" of the socialist bloc. They were accused of creating the conditions which enabled the "liberation" of the region. The Soviet ambassador to Warsaw, Brovikov, questioned how the unraveling of the socialist bloc could have been depicted as a success for perestroika and new thinking in foreign policy. Ligachev complained that the destruction of the socialist commonwealth had led to the strengthening

¹³¹ See RFE/RL Daily Report, No.201 (22 October 1991).

¹³² For a description of the debate, see Suzanne Crow, "Who Lost Eastern Europe?" RFE/RL Report on the USSR (15 November 1991).

of imperialism. He linked Gorbachev's policies with the exposure of the GDR to absorption into a reunited and revisionist Germany.¹³³

In a 13 March commentary in Pravda Valerii Musatov wrote that "our policy in Eastern Europe - not without basis - is seen as passive. The exit of the Soviet Union from our earlier 'community', without taking into account our enormous material and spiritual investments, is perceived as having no rational explanation." He added, "the turn of events in Eastern Europe had a powerful negative influence on the broadest layers of Soviet society."¹³⁴

Indeed, those who accused the Gorbachev leadership of "losing" Eastern Europe feared what the repercussions would be on the Soviet Union. Roy Medvedev, for example, argued that unless the Communists continued to open democratic channels for the "public's discontent", the Soviet Union would go the way of Eastern Europe:

During the decades of distortions and stagnation, such a critical mass of explosive material has accumulated that further delay

133 See Pravda, 7 February 1990; and Julia Wishnevsky and Elizabeth Teague, "Ligachev Attacks Gorbachev Over Eastern Europe," Radio Liberty Report (21 June 1990).

134 Pravda, 13 March 1991; see RFE/RL Daily Report, No. 52 (14 March 1991).

could have resulted in a shock of enormous strength. Today we can see this clearly in the example of the countries of Eastern Europe.¹³⁵

He added that in order to "prevent a catastrophe" in the Soviet Union it was necessary "to transform the impending explosion into a controlled reaction."

Gorbachev and his advisers argued, on the other hand, that the type of socialism which existed in the East bloc countries had failed because of its own deficiencies. Shevardnadze described previous Soviet behavior towards the Warsaw Pact countries as "violence to history, democracy, traditions, [these peoples'] way of life, and to common sense."¹³⁶ Izvestiia commentator Aleksandr Bovin attacked those who blamed the loss of Eastern Europe on diplomatic bungling:

The issue is not that we signed a certain wrong agreement. The fact that we were unable to create a truly developed civilized society that would be on the same level as today's world in terms of economy and democracy - this is the reason for everything that has taken place in Europe ...¹³⁷

135 See the New York Times, 7 February 1990.

136 Interview with Shevardnadze in Ogonyok, No.11 (March 1990); in RFE/RL Daily Report, No.58 (22 March 1990).

137 Aleksandr Bovin on "The World This Week" program of 24 March 1991; see RFE/RL Daily Report, No.62 (28 March 1991).

The reformists argued that the end of the false Stalinist model had helped usher in more democratic and genuine socialism. Shevardnadze defended himself by saying that there was no alternative:

What could we have done ...? Nobody is making any suggestions. Send in the troops, tanks, artillery? Of course, you can start shooting ... and whatever else you like, but then we would have to cancel out everything to do with 'perestroika' and democratization.¹³⁸

Countries of genuine democratic socialist pedigree, it was argued, were far more reliable Soviet allies than those of "distorted" socialism. Even when elections throughout the region undermined socialist control, relations based on shared political, military and economic interests were seen as a better basis for security than ones promoted by doctrinal solidarity.¹³⁹

138 Interview with Radio Moscow, 21 April 1990; in FBIS-SOV, No.78 (1990), p.7. Shevardnadze likened the conservative party critics of his East European policy to zealots of the McCarthy period in US history; see Pravda, 26 June 1990; in RFE/RL Daily Report, No.121 (27 June 1990).

139 See V. Zhurkin, Izvestiia, 27 May 1990; in A. Pravda, "Soviet Policy," op. cit., pp.29-30. See also the New York Times, 14 November 1989.

V. Conclusion

Gorbachev's domestic perestroika and "new thinking" in international affairs profoundly affected the socialist regimes of Eastern Europe, as well as the validity of the Soviet interventionist doctrine.

By the time Gorbachev acceded to the Soviet leadership the doctrine had already been weakened by various factors, including the Eurocommunist threat, the lack of legitimacy of the East European regimes, the Afghanistan imbroglio, and the inability to "normalize" Poland. These problems were compounded by the overall Soviet domestic crisis and Moscow's symptoms of "imperial overstretch". Domestic concerns became the Kremlin's priority: Gorbachev appeared willing to be surrounded by friendly, diverse socialist regimes that were politically and economically viable, than ones which continued to be militarily unreliable, a financial drain, and a political burden with chronic cases of unrest.

The East European elites interpreted Moscow's domestic focus as a sign that their troubles no longer were of primary concern to the Kremlin. For the reformist regimes - Poland and Hungary - the

freedom of maneuver was welcomed, although they underestimated their populations' resentment, and the speed with which the whole socialist apparatus would fall. For the conservative regimes - Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Romania - the removal of the Soviet military guarantee to prop up their regimes made them fear any type of reform; consequently the collapse of socialism in their countries occurred rapidly. Although Gorbachev did not officially renounce the doctrine until December 1989, its value and credibility to both Moscow and Eastern Europe had ended soon after Gorbachev's accession to power.

There were, therefore, a number of key factors which led to the demise of the doctrine. First, the Soviet Union under Gorbachev focused its attention on restructuring domestic policy, and paid less attention to its external relations, such as how Soviet perestroika would impact on Eastern Europe. Second, the debate within the Soviet Union - following the 1980/81 Polish crisis - on the contradictions of socialism, specifically what was considered "socialism", led to a redefinition and, ultimately, the decline of the role of ideology within Soviet domestic and foreign policy. This, in turn, raised several pertinent questions regarding the Soviet interventionist doctrine: for instance,

how could socialism be defended if there was no particular definition of socialism; what criteria determined its use; and how could the doctrine be applied if the Soviet Union no longer had the means or apparent desire to enforce it?

Third, although Moscow was willing to initiate reformed relations with the bloc, it underestimated the degree of popular dissatisfaction with socialism. The Soviet Union also did not foresee the speed with which the regimes collapsed. In the end, Gorbachev was forced by events to go further in renouncing the Soviet interventionist doctrine than he would otherwise have done. He faced six revolutions all occurring within five months of each other. The Soviet leader had envisioned a region of reformed socialism, not one of overthrown socialism. Moreover, Gorbachev may have preferred to avoid a formal denunciation to leave at least a degree of uncertainty in East European minds, as well as not having to admit officially that past Soviet policy had made mistakes.

Finally, there was a change in the traditional Stalinist connection between security and ideology. In Gorbachev's "new thinking" the value of the region lay in economic and political rather than military terms. The role of ideology decreased, while the regimes faced increasing pressure from

their populations for reform.

Under Gorbachev the Soviet interventionist doctrine served only a few functions. It clarified (up to 1989) the ground rules of behavior, such as separate roads to socialism, but still with the eventual goal of socialism. The doctrine also tried to limit behavior: for example, Gorbachev's statements regarding diversity in Eastern Europe were qualified with those reinforcing overall unity. Moreover, under Gorbachev the reliance of the conservative regimes on the doctrine - including its function as a threat, a mobilizer of bloc support, and military force - was also apparent. Once it became obvious that Moscow was no longer interested or capable of a military response, these regimes crumbled. In this way the "Brezhnev Doctrine" had also served as a guarantor of regime stability.

There was also some reasonable grounds for skepticism about Soviet claims that the "Brezhnev Doctrine" was being abandoned. Gorbachev had been in power for a relatively short period of time, and faced opposition from conservative elements within the Kremlin as well as from certain East European regimes. Gorbachev's "new thinking" toward relations with the West raised questions as to whether his concepts were genuine proposals or designed mainly for Western consumption. Moreover,

there was uncertainty as to whether in an East European crisis Moscow would not revert to old habits, namely military intervention.

While the Soviet Union (under Gorbachev) still wanted to prevent other great powers from establishing dominance in Eastern Europe, it no longer sought to control its sphere of influence in the same domineering manner as in the past. Like France and the United States, the Kremlin found that its dominance over its area was declining and taking on a different character. What Moscow did not expect was the total collapse of its sponsored socialist regimes.

While its traditional ties with Eastern Europe may have loosened due to the revolutions of 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia like other great powers will continue to have an interest in the region, and will be hesitant about participation by other great powers in the area.¹⁴⁰ Even if the Soviet interventionist doctrine no longer exists, Russia remains a state without natural frontiers, which was an empire before it was a state, and which may develop new interventionist doctrines in the new circumstances in which it finds itself. Like France

140 Although outside the scope of this thesis, mention can be made of the criticism made by Russia regarding the desire of the former socialist East European countries to join NATO.

and the US, Moscow by the late 1980s was constrained in certain ways - by its domestic economic, political, and military problems - in its behavior towards Eastern Europe. This, in turn, undermined the East European political elites and the Soviet interventionist doctrine.

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION

It has been argued throughout this thesis that the Soviet interventionist doctrine was not a quickly engineered justification for the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, but a newer version of a previous doctrine. It has been shown, through the examination of the Polish, Hungarian, and Czechoslovak crises, how Soviet doctrine preceded action, not action doctrine as had been assumed by many Western observers. In this final chapter I will attempt to answer some of the questions raised at the beginning of the thesis concerning the doctrine.

I. Origins and Evolution

What were the origins of the doctrine and how did its meaning or characteristics evolve or change from 1945 to 1989?

The Soviet interventionist doctrine was a

doctrine - a set of beliefs or body of principles - which was consistent with Soviet ideological prescriptions, and which guided and legitimized Moscow's policies. It had some similarities with Russian interventionist thinking in the pre-1917 period.

The doctrine contained certain ideological elements which gave it its own specific character. These included: the primacy of the doctrine of democratic centralism and the right of the Soviet Union to defend it if necessary, including the use of force; the common interests of all socialist states manifested in the idea of a socialist commonwealth, with proletarian internationalism dictating the importance of the supreme good; the obligation of the socialist states to the Soviet Union for the "blood shed" during liberation; and, the gains of socialism were irreversible.

Under successive Soviet leaders, the doctrine was associated with certain policies and practices, namely: visits by official Soviet delegations; "invitations" to Moscow; consultations among socialist allies; unofficial visits by Soviet "messengers"; letters of warning from Warsaw Pact members; military maneuvers; publication of articles (under pseudonyms) and declarations warning against deviation; and, of course, direct military

intervention.

The theoretical underpinning of the doctrine was Lenin's notion of proletarian internationalism. With the establishment of a group of socialist states after the Second World War, this concept was adapted by Stalin to "socialist internationalism". After Stalin's death, Khrushchev attempted to establish a more viable and cohesive alternative for Soviet-East European relations in the form of a "socialist commonwealth". Brezhnev's concept of a "socialist community", in turn, sought to increase overall unity while permitting greater domestic autonomy. For both Khrushchev and Brezhnev, however, these concepts ultimately failed to prevent crises which necessitated Soviet military intervention. Under Gorbachev the theories of "unity in diversity" and "equality in relations" between socialist states replaced "proletarian internationalism" as the basis of Soviet-bloc relations.

The historical origins of the Soviet interventionist doctrine were rooted in Soviet security concerns and the Stalinist model of socialism. Eastern Europe was considered a vital region for Soviet influence, particularly as it had historically served as an invasion route by the West. For both Russia in the 19th century and the

Soviet Union under Stalin, the importance of the area for the "motherland's" security was considered incontestable. Therefore, Soviet domination or control over Eastern Europe was seen as both protection and guarantee of Moscow's borders. In addition, from the very start of the Bolshevik regime in 1917, there were deep elements of ambiguity in the Soviet attitude toward international law; and these provided an essential part of the historical background of the Soviet interventionist doctrine.

The Soviet interventionist doctrine evolved in a number of stages. The first phase (1917-1939) was marked by Lenin's promotion of "proletarian internationalism" as a new kind of great power motto, as well as the important precedent of the Soviet-Polish War of 1920, and Soviet intervention in the Baltic States, Poland, and Finland in 1939-40, for future Soviet intervention in the name of "international brotherhood".

In the second phase (1945-1953) Stalin oversaw the creation of a socialist bloc, the imposition of Soviet-style socialism, and the promotion of the Soviet Union as the only legitimate ideological model. Satellite compliance was maintained through terror and the threat of military force.

The third stage (1953-1956) was marked by a sense

of uncertainty within the bloc resulting from the death of Stalin. The East German Uprising was quelled by Soviet forces. Statements made by Moscow indicated the importance of fraternal "solidarity". Although the comments issued at the time did not add up to a formal doctrine, they appeared to suggest that Moscow was ready to use ideological terms and expressions to justify military intervention. With the process of de-Stalinization - culminating in the revelations of Khrushchev's secret speech - the certainty of military intervention by the Kremlin to prevent satellite divergence began to be questioned.

The fourth phase (1956-1968) saw Khrushchev's apparent realization of the need to build more viable relations while maintaining unity. Along with the concept of "socialist commonwealth", he initiated institutional ties which he hoped would curtail deviation. At this stage the Soviet interventionist doctrine became multifaceted: it was employed as a warning; as a means of unifying bloc support against a deviant; and as direct military intervention. In addition, after the Hungarian crisis Moscow appeared to make an effort to formulate a formal doctrine justifying intervention. Words and expression signifying the "defense of socialist gains" as the "sacred duty" or "obligation" of the Soviet Union were similar to

those found in Soviet statements made before and after the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia.

The fifth stage (1968-1975) was characterized by the formal articulation, in a number of fora, of that nexus of ideas known as the "Brezhnev Doctrine"; and, in connection with a specific crisis, in Czechoslovakia. Moreover, Soviet statements were more elaborate and comprehensive, although essentially voicing the same message as in Hungary 1956. Articulated in this context, the doctrine was much noted in the West. It was, in retrospect, the highlight of the doctrine's history. The sixth phase (1975-1985) witnessed the actual decline of the doctrine, although it appeared to be extended to the Third World in Afghanistan in 1979, and "self-administered" by Poland in 1981. Moreover, Vietnam adapted elements of the doctrine in its justification for the invasion of Cambodia.

The seventh and final stage of the doctrine (1985-1989) was its gradual elimination by Gorbachev as a tool of Soviet foreign policy.

II. Security vs. Ideological Interests

Although military intervention was justified in

largely ideological terms, how large a role did the issue of security play in Soviet decision-making?

In the latter half of the 20th century, Soviet security and ideological interests merged and became identified with control over Eastern Europe. Dominance over the region was considered by Stalin as vital for the protection of the USSR from external threats, as well as for providing a unifying element within the Soviet Union with proof that socialism was indeed an international system. Stalin, therefore, created a pattern for future Soviet rule by combining security and ideological concerns as a justification for Soviet control over Eastern Europe.

Ideology served several important functions which impacted on Soviet security. "Socializing" the countries of Eastern Europe provided an ideological buffer which protected the Soviet Union from "subversive" Western influence. The continuing domination of the East European countries also confirmed the basic ideological proposition that the establishment of communist rule was irreversible. Moreover, Moscow's domination of Eastern Europe, and the preservation there of a system basically similar to its own, provided one of the ideological justifications for communist party rule within the Soviet Union. Control over the region also provided

a convenient springboard for the spreading of propaganda.

While ideological considerations were important, those of security were paramount. Moscow believed that its national security was dependent upon the continued existence of a "cordon sanitaire" in Eastern Europe. Moreover, the countries of this "buffer zone" had to be reliably "friendly":* and only socialist regimes were considered sufficiently "loyal".

Although it was claimed that the purpose of military intervention was to protect "socialism" from being undermined, the real motivations were to protect Moscow from external threats (such as the West gaining a foothold in the region) as well as from internal threats (such as the "reversal" of socialism in one country undermining Soviet party rule at home). In addition, crises in the northern tier states appeared to be viewed with greater consternation than those in other areas. Polish, Hungarian, East German, and Czechoslovak moves toward greater independence raised greater strategic concern than, for example, Romania's bid for increasing autonomy in foreign policy during the 1970s.

In three of the crises examined - East Germany 1953, Hungary 1956, Czechoslovakia 1968 - security

concerns were the primary motive for Soviet military intervention. The Soviet Union also intervened in Afghanistan for security reasons and attempted to justify the invasion in terms of the "Brezhnev Doctrine". Paradoxically, security concerns were also the reason why the Soviet Union did not intervene in Poland, either in 1956 or 1980/81. Poland's special status within the bloc - its vital strategic position regarding transport and communication lines to the GDR, as well as its reputation for bloody resistance - mitigated against military intervention as a form of pressure on the Polish elites. Security interests also played a role in which countries were deemed part of the Soviet Union's East European strategic "core" - Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland - and which were considered less important - Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Albania.

Prior to Gorbachev, ideology and security concerns overlapped very substantially. Under Gorbachev security and ideological interests began to be separated. He viewed technological backwardness and economic stagnation as much larger threats to the Soviet Union than those of security. Gorbachev apparently preferred the Soviet Union to be bordered by independent, economically prospering states than by dependent, financially burdensome

countries which were politically unstable, and continuously draining resources away from an already domestically-troubled Soviet Union.

III. Function

What was the function of the Soviet interventionist doctrine?

The doctrine was a tool of Soviet foreign policy that was employed for both defensive and offensive purposes. It had a number of functions which varied from crisis to crisis in Eastern Europe. First, the Soviet interventionist doctrine delineated Moscow's "ground rules" of behavior. The enunciation of the doctrine served as a reminder to the socialist states of what behavior would or would not be condoned and tolerated; and how their existence, particularly in the case of Poland and East Germany, was inexorably tied to the Soviet Union. The two constants of socialist relations - the leading role of the Communist Party, and membership of the Warsaw Treaty Organization - had to be maintained.

Second, the doctrine served as a signaling device expressing Moscow's concern over developments within a given East European country. Terms and phrases,

such as "unease", "cannot remain indifferent", and "developments deeply disquiet us" were included in various statements, declarations, and published articles. This function was used throughout the crisis periods in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland in both 1956 and 1980/81. It was not, however, employed during the East German Uprising or in Afghanistan.

Third, the "Brezhnev Doctrine" also served as a warning device against excessive "deviation" or "transgression" by a socialist country. This function was illustrated by the use of expressions such as: the "obligation" of the socialist countries to the Soviet Union for its "sacrifices"; the threat of "counterrevolution"; and the presence of "anti-socialist" or "anti-Soviet" sentiment. Although the warning device was utilized in Poland and Hungary 1956, its use peaked with the Czechoslovak crisis. It was evident also during the Solidarity crisis, but not to the same extent. This function was not, however, used during the East German or Afghanistan crises: in the former because it occurred shortly after Stalin's death and, therefore, had not been fully developed; and the latter, because it was not a genuine application of the doctrine.

The warning function appeared successful in the Polish October and the Solidarity crisis in

preventing further deviation. There were two basic reasons: Moscow did not want to intervene in Poland because of various factors previously mentioned; and, because the Polish elites - in both cases - were able to contain the situation. Jaruzelski himself stated that martial law had to succeed: no other alternative existed. Neither the 30 October 1956 Soviet Declaration nor the 15 July 1968 Warsaw Letter, however, deterred Hungary or Czechoslovakia respectively from pursuing reform. In Czechoslovakia Dubcek and his advisers later stated that they had firmly believed that Moscow would not intervene because of possible international repercussions.

Another function of the doctrine was as a method of mobilizing support within the bloc. During times of crisis Moscow would involve the socialist allies by holding Warsaw Pact meetings, issuing joint statements, and having them serve as Moscow's messengers to the "deviant" country. This function was most evident during the Prague Spring and Poland 1980/81. Because the existence of East Germany and Poland was inexorably tied to the Soviet Union, these countries had a stake in preventing the spread of "counterrevolution". This explains why their leaders were the most vocal participants in denouncing the Prague Spring, in addition to

offering political, economic, and even military support to resolve the crisis. This function of the doctrine also revealed the "fault lines" within the socialist community. Romania and Yugoslavia, for instance, distanced themselves further from the community after the Czechoslovak crisis because of their disagreement over what Moscow perceived as Dubcek's "heresy".

A further function of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" was that it created uncertainty within East European elites' minds whether or not the Soviet Union would intervene militarily. This was the doctrine's greatest value to Moscow during the Solidarity crisis. The fear of such an intervention unified and mobilized the PUWP to take whatever preventative action necessary in order to avoid what they believed was an imminent invasion. Whether or not such an intervention was indeed in the plans, the uncertainty was enough motivation.

A seventh function of the doctrine was that it was seen by the conservative elites as being necessary for the stability of their regimes. The East German leadership, in particular, was a firm believer in the doctrine: it championed its use throughout the bloc, namely during the Prague Spring and Solidarity crisis. When, under Gorbachev, the validity of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" began to be

questioned, it was the conservative regimes which resisted initiating reforms, fearing their implications. Romania tried to resurrect the "Brezhnev Doctrine" against Poland in the summer of 1989, refusing to believe or oblivious to the fact that it no longer existed.

The Soviet interventionist doctrine was also a "weapon" of "last resort": it was used only, and then reluctantly, in times of crisis. Of the five East European crises examined in this thesis, Moscow intervened in two unilaterally (East Germany and Hungary), and in one collectively with the Warsaw Pact allies (Czechoslovakia). The "weapon" of last resort was avoided in Poland twice. In the non-East European crisis examined - Afghanistan - intervention was used, but was not a function of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" as that country was not truly a socialist country.

Finally, the Soviet interventionist doctrine was used as a theoretical justification for military intervention. The Soviet use of force was justified in terms of "proletarian internationalism" and the "irreversibility of socialist gains". In the East German case there were only a few statements made after the invasion which together did not add up to a doctrine per se, but appeared to suggest that one was developing. A theoretical explanation was used,

similar to the doctrine, during the Hungarian crisis, but was not as developed as during the Prague Spring. The plethora of statements made during the Prague Spring, in addition to the Kovalev articles and Brezhnev's speech, drew greater attention to the doctrine than before. A similar theoretical justification was used after the invasion of Afghanistan, but was not a genuine application of the doctrine; rather, an imitation.

The function of the Soviet interventionist doctrine raises another important question. Did the doctrine reflect a position of strength on the part of the Soviet Union or insecurity?

From the Second World War to 1989, Soviet behavior in Eastern Europe was for the most part dictated by the need to maintain a security buffer. Soviet military action in East Germany, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia (and the use of its threat during Poland 1956 and 1981), however, reflected a sense of insecurity. While such action was to have demonstrated the strength and commitment of the Soviet Union to the region, in fact it appeared to suggest Moscow's uncertainty of its control over Eastern Europe. It indicated that the Soviet leadership was afraid that if it did not intervene, the country in question could "defect" to the West, thereby leaving the USSR in a vulnerable position.

Moreover, one defection would inevitably be followed by others. The thought of the entire Soviet security apparatus falling apart in such a way justified any type of action. In addition, the Kremlin had to respond forcefully in order to demonstrate that it was determined, strong, and capable of stopping such a "departure".

IV. Limits of Deviation

What were the limits of deviation permissible within the bloc?

The Soviet interventionist doctrine had stressed two factors which were to remain constant in Soviet-East European relations: the primacy of the Communist Party and membership of the Warsaw Pact. During the Polish October both factors remained unchallenged; in the case of Hungary the leading role of the party was undermined and the withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact occurred only after a second Soviet intervention became inevitable. In Czechoslovakia, the two factors remained constant with one significant exception: although the primacy of the Party was not at issue during the reform process, under the newly proposed reforms pluralism

of a kind would have been introduced. In the Soviet view this would have eventually undermined Dubcek's control and, ultimately, Soviet hegemony. Thus, what Moscow really meant by the primacy of the Communist Party was its continued monopoly on power.

Moreover, the "Brezhnev Doctrine" reconfirmed for the countries of Eastern Europe their subservient position to the Soviet Union. Finally, the doctrine demonstrated that Soviet interests in the area, strategic and ideological, remained constant and could not be challenged (up to 1989) successfully.

There appeared to be a distinction between countries that were permitted greater diversity from those which had to follow Moscow's dictates. Strategically important countries to the Soviet Union - Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland - were permitted little deviation from accepted norms. Bulgaria, on the other hand, was considered by Moscow such a loyal ally that deviation did not appear to be an issue. Romania was able to gain a degree of autonomy - in foreign policy as well as within the Warsaw Pact - while Yugoslavia and Albania effectively broke away from the bloc.

V. Geographical Scope

What countries were considered part of the "socialist commonwealth" and, therefore, vulnerable to the Soviet interventionist doctrine?

In Brezhnev's speech to the Polish Congress of November 1968, the obligation of defending socialist gains was stated in the context of, but not exclusively to, Eastern Europe. The ambiguity of this statement drew many analysts and statesmen to the conclusion that any country could be vulnerable to Soviet intervention (the immediate threat was felt most in Yugoslavia, Romania, China, and Albania).

In the West it was believed that Moscow had extended the doctrine to other communist and non-communist movements in the Third World when it invaded Afghanistan. Moscow's primary concern was security; the rationalization that it used was only an imitation of the doctrine, perhaps to lend a degree of credibility. It was unclear whether the Soviet Union would have used the doctrine against or in support of another non-European socialist state: Castro, for example, made statements in 1968 that questioned the extent of Moscow's commitment to the "defense" of socialism in Cuba. The clearest example of the use of a version of the "Brezhnev

Doctrine" outside Europe was Vietnam's justification of its invasion of Kampuchea in the late 1970s - a justification which, significantly, preceded the invasion.

VI. Impact

What was the impact of the Soviet interventionist doctrine on East-West relations, on Eastern Europe, and on other Communist and non-Communist movements?

With regard to East-West relations, the doctrine served as an additional restriction to freedom of diplomatic movement and independent action in international relations. Particularly for the United States and Western Europe, the doctrine reconfirmed the determination of the Soviet Union to defend and maintain its sphere of influence. It demonstrated that the USSR was willing to pay the price of global criticism to restrict outside interference. The doctrine represented to other great powers that Eastern Europe was within the Soviet sphere of influence and that they had to play by its "rules of the game".

For the countries of Eastern Europe the doctrine reaffirmed that their behavior had to coincide with

Soviet interests. Also that there was a high price to be paid for attempts at independence. At the same time, the verbal use of the doctrine by Moscow provided the East European states with a yardstick by which to measure Soviet tolerance. These states could probe to find the limits of deviation, thereby achieving a certain amount of "independence". The doctrine, therefore, delineated the rules and limits of conduct.

The other major non-ruling Communist Parties, particularly those of Western Europe, repudiated the doctrine. Indeed, the invasion of Czechoslovakia and the "Brezhnev Doctrine" gave rise to the Eurocommunist movement, which further complicated Moscow's relations with the Eastern bloc: the Eurocommunists put pressure on the East European regimes to seek alternative, national forms of socialism. The doctrine also constituted an additional "thorn" in Moscow's relations with China, Yugoslavia, Romania, and Albania. Moreover, critics of the doctrine rejected the Soviet claim that it had an authentic Marxist-Leninist pedigree: they viewed it more as great power chauvinism disguised in ideological language.

For non-Communist movements, such as the non-aligned movement, the Soviet interventionist doctrine caused consternation, particularly after

the invasion of Afghanistan. It left unanswered the question of who exactly was vulnerable to military invasion, particularly in those countries with "socialist" sympathies.

At the same time, the doctrine bolstered the non-alignment movement's identity. The whole idea of non-alignment presupposed the existence of two blocs; therefore, in this sense, the movement may have needed the doctrine to prove its status. Moreover, Yugoslavia justified its political system and foreign policy as the one major exception to the rule of Soviet control in Eastern Europe; and, as the furthest a country could go in its particular circumstance and location. As a result, there may have been an extent to which the Yugoslav regime "needed" the maintenance of the bloc. This may in part also explain the Yugoslav attitude to the Hungarian Uprising in 1956.

VII. Legal or Political

Was the Soviet interventionist doctrine essentially legal or political?

The doctrine was essentially both a legal and political doctrine in that the Soviet perception of

international law was political. Soviet theorists, such as Sanakoyev, had argued that there was a distinct difference between "bourgeois" and "socialist" legality. "Socialist" law was considered to be "true" and genuine law. Western accusations regarding the violation of sovereignty, state independence, noninterference in internal affairs, and equality were only propagandistic measures to conceal the capitalists' perverted sense of these principles. Socialist law, on the other hand, represented the real meaning behind these principles, not the distorted Western view. The states of the socialist community followed this "true" law: their relations were "unique" and of a new type. At the same time Moscow followed general international law in cases not dealing with the socialist bloc.

Moreover, some Soviet commentators implied that the doctrine's multilateral approach increased its legality. They argued, for example, that the Warsaw Pact provided the legal justification for the invasions of Hungary and Czechoslovakia. However, a reading of the text of the agreement provided no evidence for such a justification, except if one defined "external" threat as any threat to Soviet control within Eastern Europe.

Perhaps the most significant feature of the

"Brezhnev Doctrine", at least compared to some previous Soviet formulations, was its multilateral element. By using a collective approach in its warnings and intervention, the Soviet Union hoped to add a degree of credibility, unity, and legality to its policies that it would not have had if it had acted alone. The multiple approach gave the semblance of an organized, community-backed and sponsored measure rather than a hegemonic exercise.

How intellectually coherent, particularly in legal terms, was the Soviet interventionist doctrine? Its justification for the use of force - "defending socialism against counterrevolution" - was always very hard to square with the UN Charter, the Warsaw Treaty, and other key instruments of international law. Moreover, the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies had signed the 1975 Helsinki Final Act which committed the parties to respect state sovereignty and the inviolability of frontiers, and to refrain from the threat or use of force. Soviet international lawyers seemed not to have made a very convincing job of reconciling the "Brezhnev Doctrine" with such key documents. This was even more true of Polish international lawyers, who for the most part did not even try. Therefore, there was throughout a certain amount of contradiction and lack of coherence about the

doctrine.

VIII. Factors of Decline and Demise

What changes led to the decline and, ultimately, the demise of the Soviet interventionist doctrine?

The Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia and what appeared to be consolidating factors within the bloc of the early 1970s - socialist integration, detente with the West, and the signing of the Helsinki Final Act - actually sowed the seeds of future discord. By the late 1970s East-West relations began to deteriorate, mainly as a result of Western apprehensions over Soviet military capabilities and intentions, the issue of human rights, NATO's emphasis on rearmament, and Soviet involvement in the Third World. Within the bloc, the impact of detente and the Helsinki process made the "Iron Curtain" more porous and increased the exposure of East European elites and societies to Western, and especially West European, influences.

Moreover, the overall failure of East European economic policies threatened the delicate political balance which had been achieved in the region. Ideological challenges to the primacy of the Soviet

Union and fundamental premises of communist rule also came from the "Eurocommunists" and other autonomous parties in the West, as well as from dissident groups within Eastern Europe. Therefore, by the decade's end the key elements of Soviet and East European strategies for the 1970s - detente internationally, economic growth domestically, and integrationist efforts in mutual relations - were in disarray. Moreover, the unifying ideological principle of socialist internationalism was appearing increasingly irrelevant in light of pressing domestic and international concerns.

In addition, the effectiveness of the Soviet interventionist doctrine as a tool of maintaining control in Eastern Europe, or as a threat to the rest of the "socialist community", had greatly diminished. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, although not a genuine application of the Soviet interventionist doctrine, left the impression of military failure; and, if not the reversibility of "socialist gains", at least their contestation. The challenge of Solidarity was temporarily stayed by a self-administered "Brezhnev Doctrine", but the "normalization" of Poland proved to be far more difficult. Indeed, it would show that the region where the doctrine had originated and was apparently most successful was no longer willing or able to be

controlled. For Moscow, the Polish crisis was to mark an important milestone in Soviet policy toward Eastern Europe and the effectiveness of the doctrine.

By the mid-1980s it was becoming increasingly evident that Soviet domination of Eastern Europe and the utility of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" as an instrument of policy was being undermined. The USSR faced rising domestic problems which were further exacerbated by the ongoing debate within the Soviet leadership on the "contradictions" of socialism. In Eastern Europe, the lack of legitimacy on the part of the local regimes, their inability or unwillingness to find solutions, and growing dissent among the populations were creating greater instability, particularly in light of developments within the Soviet Union. Added to this confusion was the lack of leadership from Moscow, especially with the deaths of Brezhnev, Andropov, and Chernenko. At the same time Moscow was faced with the increasing political, technological, and military power of Western Europe. Many of these factors indicated that the Soviet Union was suffering from symptoms associated with "imperial overstretch".

Another factor possibly contributing to the doctrine's demise was the greatly increased Soviet

emphasis on legality as a basis of international relations. Moscow repeatedly denounced in speeches and formal agreements the use of force in international relations. Because the Soviet Union had gained a degree of trust from the West, particularly in arms control, any military invasion against a Warsaw Pact member would have stopped all negotiations and, more importantly, prevented crucial technological aid and economic trade.

Gorbachev's appointment to the top party post promised new hope for the resolution of these various problems. While the Soviet leader initially sought to reform socialism within the region, he was eventually forced by both internal and external events to surrender Soviet control over the bloc and, with it, the interventionist doctrine.

IX. Similarities and Differences

What were the similarities and differences between the Soviet interventionist doctrine and other hegemonic concepts, such as the Monroe Doctrine?

The Soviet Union, like France and the United States, sought to control its sphere of influence

primarily to prevent other great powers from establishing dominance in its area. All three hegemon's policies of domination were pursued in the name of a higher principle, whether a "civilizing mission" (France), "Manifest Destiny" (US), or "proletarian internationalism" (Soviet Union). They viewed their respective spheres of influence as vital to their status as great powers, and believed their domination contributed to peace in the region as well as international stability.

Second, like France and the US, the Soviet Union dominated its sphere through political, economic, and military means. In a manner similar to other great powers, its domination declined with time, particularly with the collapse of the East European regimes and the USSR itself. However, Russian interests in the region are likely to continue with influence being the key word rather than domination. Moreover, the Soviet Union had, like its counterparts, historical precedent for involvement in its region. Interference was not only explicit, but also implicit. The policies of all three hegemon's to their respective regions did not remain constant or rigid, but evolved and loosened over time.

All three great powers had developed specific doctrines justifying their hegemony over the

subordinate areas. The functions of "Eurafrigue", the Monroe Doctrine, and the "Brezhnev Doctrine" were to unify the interests of the "community" with the dominant power, as well as to justify any interference by invoking a higher, ideological principle. Moreover, like France and the US, the Soviet Union was the sole interpreter of how its doctrine was defined. In addition, the US and the Soviet Union held up each other's doctrines as proof of their rival's contempt for the sovereignty of smaller states. Both the Monroe Doctrine and the Soviet interventionist doctrine were also regarded as being incompatible with international legal principles. Both dominant powers had tried to gain legal acceptance or legal status for their doctrines: the United States was successful, for example, in getting the Monroe Doctrine mentioned in the League of Nations Covenant.

The Soviet Union, like France and the United States, shared with its sphere of influence certain common interests, values, and institutions, such as "socialism" and the Warsaw Pact and Comecon; however, the major difference was that Moscow shared these values with the Soviet-approved East European political elites, not necessarily their populations.

Finally, all three hegemons were constrained in certain ways in their behavior toward their

respective spheres. They used military force, but it was not habitual and uninhibited; rather, it was occasional and reluctant. In this way the Soviet Union, like France and the US, appeared to be aware of the high political cost of military intervention. While all three dominant states attempted to legitimize their policies by gaining the assent from surrounding states or regional organizations, they were not always successful. Not even the Soviet Union was exempt: Romania, for example, refused to participate in the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia. The Soviet Union, like other great powers, was also aware of the risks of being too domineering towards its sphere, fearing the prospects of popular movements (Solidarity) or "counterrevolution"; it realized, therefore, that hegemony could not be exercised without impunity. Unlike in the Soviet Union, France and the United States had to answer to their domestic audiences in whatever policy they pursued.

There were, however, also many differences between the three hegemons. The United States and France were prepared, unlike the USSR, to tolerate a variety of regime types within its sphere (with the major exception of Communist governments). The Soviet Union, in contrast, imposed Soviet-style socialism upon the East European countries and

linked their regimes through ideological, institutional and economic ties. In addition, unlike in US in Latin America, Soviet troops were present in all the East European states with the exceptions of Albania, Romania, and Yugoslavia. Eastern Europe was also strategically more important to the Soviet Union, than Latin America to the US or Africa to France.

Some of the East European states viewed themselves historically as superior culturally to the Soviet Union. Many enjoyed a higher standard of living than their Soviet counterparts. The United States, on the other hand, was wealthier than any other Latin American state and did not suffer from cultural inferiority. France in fact viewed itself as the cultural provider of Africa. Moreover, the US and France intervened in underdeveloped, Third World countries; the Soviet Union invaded, on the other hand, states with developed economies and a Western culture.

Unlike the Monroe Doctrine, the Soviet interventionist doctrine emerged in the period of the UN Charter, when international law took a strong view about the principle of nonintervention. Hence, the Soviet Union had a particularly hard task in inflicting this doctrine on a skeptical world. While the Monroe Doctrine was aimed at preventing

the involvement of other powers in the Western Hemisphere, the "Brezhnev Doctrine" sought to protect the East European states from external, as well as internal threats (more often the latter). The Monroe Doctrine was designed to protect the Latin American states from great power influence and intervention; the Soviet doctrine, on the other hand, was aimed primarily to coerce and control the domestic policies of the bloc states. Unlike the American doctrine, the geographic scope of the Soviet interventionist doctrine was never delineated. It was left ambiguous so that it could pertain to any communist country; moreover, Moscow did not try to dispel this ambiguity.

The "Brezhnev Doctrine" also sought to equate internal political pressure, even if entirely non-violent, with the machinations of imperialism, and as a form of external aggression. In addition, the United States wanted to protect the "New World" from the balance of power politics and conflicts of Europe. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, wanted to prevent Eastern Europe from being used as an invasion route or launching ground for attack.

The Soviet Union was, therefore, a hegemon much like other great powers. It encountered similar problems in conducting relations with its sphere, but its policies were more domineering and thorough

in their execution than those of France or the United States. No degree of control, however, could prevent the inevitable decline in the degree of its domination. The Soviet Union differed mainly from the other hegemons in this study in that its socialist "wards" in Eastern Europe collapsed within several months of each other, followed shortly thereafter by the USSR itself.

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