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The Demise of the Brezhnev Doctrine

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*Freedom of choice under conditions of unqualified compliance with the generally respected norms of international law ... this is the only possible foundation for the construction of a common European house ...*¹

*M.S. Gorbachev said that the CPSU, by the way of selfcritique [v poriadke samokritiki], should accept responsibility for the fact that everything was evaluated from the position of "a single model". And any search for new solutions was regarded as "revisionism" and "deviations from the principles".*²

Introduction

The topic of this study is the evolution of Soviet thinking on relations between socialist countries from the introduction of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" after the Warsaw Pact countries' intervention in Czechoslovakia in August 1968, to late 1989. The focus of the analysis is on Soviet relations with the countries of the "socialist commonwealth" - which at the beginning of the period meant the Soviet Union together with its allies in Eastern Europe in addition to the Mongolian People's Republic. Later Cuba and Vietnam became members of the group. My study, however, is primarily concerned with Soviet thinking on Soviet relations with the socialist countries of Eastern Europe.

The Soviet reaction to the recent developments in Eastern Europe, where Poland and Hungary are developing rapidly towards market-oriented democratic pluralistic societies of the western type, and where the wave of reforms now encompasses even the German Democratic Republic and Bulgaria, clearly indicates a fundamentally new Soviet approach to intra-WTO affairs. Soviet relations with the other "fraternal" countries seem to be in a state of flux. The limits of Soviet tolerance, even with regard to the question of WTO membership and the Eastern European countries' foreign policy orientation, are unclear. The Soviet "theory" described in this study, moreover, whose constituent parts had direct policy relevance in defining the nature of the Soviet Union's relationship with its smaller allies, no longer appears as an important instrument in Soviet policy towards these countries. What follows, therefore, is a discussion of the evolution of the Soviet theory of "socialist international relations" until its quiet and hopefully final death in 1989.

The study does not aim at a comprehensive examination of the topic - important aspects of Soviet theory on socialist international relations are not included in the analysis. I have chosen to focus on a set of four elements which I think constituted the backbone of the theory of "limited independence" implicit in the "Brezhnev Doctrine": "socialist internationalism", "common interests of socialism", "general laws of socialist construction" and the theory of "convergence" (sblizhenie) between socialist states. Three of these

elements were often discussed in terms of their relationship to other parts of Soviet theory of inter-state relations – “socialist internationalism” versus the “general democratic principles of international relations”, national interests of particular socialist countries as opposed to the common interests of socialism, and general laws of socialist construction versus specific national conditions.

The above elements were parts of a basically stable doctrine during the 1970s and first half of the 1980s. The discussion in the last part of the study will trace their evolution since Gorbachev’s accession to power in March 1985, and will seek to clarify to what degree Soviet statements during that period departed from previous assumptions in these fields, or whether the reevaluation under way did not touch on the fundamentals of the doctrine.

Only to a limited degree do I seek to answer the question of what caused change in Soviet thinking. I present, however, some tentative reflections on the causes and the significance of the evolution in Soviet thinking for Soviet relations with Eastern Europe, focusing mainly on the signaling function of the theory as expressed in Soviet statements, and its role in legitimizing Soviet behaviour. I have also included some thoughts about the nature of the evolving Soviet-East European relationship in the era of “perestroika” and “new political thinking”.

A discussion of the evolution of Soviet thinking on socialist international relations should ideally be combined with an analysis of patterns of Soviet behaviour during the same period. Relating ideological developments to Soviet foreign policy behaviour, it would be possible to explore the causal relationship between ideological developments and Soviet policy in the region, and the question of the causes and implications of the evolution of Soviet thinking could be addressed more substantially. Considering the Soviet habit of using ideology to legitimize Soviet policy towards other socialist countries, however, I think that an analysis limited to the evolution of Soviet thinking is of interest in its own right. I will argue that reinterpretations of important parts of the doctrine reflected changes in Soviet policy priorities in the region.

The evolution towards multi-party democracy in Poland and Hungary during 1989 proceeded at a pace which no one was able to foresee only a few months ago. As to the pace of recent

developments in East Germany, they were hardly anticipated by anybody, either in the West or in the Soviet Union.³ The Soviets now faced the necessity of either adjusting the doctrine to a fundamentally new situation in Soviet-East European relations, or of discarding the "theory" altogether. They seem to have chosen the latter alternative. In fact, there is little trace of the old doctrine in recent Soviet statements about the nature of Soviet relations with the other WTO countries. When dealing with Eastern Europe, the Soviets now tend to use a "pragmatic" language, which is more in tune with the universalist approach of the "new political thinking". It also lacks the subtleties, prohibitions and policy recommendation inherent in the previous theory of socialist international relations.

* * *

The study is based on articles in Soviet journals and newspapers and on statements of Soviet officials at various levels of authority. The more important journals have been searched systematically for the period under review. I have also consulted a limited number of Soviet books on the topic. While I have examined a large number of articles and Soviet statements, I only present for closer scrutiny those which either appeared as typical of dominant trends, or which advanced views which differ significantly from the mainstream interpretation of a particular point.

Whereas the discussion of the origin of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" and the state of the theory in the 1970s is organized along thematic lines, the parts dealing with the Gorbachev period take a chronological approach. This is due to the basic stability of Soviet thinking in the 1970s with regard to the four points mentioned above, while the gradual emergence of new interpretations after 1985 made the sequence of events more significant.

I. Soviet theory:

Specialist and leadership statements

To make sense of the role of the theory or doctrine of socialist international relations, one should have in mind its strictly normative character. The significance of the doctrine lay in its policy implications - it was hardly comprehensible as a "theory" in the western sense of that word. Nor were clearly defined terms part of the theory - the implications of the elements constituting the doctrine often appeared by reference to some historical event. For this reason interpretations of the past were at the core of the theory of socialist international relations.

One important function of ideology in relations between socialist states was to foster cohesion and control by assuring that the national regimes adhered to a set of rules of the game in the conduct of domestic policies and foreign affairs in general.⁴ The theory of socialist international relations had the additional specific purpose of creating rules for interaction between the socialist states. Statements of the current state of the doctrine often implied Soviet preferences on policy matters, and might define limits of Soviet tolerance on controversial or critical topics. The importance of this signalling effect of messages emanating from Moscow for the evolution of events in Eastern Europe at critical stages became apparent during the Soviet succession periods in 1953-57, 1964-69, and during the last years of Brezhnev's rule. In each of these cases, confusing or contradictory signals to the East European leaders and public may have contributed to the formation of acute challenges to the ruling regimes in East European countries.⁵ As a result of these experiences, the fear of creating ideological confusion that could spur uncontrolled political developments in Eastern Europe may have reinforced Soviet reluctance to undertake reformulations of the theory of socialist international relations.

As part of its signalling role the theory created a terminology for dealing with relations between socialist regimes. Some key notions of the doctrine acquired a complex meaning of their own, which could be evoked by the Soviet leadership to send some urgent signals to their allies or foreign observers.⁶

Even if one believes that "the preoccupation with power has long eclipsed the role of ideology in [Soviet] policy making"⁷ the doctrine also had an obvious role in legitimizing Soviet policy in the region. In the words of one author,

*the doctrine is still the one source of legitimacy of the power of the party and its global aspirations, and doctrinal formulations are all important to justify policies, a priori and ex post facto.*⁸

The gradual development of the formulations constituting the Brezhnev Doctrine from March 1968 may have been designed to supply this kind of *a priori* theoretical justification for the eventuality of a WTO invasion.

It may be assumed that important doctrinal changes needed the explicit or implicit approval by the leader or the leadership group. This did not necessarily mean that all publicly expressed views on socialist international relations reflected leadership opinions – this is clearly not the case in the current situation of relative intellectual plurality. It should be possible, however, to point out trends in the process of reevaluation reflecting deliberations on the foreign policy making level.

The last few years have seen a growing diversity of the views of Soviet officials, specialists, and media commentators on Soviet relations with Eastern Europe. Simultaneously with a dominant trend toward rethinking or abandoning parts of the doctrine, traditionalist or conservative views are still being expressed. This development obviously makes more acute the general problem of evaluating the significance of particular statements.

Although there may be differences over the interpretation and eventual significance of various statements by the top party or foreign policy leadership, their function in conveying leadership opinion is hardly open to dispute. The situation is less clear for media statements by persons not directly involved in the task of officially formulating or executing Soviet foreign policy. It was not always apparent to what degree media statements actually reflected opinions at the top of the political hierarchy, or were consciously used to signal leadership preferences to some target group in the Soviet Union or abroad.

A comment earlier this year in *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia*, the journal of a major Academy institute dealing with international affairs, indicates that even today, when the range of views being expressed has significantly increased, specialists' statements have wider significance than just conveying a personal point of view. It also illustrates the relationship between the ability of singular authors to express their own opinion and the need of an authoritative journal to convey a general line on doctrinally or politically important points.

In a discussion of current international affairs, *Izvestia* foreign affairs commentator Aleksandr Bovin argued that class struggle, as manifested in the contradiction between the socialist and the capitalist systems, is still the fundamental factor in international relations, the need to find common solutions for pressing problems notwithstanding.⁹ In the following issue of the journal an editorial criticized Bovin's opinions, stating as the opinion of the editors and the responsible publisher that an analysis of international relations could no longer work within a framework based on the notion of class struggle and contradiction between the two socio-political systems.¹⁰

Soviet scientists themselves are keenly aware of the special limitations which, particularly in the pre-1985 period, strictly circumscribed discussions in sensitive fields like Soviet-East European relations. In the euphemistic language which still characterizes much of Soviet political debate, Aleksandr Bovin once pointed to the "sharp corners" (*ostrye ugly*) which threatened to "destroy the fabric of the analysis" and make the discussion in scholarly articles "less convincing". In addition, there was the lack of historical distance. "Occasionally", according to Bovin, Soviet scientists did not succeed in correctly combining evaluations of current interest and political relevance "with conclusions of a more general nature." And, the author added, "one cannot avoid the fact that scientific studies have to consider the need for political delicacy."¹¹ This was the case not only in the study of Soviet-East European relations:

Like no other sphere, during the preceding years the social sciences were utterly exposed to the illnesses of dogmatism, [...], lack of ideas. More than in any other sphere they were dominated by orthodox intolerance toward

original thinking and differences of opinion, toward everything which did not collude with the opinions of the "leadership" or which distinguished itself - or still more contradicted official documents or speeches.¹²

Bovin's remarks may serve to illuminate the process by which Soviet specialists' studies were structured to the needs of the customers, i.e. the top policy makers.¹³ Contrasting specialist images might therefore be taken to represent what Franklin Griffiths called "broad variations in the corporate political interests and policy preferences of the regime."¹⁴ It was not primarily a matter of the specialists' personal beliefs or preferences:

What we have before us is evidence not so much of subjective as of what may be called transactional perceptions and preferences - stated beliefs and predispositions that may or may not correspond accurately to subjective thinking, and that are the product more of influence and power relationships than of an unfettered search for the true and proper.¹⁵

Griffiths views the relationship between senior policy makers and specialists as a two-way influence partnership. The party apparatus signalled its preferences and requirements to the specialists, who in their turn were endowed with the task of structuring and evaluating incoming information for use by the same senior politicians. During the Brezhnev period it was safe to treat authoritative specialist opinions as correlated with leadership preferences.¹⁶

The post-1985 situation has complicated the task of evaluating the significance of specialists' statements. The number of participants in discussions has increased. More important, the range of opinion being expressed in Soviet media has increased to the point where even statements on doctrinally or politically sensitive topics can not automatically be interpreted as expressions of "leadership opinion".

Some rules may be applied to evaluate the significance of specialists' statements in the Soviet media.¹⁷ First, the position, authority, and influence of the author may give important hints as to the relevance of a particular statement. Second, specialists' statements must be evaluated within the context of signals emanating from the political leadership; i.e. whether they confirm or

contradict what is known about official thinking on a given topic. Third, there were the contextual elements - the occasion and form of an oral statement, the form of a written opinion, and the character of the chosen media. And fourth, there was the character of the statement itself. Opinions on sensitive or doctrinally important matters were more likely to need some sort of sanction from above than discussions of some obscure part of the doctrine. The editorial response to Bovin's argument in *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia* may illustrate the point. His remarks touched upon one of the fundamentals of the "new thinking" in Soviet foreign policy, and could be perceived, if left without any authoritative commentary making it clear that they did not signal a change in official opinion, as signalling a return to a more orthodox approach in the Soviet Union's dealing with the West.

II. The "Brezhnev Doctrine"

What in the West has been labeled the "Brezhnev Doctrine" appeared in 1968 and 1969 as a formulation and rationalization of a set of principles said to be guiding inter-state and inter-party relations within the socialist commonwealth and Soviet policy toward the countries in the group. The developments in Czechoslovakia during the first half of 1968, resulting in the intervention of Soviet and WTO troops on August 21, were the immediate reason for the public statement of the elements of the doctrine. The term "Brezhnev Doctrine" may be misleading, insofar as the code of conduct which may be deduced from the relevant Soviet statements can be traced back to the early years of Soviet foreign policy. The doctrine did not represent a fundamentally new approach to intra-bloc relations.¹⁸ Its most obvious significance was to clarify and make explicit some of the main Soviet restraints on East European autonomy in foreign and domestic affairs. The terms "Brezhnev Doctrine" and "doctrine" will be used here for reasons of convenience.

On October 3, 1969, the Soviet minister of foreign affairs Andrei Gromyko made the following statement in the United Nations:

The Soviet Union deems it necessary to proclaim from this rostrum, too, that the socialist states cannot and will not allow a situation where the vital interests of socialism are infringed upon and encroachments are made on the inviolability of the boundaries of the socialist commonwealth and, therefore, on the foundations of international peace.¹⁹

If one inserts "vital Soviet interests" for "the vital interests of socialism" the passage should be read as a confirmation of Soviet will to defend its interests in the bloc, if necessary by means of armed intervention. The "socialist commonwealth" denotes the member countries of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, which at the time included the socialist countries of Eastern Europe in addition to the Soviet Union and the Mongolian People's Republic. What kind of limitations to East European autonomy was explicitly or implicitly

inherent in the process of formulating the "Brezhnev Doctrine" during and after the Czech movement of liberalization in 1968?

Two aspects of the doctrine may be isolated. On the one hand, there was the assumption, which the Soviets elevated to the position of an irremovable part of official ideology, that there are general laws which must be adhered to in the building of socialism. In practical terms, this amounted to a claim for a special role on the part of the Soviet party leadership as ultimate arbiters of communist ideology. From this was derived the second part of the doctrine, which was the right of the Soviet Union and its socialist allies to intervene, if necessary with military means, to influence internal developments of member countries of the commonwealth. Intervention would be justified in the case of a threat to socialism in any country, brought forth by gross deviation from the general laws of socialist construction.

The Warsaw letter of 15 July 1968 made it clear that this danger had materialized in Czechoslovakia. The document stated that "a situation has arisen in which the threat to the foundations of socialism in Czechoslovakia jeopardizes the common vital interests of the rest of the socialist countries."²⁰ At the 5th congress of the Polish United Workers' Party in November 1968, Brezhnev made it clear that this kind of threat justified military intervention in a socialist country by its allies in the socialist commonwealth.²¹

In the flow of criticism directed against the Czechoslovak party and government leaders leading up to the invasion, a number of main areas of concern may be identified. First, *the leading role* of the party was in danger, thereby endangering the very foundation of the socialist system. S. Kovalev, in an article in *Pravda* on 11 September 1968, stated bluntly that the Communist party had been in danger of being removed from the leadership of society. The seriousness of this in Soviet eyes is obvious, given the formal and informal ties and channels of influence between the Soviet leadership and the top echelons of the East European governing parties, and the often decisive voice of the Soviets in the selection of their leading cadres.²² Second, within the party itself, *a weakening of the leadership's control*, or, in Soviet terminology, *disregard of the principle of democratic centralism*, might pose much of the same dangers. Both the above factors had led to the rise of organized political move-

ments opposing socialism, making use of the weakened state and party control over the media to express their views.²³ Third, accusations were heard that the developments in the country, if left unchecked, could lead to "a market, i.e. capitalist economy."²⁴ However, it seems that this concern was not very prominent. The Warsaw letter stated ambiguously that the other party leaders did not intend to interfere "with the methods of planning and administration of Czechoslovakia's socialist national economy or with your actions aimed at perfecting the economic structure and developing socialist democracy."

Fourth, the developments seemed to endanger the stability of Czechoslovak foreign policy and the country's *relationship with the Soviet Union and its allies in the WTO*. This danger too arose as a consequence of the weakened guiding role of the Communist party, and was presented as "a threat to the foundations of our alliance and to the security of our countries' commonwealth."²⁵

The frequent references to the danger of Czechoslovakia's assuming a "neutral" position between East and West point to a Soviet preoccupation with the developments in Hungary in 1956, which culminated in a Hungarian declaration of neutrality and the country's withdrawal from the Warsaw Treaty following the launching of the second Soviet military intervention. Soviet ideologists constantly stressed the necessity of viewing the developments in Czechoslovakia in the context of the East-West antagonism. Domestic processes leading to the weakening of the socialist order would mean a corresponding strengthening of the West's position vis-a-vis the Eastern bloc. Thus, the somewhat stretched defence of the WTO action in Czechoslovakia, as securing the country's real sovereignty and right to self determination against the machinations of imperialism, disguised a real Soviet fear of losing strategic positions in Eastern Europe. The developments in Czechoslovakia if left unchecked, according to Kovalev, would ultimately have raised the spectre of NATO troops approaching Soviet borders.²⁶ The Warsaw letter stated these concerns in somewhat different words:

The frontiers of the socialist world have shifted to the centre of Europe, to the Elbe and the Bohemian forests. And never will we consent to allow

these historic gains of socialism and the independence and security of all our peoples to be jeopardized. Never will we consent to allow imperialism, by peaceful or non-peaceful means, from within or without, to make a breach in the socialist system and change the balance of power in Europe in its favour.

During 1968 and 1969 there were also frequent references in Soviet statements to an alleged "sharpening" of the conflict between the "new" and the "old" world. Consequently, Communist parties must not fail to take into account in their activities "such a decisive fact of our time as the struggle between the two antithetical social systems - capitalism and socialism."²⁷ At the world conference of Communist parties in June 1969 Brezhnev made a strong appeal for strengthening the unity of the socialist states, stressing that any weakening of "vigilance" would be utilized by the West to foster anti-socialist and nationalist sentiments.²⁸

Criticism of the intervention in Czechoslovakia as a transgression against international law was rejected by subordinating the rules of international law to "class interests" and the interests of socialism. S. Kovalev, in one of his authoritative *Pravda* articles at the time, stated the Soviet view in the following terms:

However, 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 context of the class struggle in the present day world.

He went on to explain that "in a class society there can be no such thing as non-class law".²⁹ Soviet ideologists generally stressed the distinction between the rules and norms of general international law, which were incorporated in the principles of "peaceful coexistence", and the principles governing relations between socialist countries. Whereas the Soviet Union claimed to respect the rules of international law in relations with the West, and would criticize departures from its principles within the western world, relations between socialist countries were of a different kind:

To claim that the relations between the socialist countries should be realized only according to the principles of general international law,

means to deny the type of relations existing between the countries of socialism based on class characteristics; it means to slip down to the level of impartiality and land in the morass of bourgeois normativism. Seen politically, such conceptions are aimed objectively at minimizing the significance of the relations between the countries of the socialist bloc, to dissolve them in the great mass of relations between states, to undermine the unity of the socialist bloc, to weaken it in the struggle for the rapid build up of socialism and communism, and to weaken the socialist bloc in its repulsion of all attacks of imperialism.³⁰

In the following discussion I will examine how Soviet thinking on relations between countries in the socialist commonwealth evolved during the seventies and through the eighties until the election of Mikhail S. Gorbachev as General Secretary of the CPSU in March 1985 and the 27th CPSU Congress in February 1986. This part of the study will treat in greater detail some of the concepts introduced in the above discussion of the "Brezhnev Doctrine", and I will also introduce some more general elements of the Soviet theory of socialist international relations. In the subsequent part the findings from the earlier period will be contrasted with recent developments. I will try to point out the direction of the reevaluation under way, and will conclude the article with a brief discussion of possible implications for developments in Eastern Europe.

III. Elements of Soviet theory: 1968-1985

“Socialist internationalism” and the “general democratic principles”

Soviet literature on relations between socialist states identified two elements (or sets of principles) which together constituted “the new type of international relations”, i.e. relations between the countries of the socialist commonwealth. The first element was a set of “general democratic principles” for relations between sovereign countries – state sovereignty, equal rights, and the principles of mutual advantage and non-interference in each other’s domestic affairs. These principles were said to be part of pre-socialist, bourgeois political culture, and they applied to relations between all states, socialist or capitalist. Their implementation, however, was fully realized only in relations between socialist states.³¹ The other element was the cluster of principles contained in the notion of “socialist internationalism”. A 1978 collective work defined “socialist internationalism” as “the totality of voluntarily agreed principles and objectives (ustanovki) which originate in the internationalist world view of the working class.” The precise formulation of the rules inherent in “socialist internationalism” varied slightly from author to author. However, development of all-round collaboration, readiness to render mutual assistance, and the obligation of “common defence of the gains of socialism” were commonly stressed as the three main characteristics of socialist “internationalism”.³² The two first points covered relations in all fields of inter-state contacts – economic, political, cultural, and military. The obligation to engage in the defence of socialism’s gains referred to the specific task of providing support, if necessary with military means, against a threat to socialist rule in any of the “fraternal” countries. Assistance of this kind was rendered to Hungary in 1956, to Czechoslovakia in 1968, and to Afghanistan in 1979.

The precise nature of the relationship between the two elements was an object of dispute among Soviet scholars. This highly doctrinal argument is of a certain interest because it illuminates the theoretical difficulties involved in making "socialist internationalism" compatible with the general accepted principles of relations between sovereign states.

According to A.P. Butenko, the author of a 1984 book on relations between socialist states,³³ there had been two different interpretations of the relationship between "socialist internationalism" and the "general democratic principles". One group of theoreticians argued that in relations between socialist states the generally acknowledged principles of sovereignty etc. acquire a specific socialist character, or even constitute an integral part of "socialist internationalism" itself. The second group held that the "general democratic principles" and the principles of socialist "internationalism" are of fundamentally different natures. In their view, only the latter are in fact socialist, and the term "socialist internationalism" should only be used in this narrower sense.

Adherents of the first group, on the other hand, argued that the two sets of principles are in fact "two aspects of socialist internationalism."³⁴ Struggling to make the two components of this wider definition of "socialist internationalism" compatible, one author held that the inclusion of the "general democratic principles" as "an aspect of socialist internationalism" did not imply

that the corresponding principles of general international law have been included within the system of the principles of socialist internationalism. The first thing to bear in mind is that in relations between socialist states they acquire a new, socialist content, because they serve to ensure cooperation among socialist states in their construction of socialism and communism.

For instance, the principle of state sovereignty in relations between socialist states also includes "their close friendship and mutual assistance in building socialism and communism and in defending their sovereignty against encroachments by imperialist powers."³⁵

Butenko³⁶ supported the point of view of the second group, holding that the "general democratic principles" are of the same bourgeois nature when applied to relations between socialist

countries as between capitalist countries.³⁷ Making the “general democratic principles” an integral part of “socialist internationalism”, he argued, makes any theoretical differentiation between the two sets of rules difficult. A similar approach makes it theoretically untenable to subordinate the “general democratic principles” to the principle of “socialist internationalism”, ultimately reducing the content of “socialist internationalism” to the observation of the “general democratic principles”. No less important, such an identification would imply that any divergence from the “general democratic principles” would be contrary to “socialist internationalism”.

According to Butenko, only the narrow interpretation of “socialist internationalism” makes it possible to argue coherently for the precedence of the principle of “socialist internationalism” over the “general democratic principles”. “Socialist internationalism” did not simply mean respect for sovereignty, equality and non-interference. Only in this interpretation, according to Butenko,

the fact, that if there is a contradiction between some aspect of democracy (general democratic principles of mutual benefit, independence, sovereignty) and the basic international interests of socialism, precedence is given to socialist internationalism, can be explained.

The “general democratic principles” themselves are the same everywhere, but “that does not mean that their practical implementation is the same”.³⁸

It should be noted, however, that the ultimate outcome of both approaches was to give the “general democratic principles” a secondary role in relations between socialist states. Reminding his readers of the experience in Czechoslovakia in 1968, Usenko concluded that

to reduce socialist internationalism only to the principles of equality, non-interference, sovereignty, [...] inevitably [leads] to kill the socialist content of this principle and, eventually, to petty-bourgeois nationalism.³⁹

All authors agreed that the “correct” balancing of the two elements in relations between socialist states is the clue to successfully “strengthening the unity of socialist states.”⁴⁰ This remained the

official view until changes in the Soviet attitude gradually set in after Gorbachev's accession to power in 1985. Repeated reminders, at the 26th CPSU congress and on later occasions in the form of leadership statements and articles in journals and newspapers, left little doubt that the will to defend "the gains of socialism" was still an essential part of Soviet thinking on relations with the socialist countries. "Socialist internationalism" remained the cornerstone of socialist international relations.

National and international interests

The question of the relationship between national interests of particular socialist countries and the common interests of the whole socialist world was at the core of Soviet doctrine about relations between socialist countries in general, and between the Soviet Union and the smaller countries of the commonwealth in particular. The Warsaw letter of 15 July 1968 stated that

[e]ach of our parties bears a responsibility not only to its own working class and its own people but also to the international working class and the world Communist movement and cannot evade the obligations deriving from this.

Soviet thinking on this topic was relatively stable from the beginning of the period under review until important changes gradually developed following the 27th CPSU congress in February 1986.

The orthodox view defined the international interests of socialist countries as "the general, regular, basic interests of all socialist countries, which constitute the core of the national state interests of each of the fraternal countries".⁴¹ The preponderance of common interests over national ones was ascribed to the existence in the socialist states of basically similar political and economic structures. The relationship between the international and the national interests was usually presented as a matter of finding the point of balance between two conflicting tendencies. A collective work on the topic from 1977 defined the fundamental contradiction within socialism as

*the contradictory interaction of the national and the international, between the increasing internationalization of the productive forces and production itself on the one hand, and the preserved national-state form of organization of societal life on the other.*⁴²

While the national and the international interests of the working class were said to be identical “in the final analysis”,⁴³ a degree of conflict between the two was bound to exist as long as the socialist world remain organized in national states. The complete “withering away” of this contradiction would coincide only with the transformation of the world socialist system into higher forms of human societal existence.⁴⁴

However, Soviet theoreticians pointed out that the process of gradual “sblizhenie” (convergence) between the socialist countries led to an increasing identity of the national interests of particular countries with the common interests of the whole socialist world. K. Katushev, then head of the Central Committee department for liaison with ruling Communist parties, noted in 1973 that the development of the socialist commonwealth had resulted in a very high degree of identity between the two.⁴⁵ Variations of this argument were a favoured topic of Soviet theoreticians during the period under review. In March 1977, for instance, an article in *Kommunist* pointed to the increasing number of colluding interests between socialist countries, which more often than not made the common interests of the whole socialist system identical with the interests of particular countries.⁴⁶ In 1980 Mikhail Suslov maintained that “real” national interests never contradicted the international interests of the working class and socialism as a whole.⁴⁷

The obvious implication of the theory was that national interests had to be subordinated to the common interests of socialism as a whole in case of conflict between the two. At times this had been said explicitly in Soviet statements. A 1958 *Kommunist* critique of Yugoslav positions made it clear that “under certain conditions proletarian internationalism demands the subordination of the interests of the [...] struggle in one country to the struggle on a worldwide scale.”⁴⁸ The point was clearly perceived in Eastern Europe. The official Hungarian journal *Társadalmi Szemle* lamented

in 1984 that a consequence of the theory had been that "national interests necessarily had to play a secondary role and generally had to be subordinated to interests and objectives that were seen as common ones."⁴⁹ The Hungarian article was the implicit object of an article in the Czechoslovak party daily *Rude Pravo*, which presented a staunchly orthodox reiteration of the orthodox view of the "dialectics" of the national and the international under socialism. The Czechoslovak article was promptly paraphrased in the Soviet weekly *Novoe Vremia*.⁵⁰

Nicolae Ceausescu, not surprisingly, had attacked the theory for similar reasons, pointing out that "the sovereignty of socialist countries" should not counterpoise socialist internationalism. In his view, the principle of sovereignty of states and equality of Communist parties should not be limited by giving precedence to the common interests of socialism.⁵¹ The Soviets, on the other hand, never failed to make it clear that nationalist feelings constituted a major threat to socialist construction in commonwealth countries.

Suslov's categorical statement notwithstanding, the relationship of national and international interests was seen as the main source of conflict and contradiction between socialist countries. Another important source of conflict was the uneven level of economic development among the countries of the socialist commonwealth. However, any conflict or contradiction was "non-antagonistic" and of a non-permanent nature.⁵²

General laws and specific national conditions

Closely related to the discussion of national versus international interests was the question of the relative status of the general laws (obshchie zakonomernosti) of socialist construction and specific historically-defined conditions in socialist countries. The dominant trend during the 1970s was to stress the overriding importance of following the general laws when building socialism. Although Soviet thinking on the topic did not fail to point out the existence of different social, economic and political conditions in various countries, the tendency was to play down their significance when compared to the general rules of socialist construction.

At the 24th CPSU congress in 1971 Brezhnev pointed out that the success of socialism largely depended on "the correct combination of the general and the national specific" in the development of socialist societies. The way to socialism "in its main features" was determined by "the general patterns inherent in the development of all the socialist countries." These general patterns, however, were manifested in many different forms, due to concrete historical conditions and national specifics.⁵³ The congress, not surprisingly, endorsed Brezhnev's formulations in its resolution on the Central Committee report.

The implications inherent in Brezhnev's seemingly balanced statement were clarified by subsequent discussions of the topic. An article by Katushev in March 1972, stressing the importance of not deviating from the general rule of socialist construction, presented the main points of the argument. In fact, according to Katushev, it would be a mistake to pose a contradiction between specific national conditions and the general laws of socialist development. Consequently, "it would be a serious mistake to speak about a precedence of the national-specific over the general laws."⁵⁴ Any deviation from the general laws of socialist development would, moreover, be corrected by life itself:

*the real needs of societal development invariably necessitates the removal of any deviations from the objective laws of socialist construction. Life itself sooner or later will give everything its due place.*⁵⁵

An important element of the argument was the rejection of even the possibility of serious conflict between a "correct" policy according to the general laws and the necessity of taking account of conditions differing from country to country. Although the neglect of particular national conditions was castigated as "dogmatism" and branded as "un-Leninist", the general line of argument left little doubt that deviations from the general rules of socialist construction (i.e. the Soviet model) were theoretically untenable.⁵⁶ Indeed, "deification" of national specific conditions was identified as the very foundation of the "revisionist" threat in the Communist movement.⁵⁷

The discussion about the role of general laws and national specifics was often set in terms of attacking Chinese and Euro-communist views, explicitly or through more subtle hints. In the summer of 1980 an authoritative voice derided as "opportunist"

attempts to replace Marxism-Leninism by "a combination of general truths of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete revolutionary process" as a pretext for departure from the general laws of socialist construction.⁵⁸

Although Soviet and East European official statements and specialists' contributions repeatedly stressed the equality of all parties in the Communist movement, the theory of the role of general laws versus specific national conditions implied a special role in the socialist movement to the CPSU, as "the most experienced" of the Communist parties. In practical terms, therefore, fidelity to the "general laws" could mean simply adherence to the Soviet experience. Although the Soviets used to be extremely cautious on this point, Soviet contributions sometimes made it clear that the equality was somewhat qualified, as when Aleksandr Sobolev, head of one of the departments in the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the CPSU Central Committee, characterized neglect of the experience of the CPSU as being one of the main traits of revisionism.⁵⁹

Brezhnev's speech at the 26th CPSU congress in February 1981 seemed to indicate a somewhat greater recognition of diversity in the socialist camp, thereby scaling down the preponderance of the "general laws". He pointed to the "diversified positive experience in organizing production and management and in resolving economic problems" in various socialist countries. Specifically, he mentioned *inter alia* the work of agricultural cooperatives and enterprises in Hungary, and East German experiences in industrial management.⁶⁰

The 26th CPSU congress also seemed to initiate a cautious campaign in favour of stressing the value of the "collective experience" of socialism. Brezhnev's remarks on the congress were reflected in subsequent articles, which pointed to the possible significance of innovations even for the Soviet Union (the word "reform" was more often than not avoided) in developing socialism in other countries.⁶¹ One should not base too much of an argument on this point. It could, however, be an early signal of reevaluations of the nature of the relationship between the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies which were to manifest themselves a few years later.

Process of convergence between socialist states (sblizhenie)

Soviet thinking presupposed the existence of a long-term tendency of socialist countries to develop ever-closer forms of cooperation and coordinated development, leading eventually to forms of societal organization making the idea of separate statehood obsolete. This idea of gradual convergence (sblizhenie) and increased cohesion (splochnost') was a principal element of the theory of "international relations of the new type" as it evolved during the 1970s and in the first half of the 1980s. The world socialist system, according to the collective work from 1978 referred to earlier, was characterized by

the formation of structural forms related to the developing socialist international division of labour, to the broadening co-ordination of the fraternal countries' foreign policies, and to the growing cooperation in the fields of ideology and organizational and party work. Thus the development is pointing towards the gradual transformation of the community (system) of socialist countries into a organic socio-historical entity, which will be the regular (zakonomernyi) result of their all-round convergence (sblizhenie).⁶²

The process of "sblizhenie" resulted from a number of factors, such as a common ideology, the fundamental similarity of the countries' economic and political systems, the general rules governing the construction of socialism in any socialist country, the internationalization of economic life, and the common interest in the defence of the gains of socialism against the machinations of internal and external enemies.⁶³

However, this ultimate goal was obviously seen as a distant one. Meanwhile, the doctrine aimed at steadily developing unity and cohesion between the socialist countries.⁶⁴ One frequently mentioned aspect of this process was the gradually diminishing differences between the levels of economic development within the commonwealth. This did not simply imply that the least developed of the socialist countries would have to achieve a higher rate of growth

than those on a more advanced stage of development in order to reach the same rate of per capita production. A principal prerequisite for this process would be the transformation of all branches of the economy of the socialist countries on a socialized footing.⁶⁵ For a country like Poland, with a large private agricultural sector, this might have important implications. Ultimately, economic integration would lead to the formation of a single social-economic entity free of national borders.⁶⁶

The notion of growing convergence was not limited to the economic sphere alone. The process also involved the gradual withering away of differences in the spheres of social and political structures, ideology and culture.⁶⁷ At the 25th CPSU congress in 1976 Brezhnev made it clear that the "gradual leveling out of their development" and the "gradual drawing together" of socialist countries were now operating as an "objective law".⁶⁸

The theory of "sblizhenie", "splochennost" (cohesion), and the ultimate "slianie" (fusion) of socialist countries, continued as a regular feature of the theory of socialist international relations. However, an increased sensitivity toward the urgency of paying attention to the specific needs of individual socialist countries may be deduced from Brezhnev's remarks on the topic at the 26th CPSU congress. After referring to the value of the collective experience of socialist countries (see above), he continued:

*That process [of convergence] is continuing. But it does not obliterate the specific national features or the historical distinctions of individual socialist countries. We should see the variety of forms of their social life and economic organization for what it really is - a wealth of ways and methods of establishing the socialist way of life.*⁶⁹

An editorial in *Kommunist* in 1983 may be interpreted as a further indication that a reevaluation was now under way. The editorial, which repeated the monotonous call for unity in the socialist bloc, observed that natural conditions and history had led to differences in the methods of building the socialist society. This should be seen as a natural thing, according to *Kommunist*, "although earlier it was assumed that the socialist world would be more homogeneous".⁷⁰

The evolution of Soviet thinking until 1985

The main features of the doctrine remained basically stable during the first half of the 1980s. Points of view hardly varied between authors, and those that did carried no immediate implications for Soviet policy in Eastern Europe. However, on the more subtle level there seemed to be a tendency under way towards a greater recognition of diversity within the socialist bloc, which would become more visible after Gorbachev's accession to power in March 1985. There was also an increased emphasis on the value of the "collective experience" of the socialist commonwealth. We have noted Brezhnev's remarks to this effect at the 26th CPSU congress. A Central Committee Plenum in June 1983 took one more cautious step toward a partial reinterpretation of the relationship between the Soviet Union and its socialist allies, noting that

the last two decades enriched our thinking about socialism, demonstrated more clearly its variations and complexity. Between the socialist countries there are great economic and cultural differences, and variations in the ways and methods of solving the tasks of socialist development. This is a natural thing, although we used to think of it [i.e. the process of socialist construction] as more uniform.⁷¹

But more often than not the familiar arguments from the preceding decade were repeated, with no significant change of emphasis. Presentations of the theory of relations between socialist states continued to emphasize the importance of finding the right balance of national and international interests. In cases of conflict between the two, priority was clearly to be given to the common interests of socialism. By opposing "narrowly perceived national state interests at any given moment" to the "common internationalist position", nationalism still represented the greatest danger to socialism.⁷²

The right to "common defence of the gains of socialism" was never questioned. Indeed, the 26th CPSU congress explicitly reaffirmed the continued validity of this aspect of the Brezhnev Doctrine. Referring to the unfolding events in Poland, and predicting future trials for the socialist world, Brezhnev made the

following statement: "And let no one doubt our common determination to secure our interests and to defend the socialist gains of the people."⁷³

An article in *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'* in the summer of 1983 may be quoted as fairly typical of the pre-27th congress doctrine of relations between socialist states.⁷⁴ The author continued the tradition of the 1970s, without signalling any significant new departures. However, he played down the element of "fraternal help in the defence of socialism", stressing more noncontroversial points about political, economic, and other fields of cooperation. Other authors, on the other hand, did not fail to stress the continued validity of this part of the doctrine.⁷⁵ The other arguments were all familiar, for instance the critique of non-marxist theory for ignoring the class content of international relations.⁷⁶ Discussing differences in the level of economic development between socialist countries as an important determinant of their mutual relations, the article emphasized the necessity of developing further cooperation between socialist countries. This process of "sblizhenie" created the best conditions for the strengthening of the sovereignty of each socialist country. A somewhat cautious and noncontroversial formulation about the need to defend the gains of socialism did not counterpoise the right to self determination of each country - apparently, there was no inherent conflict between the two. The author acknowledged the existence of contradictions between socialist countries, which, albeit non antagonistic, might take on an acute form as the result of the sinister influence of forces hostile to socialism.⁷⁷ He stressed the importance of foreign policy cooperation between the countries of the socialist commonwealth. This, together with appeals for increased ideological unity and vigilance in face of the deteriorating relations with the West, were prominent in Soviet statements on socialist international relations in the first half of the 1980s.⁷⁸

However, Soviet calls for strengthened unity in the socialist bloc in the face of the deterioration of East-West relations met with no unconditional approval in Eastern Europe. Erich Honecker suddenly abandoned his hard-line approach in the dispute over the deployment of American Pershing II and cruise missiles in Western Europe. Despite Moscow's obvious discontent, the GDR continued its policy of multi-faceted intra-German cooperation and consulta-

tions even when the deployment of the missiles got under way in the Federal Republic. The German position was supported by the Hungarians, while Czechoslovakia came out with strong verbal support for the Soviet side.⁷⁹

For the purpose of this study it should be noted that the discussions revealed significant variations in the interpretation of the postulates of the theory of socialist international relations. Obviously in order to support Honecker in the dispute with Moscow, Matyas Szuros, the HSWP Central Committee secretary responsible for foreign relations and a former ambassador to Moscow, presented an interpretation of "national" and "international" interests which clearly contradicted the Soviet position. Writing in the HSWP journal *Társadalmi Szemle*, he pointed out that

*the present interpretation of the international interest and the method of formulating it changed the hierarchical order of national and international interests. In the era of a [decision making] center and then the world conferences where decisions were made on the basis on pluralism, national interests [...] necessarily played a secondary role and generally had to be subordinated to interests and objectives that were seen as common ones. There is no question of this kind of unconditional subordination any more ...*⁸⁰

Szuros went on to state that national interests could be subordinate to common interests "only in an extraordinary situation". The "dialectics" of national and international interests were manifest in both the domestic and foreign policies of socialist countries.⁸¹

Szuros' interpretation was the obvious aim of a subsequent article in the Czechoslovak Party daily *Rude Pravo*. The authors of the article had noted recent attempts to reinterpret "the hierarchic system of national and international interests". Such undertakings only revealed "a metaphysical understanding" of the relationship between those two values:

One thing is, and will continue to be, valid: the criterion of a truly revolutionary line is not a verbal but real, harmonious formulation of national and international interests and duties. The national is reflected through the international; true national interests can be understood only

within the framework of respect for the international interests of all socialist countries and of all working people in the world ..."⁸²

The front lines in the dispute were emphasized when the GDR Party daily *Neues Deutschland* reprinted Szuros' article on April 12, while the Soviet weekly *Novoe vremia* at the same time published a paraphrase of the *Rude Pravo* article. Nor was it a mere coincidence that Oleg Rakhmanin in the April issue of the Soviet journal *Voprosy istorii KPSS* published an article dealing with "the union of a new type", i.e. socialist international relations. "Concern for the correct combination of the international and the national", he wrote, was "the common cause of all Communists". Rakhmanin continued:

*The CPSU rejects any attempts by revisionists to "refute" the principle of proletarian internationalism by means of artificially opposing it by appealing for "independence and self sufficiency" ... The CPSU also considers unacceptable a position of "neutrality" toward the violation of the correct combination of the international and the national ...*⁸³

Such differences in the interpretation of the doctrine did not belong to the realm of "pure theory". They reflected a growing diversity among the East European countries in domestic and foreign policies as a result of their efforts to cope with mounting domestic and social problems at home and an adverse international environment. At the same time the unstable leadership in the Kremlin, which characterized the period from the last years of Brezhnev's rule until Gorbachev's rise to power in March 1985, seemed increasingly unwilling or unable to enforce stability, unity and cohesion in the bloc. Thus was heralded the collapse of political, ideological and economic unity in Eastern Europe.

IV. The Gorbachev period: 1985-1989

1985-1987: The beginning of a reevaluation

The election of Mikhail Sergeevich Gorbachev as General Secretary of the CPSU in March 1985 was not followed by any dramatic announcement of new approaches to Soviet policy towards the socialist countries, although Gorbachev in his first speech promised to make the strengthening of "fraternal friendship" with the social countries his "first commandment".⁸⁴ Nor did the April Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, which sketched the main outlines of coming economic reform, pay much attention to foreign policy. Gorbachev made only a passing reference to relations with the socialist allies in his speech to the Plenum, calling for new efforts to improve cooperation and "the organic combination of national and international interests of the great commonwealth."⁸⁵ His remarks may have been an attempt to take a middle stance in the dispute over the correct interpretation of the national and the international in relations between socialist states.

Before long the intra-bloc debate mentioned above was complemented by a Soviet discussion of the nature of relations between socialist states. The conservatives were once more represented by Oleg B. Rakhmanin (the first deputy chief of the CPSU Central Committee Department of Liaison with Communist and Workers' Parties of Socialist Countries, now writing under the pseudonym of O. Vladimirov), while Iurii Novopashin of the Institute of the Economy of the World Socialist System wrote for the reformist camp.

Rakmanin's article, in the 21 June 1985 issue of *Pravda*,⁸⁶ was a vicious attack on all attempts to reinterpret the fundamentals of the theory of socialist international relations. Some of the article's main points left no doubt that what he had in mind was not least the unorthodox views presented by Szuros the previous year. Rakhmanin's article may also be interpreted as an attempt by the conservative faction to define the agenda for Soviet debates on relations with other socialist countries. In the face of strengthened

imperialist attempts to weaken the socialist camp, the socialist countries had to demonstrate their "fidelity to the principles of proletarian internationalism", their readiness to defend the gains of socialism and the "interests of world socialism". Rakhmanin condemned theories which treated the "general laws" of socialism as "belonging to the past," and rejected attempts to replace the time-honored principles of "socialist internationalism" with "some new kind of "unity". He attacked the idea of models of "national communism," and argued that deviations from the path of marxism-leninism were regularly the result of "nationalist tendencies". He also criticized "revisionist" attempts to allow for more private ownership and increase the role of market forces in socialist economies.

Iurii Novopashin's article, in the September 1985 issue of *Rabochii klass i sovremennyi mir* (a journal devoted to studies of the "international workers' movement", to use the Soviet term)⁸⁷, presented a striking contrast to Rakhmanin's orthodoxy. Whereas the *Pravda* article in no way differed from orthodox Brezhnevite interpretations of the theory of socialist international relations of the 1970s, Novopashin's views were too radical to be representative for pre-February 1986 thinking on the subject. Even in late 1988 more orthodox authors criticized some of his views as neglecting the internationalist part of the doctrine. Novopashin's article, subjecting a number of old dogmas to critical scrutiny, nevertheless signaled the emergence of opinions which would later constitute part of the mainstream of Soviet analysis. Since the early 1970s Novopashin had been a prominent contributor to the scholarly debate about socialist international relations.

Novopashin called for greater attention to the primary importance of "democratism" in relations between socialist states. It appears from his analysis that what he had in mind was the "general democratic principles" which the theory identified as one of the two sources of socialist international relations.⁸⁸ In reaching his conclusion, Novopashin made the potentially significant observation that the national interests of socialist states, neither being entirely identical with the common interests of socialism, nor withering away in the process of socialist "sblizhenie", were in fact asserting themselves more and more forcefully as a result of the

socialist states' consolidation and economic development. This made the emergence of contradictions between the interests of socialist states unavoidable. In a thinly disguised reference to Soviet conduct of its relations with its socialist allies, he warned against "great power ambitions" as the deciding factor in resolving disputes within the socialist camp.⁸⁹

"Democratic centralism", according to Novopashin, could not be the principle guiding relations between nations. Theoretical justifications for the application of the principles of "democratic centralism" to inter-state relations often referred to isolated statements of Lenin or Marx and Engels, who, however, did not foresee or discuss the kind of socialist world system which developed after World War II.⁹⁰ Novopashin rejected the whole idea, inherent in "democratic socialism", of subordinating peripheral interests to the common ones expressed at the centre:

For this reason [...] attempts to characterize the contents of socialist internationalism in subordinating categories appear as dubious, like, for instance, statements to the effect that the principle of respect for the sovereignty of socialist countries should be subordinated to unity as another, higher principle of their mutual relations. This habit of speech ignores the processes under way in the world socialist system and in the international relations of the new type. These processes demand a harmonizing, not subordinating approach to the question of combining national and international elements in the development and [...] mutual relations of socialist countries.⁹¹

There was a tendency in the past to exaggerate the development towards "edinobrazie" (conformity) in the socialist world. Novopashin referred in this connection to the June 1983 plenum of the CPSU Central Committee (see above, p. 28). Soviet policy toward the socialist countries, according to Novopashin, must take into account the sometimes very significant differences and contradictions which exist within the socialist world. For the foreseeable future, the tendency toward internationalization of economic and societal life would be paralleled by the continued development and strengthening of national states within socialism.⁹²

An article by Oleg Bogomolov in *Kommunist*, although less outspoken and clear in its implications than Novopashin's

contribution, made it clear that his reevaluation was not an isolated phenomenon at the time (although it should be noted that Novopashin and Bogomolov both represent the Institute for the Economy of the World Socialist System, which has established itself as the main center for innovations in the theory of socialist international relations). Bogomolov called for more realism and pragmatism in the handling of conflicts between national and international economic interests in the socialist commonwealth. Like Novopashin, he argued that conflicts of interests were bound to occur for the foreseeable future, although the national and international interests were "ultimately" identical.⁹³

* * *

The ambivalent state of the theory probably reflected differences of opinion within the new leadership and lack of a coherent strategy for managing intra-socialist affairs. The proceedings of the 27th CPSU congress in February 1986 seemed to confirm this interpretation. Western scholars visiting Moscow at the time were allegedly told that "the whole issue of intra-bloc relations and reform in Eastern Europe had proven "too controversial" for detailed enunciation during the Congress."⁹⁴

Gorbachev's political report at the congress made only short and noncommittal references to the evolution of relations between countries in the "socialist commonwealth". Avoiding the most controversial elements of socialist internationalism, the General Secretary emphasized the importance of developing all forms of cooperation between socialist countries. Stressing the need for launching new initiatives in domestic and international policies, he pointed to the necessity of taking into account the forms of societal development in the whole number of socialist countries. The need was for a "respectful attitude" toward each other's experiences.⁹⁵ This was in line with the emphasis on the value of the "collective experience" of socialist countries expressed at the 26th CPSU congress and in subsequent statements.

The resolution of the congress on the report of the Central Committee was equally noncommittal in its treatment of the subject. However, the resolution repeated Gorbachev's emphasis on

the value of the diversified experience of the socialist world, and could by its very vagueness give rise to different interpretations:

The Congress proceeds from the premise that the diversity of the communist movement is not a synonym for disunity, just as unity has nothing in common with uniformity, with hierarchy, with the interference of some Parties in the affairs of others, or with a striving by any Party to have a monopoly over truth. The communist movement draws its strength from its bold, creative approach to the realities, in keeping with the doctrine of Marx, Engels, and Lenin; from its class solidarity and equal cooperation among all fraternal Parties in the struggle for common aims – peace and socialism.⁹⁶

A discussion of the significance of the congress for relations between socialist countries in *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, the semi-official journal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, strengthened the impression that the congress by itself hardly represented significant new departures in the field. Under the heading "Socialist internationalism – the foundation of relations between the fraternal countries", the article clearly aimed at strengthening the orthodox view. The author quoted Lenin's appeal to "fight *against* small-nation narrow-mindedness, seclusion and isolation, consider the whole and the general, subordinate the particular to the general interest." According to Lenin, "one must *not* think only of one's own nation, but place *above it* the interests of all nations".⁹⁷

Neither did the new party program adopted at the congress signal a fundamentally new analysis of the nature of socialist international relations. One obvious change when compared to the program of 1961 is the absence of the pinpointing of "nationalism" and "revisionism" (in 1961 represented by Yugoslavia) as the most serious threat to socialism and the Communist movement.⁹⁸ The 1986 program makes only a passing reference to the constant attempts of imperialism to utilize internal difficulties in socialist countries to fan nationalist emotions.⁹⁹ The parts of the new program discussing relations between socialist countries emphasized the necessity of further developing forms of comprehensive cooperation – political, economic, military and cultural. In a significant passage the program noted that the preceding decades

had enriched the practice of socialist construction, and demonstrated the diversity (mnogooobrazie) of the socialist world. The consistent utilization "of the general laws (obshchie zakonomernosti) in the concrete situation of each socialist country" was the formula for the successful construction of socialism.¹⁰⁰

Thus the 27th CPSU congress alone did not promise significant new developments in the doctrine. However, the very vagueness of the language, in Gorbachev's speech as well as in the subsequent resolution and in the new party program, whether intentional or not, would seem to open for discussions which could eventually challenge orthodox interpretations. The congress, on the other hand, did not create a new ideological framework to regulate relations between socialist states. It seems reasonable to conclude that the new leadership had not yet undertaken a comprehensive review of the field. Limiting themselves to noncommittal phraseology, they avoided or toned down controversial parts of the old doctrine, while leaving the main framework largely intact.

It became increasingly evident, however, that the times of a single, coherent "theory" were gone. The fundamental unanimity of views which until recently had characterized Soviet statements and writings about socialist international relations no longer existed. A group of innovators, who extended "new thinking" in Soviet foreign policy to intra-bloc relations, were opposed by hard-liners of the old school. In February 1986 Vadim Zagladin published an article which, without mentioning Novopashin's contribution from the previous autumn, was clearly an attack on reform-minded interpretations of socialist international relations. Rejecting notions that internationalism was "outdated", Zagladin complained that proletarian internationalism was sometimes discussed in a manner which threatened to strip the notion of its "internationalist" content.¹⁰¹ *Pravda* continued to champion the traditionalist cause. An editorial after the CMEA summit in Moscow in November 1986 reiterated the old arguments. *Pravda* stressed the need for "unity", "cooperation", and "cohesion" in relations between socialist states, which should be guided by the principles of "proletarian, socialist internationalism".¹⁰²

The apparent conservative opposition notwithstanding, from early 1987 the changes initiated in Soviet theory on socialist international relations after Gorbachev's accession to power rapidly

gained in significance and visibility. First, the previous unity of views vanished – and the observer was left to cope with an increasing number of mutually contradictory statements, some of which might have originated from sources highly placed in the government machinery or in influential academic institutions. Being primarily the result of the new atmosphere of “glasnost” which gained momentum after the January 1987 plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, the new plurality of opinions would in itself imply a change in the role of the “theory of socialist international relations” in relations between socialist states. Until then statements in major Soviet academic journals and newspapers could be interpreted as representing Soviet leadership opinion (or the opinion of important leadership groups), not merely the author’s personal views. One of their functions was to signal Soviet preferences to the outside world. The new situation has changed the observer’s task when trying to interpret the multitude of Soviet statements. Secondly, what could be called the mainstream interpretation of the doctrine underwent significant changes. Authors, who in the conformist 1970s had produced strictly orthodox articles and books, which in their basic arguments were hardly distinguishable from one another, now presented new and challenging interpretations. One representative of this kind of metamorphosis was the academician Oleg T. Bogomolov, leader of the Academy Institute of the Economy of the World Socialist System, whose previous works in the field were not always stimulating reading, but who now regularly appears with provocative views on the nature of socialist international relations.

An article by Vadim Zagladin in *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil* (a journal of the Ministry of Defence) presented some of the themes which were to reoccur in subsequent discussions of the subject.¹⁰³ It may seem curious that Zagladin, who usually did not excel in innovative reformulations of orthodox doctrine (cf. his article from February 1986 mentioned above), now seemed to initiate a new approach to the topic. The most obvious explanation may be that the need for new thinking in the field was now generally recognized, and the conservative faction wanted to put their imprint on the ensuing debate.

Zagladin argued that diversity in the movement should be viewed

primarily as a source of strength, which "makes it easier for communists to pay regard to national peculiarities and the actual historical situation". The rise of disagreements within the movement is a completely natural consequence of this diversity, and should be overcome by way of "comradely" discussions. Any attempts to avoid or hide disagreements in a movement as big as the communist one could be only illusory. Neither was the existence of a single unifying center in accordance with the demands posed by the time.

The CPSU's relationship with fraternal parties should be guided by a set of principles. First, relations with all Communist and workers' parties should be developed as one of the most important directions of CPSU activity on the international scene. Second, disagreements between the parties should not be exaggerated. Disagreements are, basically, normal, and they should not be allowed to prevent the development of constructive relations. Third, when striving toward higher forms of collaboration between the parties, the CPSU should not equate unity with "edinobrazie" (conformity) - no one has a monopoly of truth, and there should be no interference in each other's affairs. Disagreements, even in matters of principle, should be solved by way of discussion. The CPSU should be guided by the principle of "proletarian internationalism", but "complete independence and equality, noninterference in each other's internal affairs" should be its indispensable parts. Zagladin also recognized the necessity of a new analysis of a series of problems of the communist movement and international relations.

Gorbachev's remarks during his visit to Prague in April 1987, although not representing a fundamental revision of the basic doctrine of "socialist internationalism", continued the line only indicated at the 27th congress by renewing the emphasis on "mnogoobrazie" (diversity) and the non-socialist general principles of relations between states. Answering Gustav Husak's somewhat hypocritical praise of the policy of reform in the Soviet Union, Gorbachev said, inter alia:

We proceed above all from the premise that the entire system of political relations between the socialist countries can and should be built unswervingly on a foundation of equality and mutual responsibility. No one has the right to claim a special position in the socialist world. The

independence of each party, its responsibility to its people, the right to resolve questions of the country's development in a sovereign way – for us, these are indisputable principles.

It may be argued that these remarks did not necessarily signal the emergence of a new Soviet interpretation of the nature of relations between socialist countries. After all, “equality” and “sovereignty” had on various occasions in the past been hailed as undisputable elements of socialist international relations. However, their significance on this occasion was underlined by parallel remarks about the need to proceed to a “qualitatively new stage” in relations between socialist states – the old forms of cooperation being no longer sufficient.¹⁰⁴

Some weeks earlier the General Secretary had used similar language during a visit to Moscow of the Argentine communist leader Athos Fava. The two party leaders agreed that the movement needed to overcome “stereotypes that arose in the previous stage”. They called for

*relations among Communist Parties that rule out any sort of “centre” and that promote a common search for answers to urgent and long-term questions and for relations of trust and sincerity, in which parties are able to value one another's experience and to cherish the principles that enable them to draw from this diverse experience lessons that are useful to each other.*¹⁰⁵

Gorbachev used similar expressions in an interview in the *l'Unità* in May. He strongly repudiated the possibility of the existence of any kind of “centre” of the communist movement. The “determination of policy and forms of activity” were wholly within the jurisdiction of each party; cooperation itself was possible only “on a voluntary and equal basis”.¹⁰⁶

Oleg T. Bogomolov continued the cautious reevaluation under way in an article in *Kommunist* at about the same time. He stressed the diversity of forms of socialist development – each country's path toward socialism being influenced by the domestic factors and national characteristics. Bogomolov conceded that these points were not innovations in the theory. However, he says, there had been a tendency not to pay sufficient attention to “the analysis of the

diversity of forms and methods of socialist transformation". Continuing the theme of "unity in diversity", Bogomolov stated that differences in "national and state interests of each country" must be addressed in order to achieve cohesion in the socialist camp.¹⁰⁷

An article in *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil* some months later took a more conservative approach to the problem of finding the proper balance between the principle of "mnogoobrazie" and the orthodox values of unity and priority of common interests. The author referred to the new party program, and paraphrasing Gorbachev's speech in Prague, he stated as an overriding principle that "the whole system of political relations between the countries of socialism should be constructed unswervingly on the basis of complete equality and mutual responsibility. Nobody has the right to assume for himself a special position in the socialist world." The independence of each party is an unbreakable principle. But then came the ubiquitous "but" (this, too, a paraphrase of Gorbachev's remarks in Prague):

*we are deeply convinced, that a successful development of the socialist commonwealth is impossible unless every party and country takes an interest not only in its own affairs, but pays attention to the common interests as well, taking a respectful attitude to friends and allies and paying due attention to their interests.*¹⁰⁸

A third article, in the July issue of *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, supported the innovative interpretation represented by Bogomolov. Contrary to Bul'ba's traditionalist stressing of the priority of the international over national interests, the article in *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'* produced a Lenin quotation which emphasized the importance of adjusting the general principles of socialist construction to the conditions in each country.¹⁰⁹ The author also quoted Gorbachev's statement in Prague about the transition to a new phase in relations between socialist states. On the political level, according to the author, this new phase would require recognition of the complete equality of all the countries. No one had the right to a special position in the socialist world. The article noted that the independence of each party, their responsibility toward the people, and their sovereign right to decide all domestic issues, should be "unconditionally" respected.¹¹⁰

The doctrine thus proved sufficiently vague to allow a certain range of interpretations, without the appearance of necessarily rejecting old dogmas or creating new ones. At this point, at least, it was a matter of presenting relevant interpretations of the old doctrine.

Gorbachev's two main speeches during the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the October revolution in November 1987 did not add anything substantially new to the earlier statements. The paragraphs on relations between socialist states in his speech to the gathering of socialist and Communist parties on November 4 elaborated on the theme introduced before his visit to Prague and subsequently discussed by Soviet authors. While the call in Prague had been for "a new stage" in the development of relations between socialist states, Gorbachev now postulated the necessity of a "more sophisticated system of mutual relations" between the world's progressive forces. He warned against the "arrogance of omniscience" resulting in "a tenacious habit to reject other points of view out of hand."¹¹¹

Gorbachev's speech in the Supreme Soviet tried to balance the renewed stress on diversity with references to the still valid internationalist duties of socialist countries. Speaking about the necessity of "unconditional and complete equality" and "strict observance of the principles of peaceful coexistence"¹¹² between socialist states, Gorbachev continued:

The world of socialism stands before us today in all its national and social diversity. This is good and useful. We have become convinced that unity does not at all mean identity and uniformity. We have also become convinced that socialism does not and cannot have any "model" that everyone must measure up to.

The remarks on the traditional "common" interests of socialism were comparatively vague. Gorbachev recognized "concern for the common cause of socialism" as one of the "recognized principles" of relations between socialist states. However, when he directly addressed the internationalist aspects of the doctrine, the implications remained less than clear:

*We know about the damage that can be caused by a weakening of the internationalist principle in relations among socialist states, by deviations from the principle of mutual advantage and mutual assistance, and by inattention to the common interests of socialism in activities in the world arena.*¹¹³

A comparison of articles by Bogomolov and Savinov, who regularly wrote on the topic in the Foreign Ministry journal *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, may serve as a further illustration of the undetermined state of the doctrine at this point. An article by Bogomolov in the November 1987 issue of *Kommunist*,¹¹⁴ one of several contributions by this author during the year,¹¹⁵ took as its point of departure the need for "new solutions" to regulate the relations between socialist countries.¹¹⁶ Savinov, writing some months later in *Voprosy istorii KPSS*,¹¹⁷ agreed about the need for change, stating that the forms of cooperation which were formed "in the first period of the world socialist system" were becoming increasingly inadequate and must be renewed.¹¹⁸ Otherwise, however, Savinov's article was far more conservative in its general approach to the subject.

Bogomolov, stressing the extent of diversity in the socialist world and qualifying the value for other countries of the experience of the CPSU and the Soviet Union, emphasized the importance of the "general democratic rules" in relations between socialist states. The need was for democratization of international relations.¹¹⁹ References to "internationalism" were toned down. Bogomolov observed "a growing diversity of each country's approach to the tasks [of socialist construction]" resulting in mutual influence between the various forms of social change taking place in socialist countries.¹²⁰

Savinov, on the other hand, having finished the obligatory recital of the need for "new thinking" also in socialist international relations, in fact repeated many of the old dogmas of the doctrine. He stressed the continued validity of "socialist internationalism", attacking attempts to replace "socialist internationalism" with "socialist partnership". Similar attempts, according to Savinov, questioned the "class content" and the "revolutionary content" of relations between socialist states, contrary to the interests of socialism. As an example of this kind of thinking, he referred to Novopashin's article, mentioned previously, in *Rabochii klass i sovremennyi mir* from September 1985 (see above, p. 33).¹²¹

National interests, "correctly understood", Savinov wrote, ultimately converged with the common interests of socialism. Communists should pay attention in their decisions to factors uniting the socialist countries. Decisions should not be allowed to "weaken the common front against imperialism". The implications of the argument was that international interests should have precedence in cases of conflict between the two.¹²² Savinov emphasized the importance of the general laws of socialist construction, calling for "unity" and "cohesion" in the socialist bloc.

1988: Soviet ideology in transition

In the course of 1988 Soviet media rapidly extended the range of free wheeling discussions from domestic to discussions of foreign policy, including relations between socialist countries. In May and June Viacheslav Dashichev, department head in the Institute of the Economy of the World Socialist System, published a broad critique of past and, by implication, present conduct of Soviet foreign policy.¹²³ Dashichev himself viewed his efforts as an attempt to open up the field of foreign affairs to public debate, criticizing earlier silence on the subject. The new openness to debate and diverging views, even in publications aiming at a broader public, became apparent also in the field of Soviet-East European relations.

On the formal political level the signing of the joint Soviet-Yugoslav declaration on 18 March had potential significance not only for Soviet-Yugoslav relations. The principles said to govern Soviet relations with Yugoslavia were explicitly said to be valid for relations between socialist states in general. At the close of the year, in Gorbachev's speech to the General Assembly of the United Nations, some of the elements of the new Soviet view on relations between socialist states were stated in the most unambiguously authoritative manner so far.

The Yugoslav-Soviet declaration, signed during Gorbachev's visit to Yugoslavia,¹²⁴ opened by reiterating the content of the declarations from Belgrade 1955 and Moscow 1956. The two parties declared their continued adherence to the basic elements in

the two previous declarations: mutual respect for each other's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, equal rights, and noninterference in each others internal affairs under any pretext. The declaration also explicitly recognized the possibility of "different roads to socialism". While most of the specific stipulations of the declaration addressed Soviet-Yugoslav relations, the principles governing relations between the two countries were explicitly made valid for relations within the socialist world in general: "Consistent respect for the independence [...] of parties and socialist countries in their choice of path of their own development"; the declaration declared, had enabled the two governments to overcome the post-1948 difficulties. "This is of great importance not only for Soviet-Yugoslav mutual relations, but for the development and strengthening of socialism as a world system." The declaration went on to state a variety of the by now familiar Soviet theme of "freedom of choice":

Convinced that no one has a monopoly on truth, the two parties declare the absence of any intentions to force upon others their own ideas (predstavleniia) of societal development. The degree of success of each path to socialism is tested by social-political practise, and is affirmed by concrete results.

Referring to the Helsinki accord from 1975, the two parties declared their readiness to abstain from interference in other countries' internal affairs "under any pretext".

Aleksandr Bovin, the *Izvestia* commentator, has argued that the Soviet-Yugoslav declarations of 1955 and 1956, reflecting the "special case" of the troubled relationship between the two countries, had only limited impact on Soviet interpretations of the general nature of relations within the socialist world.¹²⁵ The Soviet acceptance of applying the basic principles of the new declaration to relations between all socialist states was of obvious significance for Soviet-East European relations.

* * *

Only a comparatively small part of Gorbachev's main speech to the 19th CPSU Conference on 28 June 1988 dealt directly with foreign

affairs and relations between socialist countries. However, when compared with the vague language on the subject of socialist international relations during the 27th CPSU Congress in 1986, Gorbachev's statements on this occasion testified to the process of reevaluation now under way. Without specifying the exact meaning of his words, Gorbachev stated that the socialist countries had endeavoured "to rid the internationalist essence of our relations of the sediment that accumulated on them in the past." Having stated that the socialist world was going through "a complex, crucial period", Gorbachev in the next paragraph stressed "freedom of choice" as a key factor of new thinking in foreign policy:

We are convinced that this is a universal principle for international relations at a time when the very survival of civilization has become the principal problem of the world, its common denominator.¹²⁶

Although his words seemed to be primarily directed toward the Third World, Gorbachev's emphasis on "freedom of choice" as an universal principle could hardly remain without repercussion for the ideological foundations of Soviet policy in Eastern Europe. In the present situation, Gorbachev continued,

the imposition of a social system, way of life, or policies from outside by any means, let alone military, are dangerous trappings of the past period. Sovereignty and independence, equal rights and non-interference are becoming universally recognized rules of international relations, which is in itself a major achievement of the twentieth century. To oppose freedom of choice is to come out against the objective tide of history itself. That is why power politics in all its forms and manifestations is historically obsolescent.¹²⁷

The relevant point is not the fact that Gorbachev did not raise "the question of limited sovereignty", or the fact that Eastern European reformers were left in the dark as to how much reform could be tolerated.¹²⁸ It could prove difficult, however, to maintain the ideological justification of the limitations to Eastern European autonomy while simultaneously stressing "freedom of choice" as an unconditional principle.

In another significant paragraph Gorbachev seemed to imply an

increased Soviet emphasis on the values of the "general democratic principles" of international relations:

The new political thinking has enabled us to appreciate more fully how vitally important to contemporary international relations are the moral values that have over the centuries been evolved by nations, and generalized and spelled out by humanity's great minds.¹²⁹

The cautious reevaluation of socialist international relations under way had so far remained within the flexible limits set by the old doctrine - reemphasizing and reinterpreting old formulas rather than placing socialist international relations on theoretically new foundations. Basic postulations of the old theory were not explicitly rejected. There always seemed to be the possibility of reviving some statement, of the "founders of Marxism-Leninism" or lesser authorities, which implied that the new view was, in fact, only the correct interpretation of old truths. In the realm of general Soviet foreign policy, on the other hand, the new thinking represented not only a reinterpretation, but the rejection of fundamental parts of the previous doctrine. The rejection of "class struggle" as the determining factor in relations between socialist and capitalist states brought Soviet international relations, in theory at least, on a new footing. Viacheslav Dashichev also criticized the conduct of Soviet foreign policy in the past. But the rejection of class struggle, as well as the historical critique, only touched upon Soviet relations with the socialist states.

The article by Aleksandr Bovin referred to above was one of the more revealing analyses of "socialist internationalism" and relations between the Soviet Union and its socialist allies so far. Its point of departure was a seemingly theoretical discussion of whether the principles of "peaceful coexistence" are applicable also to socialist international relations. Bovin identified "peaceful coexistence" with the "general democratic principles" for relations between states: non-aggression, equal rights, respect for sovereignty, non-interference, etc. This set of rules, according to Bovin, was "the only possible foundation" for cooperation between the fraternal countries, and they must also be at the foundations of "socialist internationalism". While the previous mainstream interpretation of

the doctrine had given precedence to “socialist internationalism” in the case of conflict, Bovin now took the opposite stand. And indeed, he continued, past mishaps in socialist international relations were due exactly to this order of priority:

*The principle of socialist internationalism cannot be realized, cannot be free of various kinds of deformations, [...] if its role in the system of socialist international relations is not founded on the solid foundations of [...] the general democratic norms.*¹³⁰

The theory itself had not been the real problem. Theoretically the “general democratic” norms had been acknowledged all the time. In praxis, however, attention had been fixed on the unity of ideas and policies and on monolithic cohesion – not on the norms of conduct derived from respect for sovereignty and equal rights.¹³¹ Although the critique was most specific for the pre-1956 period, Bovin argued that the negative tendencies continued to influence relations between the socialist countries. Bovin identified the balancing of national and international interests as the central problem in relations between socialist states.¹³²

The point is not that Bovin’s views necessarily represented the “official” view of the Soviet foreign policy apparatus. Other comments, like for instance some by LP Aboimov, a deputy minister of foreign affairs, could be more ambiguous in their implications. Aboimov limited himself to stressing the necessity of avoiding “dogmatism” and of “democratising” cooperation between the socialist countries, to take into regard the diversity of the socialist world, and to respect national interests and the peculiarities of each country.¹³³ However, Bovin was not alone in arguing for a reinterpretation of the relationship between the “general democratic norms” and “socialist internationalism”. Vadim Medvedev, the Central Committee secretary in charge of ideology, emphasized in an interview with *Kommunist* that “acknowledging national features” was no longer seen as a “deviation from Marxism-Leninism”. Medvedev described the “multiplicity of forms of national manifestations” of the socialist ideas as “the confirmation of its universal nature, and an enrichment of the socialist idea itself”.¹³⁴

Gorbachev’s appearance in the United Nations on 7 December

1988¹³⁵ represented the next in a series of Soviet efforts to convey a new image of Soviet foreign policy aims and methods. In some cases they had gone far in the direction of posing doubts about the morality and expediency of Soviet conduct in the past. In line with this tendency, Gorbachev's speech announced a set of new departures and questioned important parts of the fundamental dogmas hitherto underlying the conduct of Soviet foreign policy. Apart from concrete proposals in specific fields, the speech for the most part reiterated ideas which had been presented before as part of the evolving "new thinking" in Soviet foreign policy.¹³⁶ However, the form of the speech as a major Soviet foreign policy pronouncement directed toward a world audience warrants some comments on the parts directly relevant to Soviet-East European relations.

Gorbachev called for the rejection of the use of force as an instrument in foreign policy. In relations to Eastern Europe, this represented a significant departure from the original stipulations of the Brezhnev Doctrine - use of force actually spurred its very formulation.

He went on to state that every nation should have "freedom of choice" in the creation of its social and political system. The "freedom of choice" should not be restricted by any limitations:

To deny this right of the peoples, under whatever pretext it is done, under whatever words it is concealed, is to encroach upon even the unstable equilibrium that has been achieved. Freedom of choice is a universal principle, and it should know no exceptions.¹³⁷

The significant point is the statement about the universality of this principle. Although Soviet foreign policy doctrine has always stressed the "complete sovereignty" of socialist nations, such statements have regularly been followed by a number of important "buts" making it clear that "sovereignty" was to be interpreted within limitations set by "socialist internationalism". Gorbachev also stated as a fact the diversity (mnogovariantnost') of social and political forms in the capitalist *and* socialist world.

An equally important departure from previous dogmas was Gorbachev's interpretation of the role of international law in regulating relations between nations. We have discussed the earlier

approach - making the rules of international law subordinate to "class interests" in relations between socialist nations. Now Gorbachev declared his allegiance to a system of international law that should be binding on all states, independent of their social or political system:

Our ideal is a world community of states based on the rule of law that would be ruled by law in their foreign policy activity as well.

The achievement of this ideal would be facilitated by an accord, within the UN framework, on a uniform understanding of the principles and norms of international law, their codification with consideration for the new conditions, and the elaboration of legal norms for new spheres of cooperation. In the conditions of the nuclear age, the effectiveness of international law should be grounded not in fulfillment by compulsion but in norms reflecting a balance of the interests of states.¹³⁸

It may be argued that the general reorientation outlined in Gorbachev's speech and elsewhere is not relevant to Soviet thinking on relations between the Soviet Union and its socialist allies. Did the Soviets actually apply for instance "freedom of choice" to their doctrine of relations between socialist states? Statements by Eduard Shevardnadze at a conference in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the summer of 1988 seemed designed to demonstrate the linkage between "new thinking" and Soviet relations with Eastern Europe and other socialist states.

These relations, according to Shevardnadze, were established during the first decade after World War II, and necessarily reflected the "peculiarities" (osobennosti) of that period. This was reflected in "special ideas about the character of alliance obligations and the juridical procedures to safeguard these obligations". Although much had been done to place the alliance on a footing of "equality, respect for sovereignty and independence", these generally accepted principles of mutual relations were far from always realized in relations between the Soviet Union and its allies. "New thinking", however, had brought "genuine respect for the right to independence" and an "atmosphere of equality" and respect for and interest in each other's experience. Shevardnadze ended up declaring the right to "free choice" and the rules of "peaceful coexistence" (i.e. the "general democratic norms") to be the "higher, universal"

principles of relations between states. This, not surprisingly, fostered the necessity of rethinking a number of "stereotypes".¹³⁹

Lesser authorities were naturally still more direct when addressing the problem. Oleg Bogomolov declared in 1989:

Setting the course for revolutionary restructuring, the CPSU declared clearly and unambiguously: each communist party bears full responsibility for its policy before its own people; none of them, the CPSU included, can lay down claim to the absolute truth. The Soviet Union does not impose its own course on anyone. On the contrary, we are trying to make use of the valuable experience of other socialist countries. The times when those who departed from the Soviet model were excommunicated from socialism and branded degenerates have passed.¹⁴⁰

1989: Beyond the Brezhnev Doctrine

Political developments during 1989 seem to have answered the question underlying the above discussion of Soviet theory of socialist international relations since 1985. To what degree are the Soviets prepared to abandon the limitations on East European autonomy inherent in the "Brezhnev doctrine"? In fact, Soviet tolerance towards political and social experimentation in Poland and Hungary has proved to be far greater than anybody was able to foresee less than one year ago. Writing early in 1989, Charles Gati concluded that the Soviet Union was prepared to tolerate extensive experimentation in the region, but within certain limits:

Yet pluralism of the Western kind - one that would include several independent parties competing for power and the company unions coexisting with independent unions - remain ideologically unacceptable and untested, and thus unlikely.¹⁴¹

At the present moment¹⁴² the only remaining Soviet limitation to East European autonomy seem to be the demand that the WTO member countries honour their alliance commitments and continue cooperation with the Soviet Union in security and foreign affairs. But even here the "limits to Soviet tolerance" are undefined. Would

Hungary be allowed to leave the Warsaw Pact and assume a neutral position, as some fairly authoritative Soviet voices have suggested? Would the Soviet Union's security interests in the region be better served by some kind of Finnish/Austrian solution rather than by a military bloc of potentially unreliable and reluctant allies?

Thus the practise of Soviet policy toward Eastern Europe presents itself fundamentally differently in late 1989 when compared to Gorbachev's first years in power. In the realm of theory, however, the new practise has only been partially accompanied by explicit reevaluations and redefinitions. In August 1989 an observer of Soviet-East European relations made the observation that

*Soviet policy toward Eastern Europe is one area where glasnost' up until now has generated less of the type of critical debate that has accompanied other aspects of Soviet foreign policy.*¹⁴³

Soviet commentators themselves have made similar remarks. It was argued in *New Times* that more is said and written about Soviet-US relations or the common European house than about "the problems of the group of countries traditionally known as the socialist commonwealth".¹⁴⁴ Eduard Shevardnadze has made it clear that the exact content of the "new principles" that should guide relations between the "fraternal" countries remain to be defined. "On this field we are falling behind", he declared before the Supreme Soviet in October 1989.¹⁴⁵

The foremost reason for this may be the swiftness of developments in Eastern Europe. Rather than elaborating a blueprint and theoretical foundation for an active policy in the region, the Soviets have been presented with a series of *faits accomplis* which has made the previous theoretical framework for Soviet policy in the region now appears as an integral part of the general coherent blueprint for Soviet policy toward Eastern Europe, Soviet policy in the region now appears as an integrated part of the general framework of Soviet foreign policy strategy. The priority of the region in Soviet foreign policy thinking, with the concomitant need for a special theory to regulate intra bloc relations, has been scaled down.

The integration of Soviet policy towards Eastern Europe within

Soviet foreign policy strategy had its corollary in a general deideologization and pragmatization of Soviet policy in the region. Without explicitly rejecting all the axioms of the theory of "socialist international relations", the Soviets now prefer to deal with the subject in the pragmatic language of "new political thinking".

Soviet reactions to recent developments in Eastern Europe thus seem to imply that the interventionist part of the "Brezhnev doctrine" is no longer part of Soviet thinking on relations with the WTO countries of Eastern Europe. Although Gorbachev himself has avoided direct references to it, some of his close associates have repeatedly stressed that the Brezhnev doctrine is dead.

Until recently Soviet statements rarely addressed directly the notion of military intervention, and the Soviets used to reject the existence of a special "Brezhnev doctrine" of "limited sovereignty" for Eastern Europe. A Hungarian diplomat reportedly observed that "this so-called doctrine was never formally promulgated, so we can't expect it will be formally renounced".¹⁴⁶

With regard to the doctrine of "limited sovereignty", the Soviets have in fact gone far toward renouncing the right to military intervention in the socialist commonwealth. Soviet government spokesman Gennadii Gerasimov, when asked in December 1987 whether "the time now passed when it would be possible for the Soviet Union to intervene militarily in the name of socialism in Eastern Europe", answered an unequivocal "Yes". At about the same time politburo member Egor Ligachev, who can hardly be said to represent the reform-minded wing of the party, ruled out the possibility of Soviet intervention in Rumania on the lines of the interventions in Hungary and Czechoslovakia if the Rumanians should prove unable to overcome their difficulties themselves.¹⁴⁷ Oleg Bogomolov, during a press conference broadcast by Soviet television, stated that the Soviet Union no longer questioned the sovereignty of its socialist allies, and that from now on the application of "what has been known in the West as the Brezhnev Doctrine" was "inconceivable".¹⁴⁸ Before an American audience he said that "the "Brezhnev Doctrine" is completely unacceptable and 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".¹⁴⁹ In March 1989 Gorbachev reportedly told Hungarian party leader Karoly Grosz that "all possible safeguards should be provided so that no external force can interfere in the domestic issues of socialist countries" as in 1956 and 1968.¹⁵⁰ Recently some Soviet voices have been even more outspoken. Andranik Migranyan, an associate of Bogomolov at the Institute for the Economy of the World Socialist System, stated in August 1989 that "[w]hat in the West was called the "Brezhnev doctrine" in our theoretical studies was dubbed the principle of socialist internationalism in relations between the Warsaw Treaty countries". Underlying it was "the principle of a single model of socialism".¹⁵¹ Gorbachev himself, however, has neither acknowledged the existence of, nor rejected, the Brezhnev doctrine.

A reevaluation of the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and the legitimacy of the WTO intervention might be expected to accompany any definitive Soviet renunciation of the policies implied by the "Brezhnev doctrine" of "limited sovereignty". The evidence on this point is clearly open to interpretation, but as far as official Soviet opinion is concerned, the reevaluation has at best been a very hesitant one. Vadim Medvedev, then Central Committee secretary in charge of relations with ruling Communist parties, referred implicitly to the Czech reforms in an interview in February 1987, denouncing the reformers of 1968 as people who "behind the slogan of renewal were attempting to undermine socialism"¹⁵², and has denied any similarity between the present reforms in the Soviet Union and the developments in Czechoslovakia in 1968. Czech party chief Milos Jakes, during his visit to Moscow in January 1988, was apparently assured that no Soviet reevaluation was under way. Soviet views on the crisis, according to Jakes, were identical with those of the Czechoslovak government.¹⁵³ Other evidence is more ambiguous. Soviet press commentaries on the twentieth anniversary of the invasion in August 1988 included some critical reports on the background of the crisis and on the role of Soviet policies as obstacles to necessary reform.¹⁵⁴ A TASS commentary in *Izvestia* on 22 August, on the other hand, rejected the idea that a reevaluation of the Czechoslovak events must follow from the processes under way in the Soviet Union itself.

This picture was confused by statements of Soviet specialists, one

of whom told a Japanese newspaper that in a similar situation today, "our Party would make a decision different from the one it made in 1968. [...] The reason is that no one has the right to monopolize the truth."¹⁵⁵ Similar statements notwithstanding, Soviet leaders have so far not been willing to authorize a reevaluation of the Czechoslovak events. Since the summer 1989, however, signs of an imminent Soviet reevaluation have appeared. In August an article in *Moscow News* implicitly condemned the invasion, stating that "[t]he action, taken on August 21, crushed the hopes for a gradual, evolutionary transformation of our own society".¹⁵⁶ Eduard Shevardnadze, when pressed on the point during an interview with Adam Michnik of *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Warsaw), made it clear that the Soviet Union could not officially condemn the invasion as long as the Czechoslovak leadership did not change its position.¹⁵⁷ A similar argument may hold true for the broader question of an official Soviet renunciation of the Brezhnev doctrine. In August 1989 Evgenii Ambartsumov, a reform minded historian, told *La Repubblica* that "Gorbachev must take into account the position of the present Czechoslovak leadership" and that "he cannot today allow himself to adopt a position that would then be rejected by the political leadership of an allied country."¹⁵⁸ The Soviet reaction to the Polish-Czechoslovak squabble in late August 1989, after the Polish Sejm condemned the invasion, indicated a "neutral" position in the conflict.¹⁵⁹

The Soviet position is equally ambiguous with regard to the Hungarian uprising and the Soviet intervention of 1956. Despite the official Hungarian characterization of the events as a "popular uprising", the Soviets have not officially renounced its depiction as a "counterrevolution". Liberal and more conservative opinions have clashed in the columns of *New Times*.¹⁶⁰ An extremely conservative article on the subject appeared in a military-historical journal, repeating the old allegations about an "internal counter-revolution" supported by the "most reactionary forces of international imperialism" etc.¹⁶¹ The revolution and intervention in Hungary in 1956, however, is to a smaller degree than the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 directly linked to the genesis and the axioms of the Brezhnev doctrine.

Although the conduct of Soviet relations with Eastern Europe in the past has been extensively criticized under Gorbachev, the

Soviets have so far been cautious about questioning the very legitimacy of the communist takeover in these countries after the Second World War. Although it could be stated that "this model [i.e. the Soviet model] was not only an example, but [...] to a certain extent it was forced upon them [i.e. the East European countries]",¹⁶² even the most ardent reformers limited their critique to past "mistakes" in intra-bloc affairs.¹⁶³

Conclusion:

Soviet East European relations in transition

Even if it is impossible to answer the question of whether the Soviet Union has finally renounced the "Brezhnev doctrine" and the theory of "limited sovereignty", the changes with regard to the broader subject of Soviet theory of relations between socialist states have put the relationship between the Soviet Union and its allies in Eastern Europe on a new footing. First, the signals emanating from Moscow have changed from equating compliance with the Soviet model of socialist construction to encouraging reform based on the historical and socio-political realities in each country. Thus the regimes of Eastern Europe face the dilemma of reacting to popular demands of reform which may be implicitly or explicitly supported by Moscow. Second, changes in the theory and in officially proclaimed Soviet doctrine on relations between socialist states have all but eliminated the possibility of ideologically justifying an implementation of the interventionist part of the "Brezhnev doctrine".

The main line of development of Soviet thinking on socialist international relations during the last two decades has gone from emphasis on "convergence" (sblizhenie), "cohesion" (splochenost'), and ultimate "fusion" (slianie), toward recognition of the pluralization of the socialist world - "a search for variety [of socialist construction] within the framework of a single formation". As the Soviets put it, the idea of a single model of socialism has ceased to exist.¹⁶⁴

* * *

The opening pages of this study stressed the normative and policy-oriented character of Soviet ideology in general and the theory of relations between socialist states in particular. The fundamental task of ideology in relations between socialist states was described as fostering Soviet control and cohesion in the bloc by presenting a set of rules of the game for the conduct of domestic and foreign affairs. The theory of socialist international relations had the

specific function of providing such rules for relations between socialist states, and paid special attention to relations between the Soviet Union and its smaller allies. The "theory" however, was not confined to relations between states, but was intimately intertwined with a "theory" or doctrine of socialist development, i.e. with the internal evolution of socialist countries.

Thus "theoretical" discussions or statements served to signal Soviet preferences in matters of domestic and foreign affairs to the leaders of East European countries and also to various other target groups. Elements of the theory, which from a purely analytical point of view might seem less than illuminating, had obvious policy implications, and their evocation by Moscow might severely restrict the options open to policy makers in Eastern Europe. In this essay we have focused on the evolution of a number of such "focal points" of the Soviet theory of socialist international relations.

Considering the character and function of the theory as outlined above, it may be assumed that the gradual, and then more abrupt, development of some of its key elements reflected a real change in the way the Soviets viewed the nature of the relationship between the Soviet Union and the smaller socialist countries of Europe. The evolution of the doctrine implied a reconsideration on the part of the Moscow leadership of the nature of Soviet interests in the region, or at least a reevaluation of the means toward the achievement of Soviet objectives.

During the 1970s and the first part of the 1980s, the theory of socialist international relations was basically stable, and there were few signs of a radical reinterpretation of the basic tenets of the doctrine. We have seen, however, that evidence of an initial reevaluation became visible in the early 1980s, and that elaborations of the topic during the following years tended to stress "diversity" in the socialist camp as "regular" and "normal".

The principal cause for the reevaluation was the ailing performance of the Soviet and the East European economic and political systems which became increasingly manifest from about the middle of the 1970s. The stagnation, or even reversal, of the improvement in living standards, and the habit of the East Europeans to use as the basis for comparison the situation in Western Europe rather than that in the Soviet Union, seriously

undermined what was left of the legitimacy of the Communist regimes. Signs of potentially dangerous popular discontent appeared, most expressly in Poland, and at the same time the economic cost to the Soviet Union of bolstering the regimes in Eastern Europe steadily increased.¹⁶⁵ The western response to the imposition of martial law in Poland in December 1981 demonstrated the political cost of maintaining the unity of the socialist bloc in Europe. The "burdens of empire" became increasingly heavy for the Soviet Union.

Since the early 1970s western observers had pointed to the increasing potential for conflicts between Soviet demands for orthodoxy and East European particularistic aspirations. Referring to Soviet relations with its socialist allies in Eastern Europe (and to the US-Latin America relationship), William Zimmerman wrote in 1972:

*As decisionmakers in these states [i.e. Eastern Europe/Latin America] attempt to cultivate a sense of legitimacy for their respective regimes by instilling in major societal groups a sense of participation in the political system, these countries will be prone to pursue politics which will clash with the preferences of the regional superpower...*¹⁶⁶

The Soviets were confronted with the dilemma of accepting a greater degree of diversity in the socialist bloc, or insisting on conformity with the Soviet model and thus running the risk of having to engage in high-cost political, economic and ultimately military intervention in the socialist countries of Eastern Europe. Their two goals, "cohesion" within the Soviet bloc and "viability" of the Communist regimes, became increasingly incompatible in Eastern Europe. "Cohesion" according to J.F. Brown, was the main Soviet aim in Eastern Europe. It meant

*a situation where [...] there is a general conformity of ideological, political and economic policy, both domestic and foreign, as laid down by the Soviet Union in any particular period.*¹⁶⁷

"Viability", on the other hand, meant

a degree of confidence and efficiency, especially economic, in the East European states that would increasingly legitimize communist rule and

*correspondingly reduce the Soviet need for a preventive preoccupation with that region.*¹⁶⁸

Particularistic tendencies appeared in most East European countries. Poland and Hungary followed their own way of social and political development, and even Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic presented some innovations in their economic systems. Rumania followed its own path in foreign and security affairs. With the exception of Rumania, however, particularism was mostly confined to domestic policies. The integrationist drive of the 1970s¹⁶⁹ notwithstanding, the Soviets were forced to accept a degree of deviation from the Soviet model. The cautious reevaluation of Soviet theory, far from preceding the appearance of diversity in the bloc, merely reflected the realities of the new situation in Soviet-East European relations. Evolutions in the doctrine, however, once declared, gave the stamp of Soviet approval to greater diversity within the bloc, and made a return to the classic ideal of unity less likely.

The Polish crisis of 1980-81 demonstrated the failure of Poland's social, economic and political system, and made evident the need for some sort of basic reform. The Polish events also presented obvious lessons for the other socialist regimes of Eastern Europe. It was hardly coincidental that Brezhnev used the rostrum of the 26th CPSU congress in February 1981 to signal Soviet approval for more diversity within the bloc.

The period after March 1985 has been characterized by the processes of rapidly mounting economic, social and political crises in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union itself, at the same time as the Soviets have launched their own radical program for economic and political reform. The conflict between "cohesion" and "viability" became acute: in Poland, and to a lesser degree also in Hungary, the lack of fundamental reform led to economic disintegration and the spectre of popular revolt. Other regimes in the region have been able to continue along the old path only through increased use of repressive measures to contain popular dissent and discontent. The Soviets were forced to realize the counterproductivity of the previous model of Soviet East-European relations for *Soviet* political, military and economic interests.

The reevaluation under Gorbachev of the theory of socialist

international relations was part of the general rethinking of Soviet foreign policies which was launched under the name of "new political thinking".¹⁷⁰ Underlying the new approach in Soviet foreign policies was the realization of the Soviet Union's dependence on the more developed capitalist West for its own development and modernization. Under these circumstances, the political cost of maintaining old-fashioned unity in the socialist camp became too high. The imperative need for improved relations with the West and more cost-effective use of Soviet material and political resources made the Soviets rethink their policy towards the smaller allies in Europe. The Soviets felt that the previous model of Soviet-East European relations comprised a hindrance to Soviet efforts to establish a new relationship with the developed West with a view to modernizing the Soviet economy.

Equally relevant is the question whether developments in the Soviet Union itself made obsolete the old principle of stressing "unity", i.e. conformity with the Soviet model, as the basic feature of socio-political developments in Eastern Europe. It may be argued that the questioning of previous orthodoxy in the Soviet Union itself excluded the possibility of demanding adherence to the Soviet model from the smaller socialist countries: there was no Soviet example to follow any more. Under these circumstances Eastern Europe may even have become an asset to the Soviet Union as a field of experimentation - East European reformers presented the Soviets with valuable experience for their own search for new solutions to problems of economic and political development.¹⁷¹

* * *

In late 1989 the theory of socialist international relations is no longer appropriate as a guide to the intricacies of Soviet policy towards the East European countries. The terminology has changed, and the Soviet reaction to developments in Poland and Hungary demonstrates that the "Brezhnev doctrine" no longer defines Soviet policy in the region.

"Freedom of choice" for all countries regardless of their social system, and "all peoples' right to decide over their own future"; these and similar expressions reappear in today's Soviet statements and commentaries dealing with Eastern Europe. Gorbachev also

used the rostrum of the Council of Europe to declare the Soviet Union's unconditional adherence to the principle of "non-interference in other countries' internal affairs". With direct reference to the western notion of a Soviet theory of "limited independence", he condemned "any attempts to limit the sovereignty of states".¹⁷² Asked whether the Soviet Union was prepared to accept that the communist parties in Poland and Hungary might lose the "leading role" in society, he declared that this was a matter to be decided by the Poles and the Hungarians themselves.¹⁷³

Since then similar assertions tend to appear in all official Soviet statements on Soviet-East European relations. A couple of examples may make the point. In his speech to the second session of the Supreme Soviet on 23 October 1989 Eduard Shevardnadze stressed that Soviet foreign policy is based on a set of generally acknowledged principles of universal validity. He continued: "These values are not an abstraction. They exist and cannot be applied arbitrarily or selectively". Soviet relations with the socialist countries, Shevardnadze stated, are going through fundamental, qualitative changes:

*We build our relations with these [countries] on the foundations of sovereign equality, non-acceptability of all kinds of interference [in other countries' internal affairs], respect for each country's right to complete freedom of choice.*¹⁷⁴

The communiqué after the meeting in Moscow of the WTO committee of foreign ministers on 26-27 October 1989 emphasised the same message of independence, freedom of choice and non-interference.¹⁷⁵

During the summer and autumn of 1989 it appeared that the Soviet leaders were prepared to tolerate the questioning of at least two of the three touchstones of the "Brezhnev Doctrine": the leading role of the party and the principle of democratic centralism within the party. The Poles, on the other hand, who so far have completed the most thorough transformation of the political system yet seen in Eastern Europe, have gone out of their way to stress Poland's continued loyalty towards its alliance commitments. The Soviet reaction to increasingly radical efforts at social and political

reform in Poland and also in Hungary has been uniformly positive – Soviet media in fact tend to praise the leaders of Poland and Hungary as innovative reformers in the communist movement. Soviet leaders, including Mikhail Gorbachev himself, and Soviet media, did nothing to hide their sympathy with the popular demand for reform in the GDR and Czechoslovakia.

The Soviets also opted for a model of Soviet-East European relations that would make the region more of an economic and political *asset* to the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union could no longer afford to use its own scarce economic resources to bolster up incompetent and unpopular regimes. As regards Soviet-East European economic relations, the Soviets needed trading partners with more to offer in the form of high technology and quality products in exchange for Soviet raw materials.

While Soviet statements now treat intra-bloc relations as an integrated part of the broader Soviet foreign policy strategy, Eastern Europe remains a region of primary importance to Soviet security interest. However, the Soviet strategy for safeguarding these interests may have changed. It may be speculated that Soviet leaders became less interested in the military contribution of the East European countries per se (cf. the questionable reliability and commitment of their armies), but continued to view Eastern Europe as a buffer zone against the West, and as a field of possible Soviet military build-up in case of threatening international conflict. Soviet leaders apparently concluded that these objectives were attainable even within the framework of radically changed socio political systems in Eastern Europe.

The East Europeans themselves are keenly aware of the need for assuring the Soviets of continued alliance loyalty. Tadeusz Mazowiecki's assurances to that effect immediately after his confirmation as Poland's prime minister were received with satisfaction in Moscow.¹⁷⁶ Since then the two parties have used every opportunity to emphasize that changes in Poland's alliance policy are not on the agenda. The Soviet attitude to Hungary, which is less strategically important than Poland, has been more ambiguous. Bogomolov's remarks early 1989 that a neutralized Hungary "would not pose a threat to Soviet security",¹⁷⁷ were apparently not sanctioned from above, but nevertheless signaled a

more flexible Soviet approach to the problem of safeguarding Soviet security interests in Eastern Europe.

The term "finlandization" has recently been introduced into the Soviet debate. Andranik Migranyan, in an article in August 1989, took as his point of departure the necessity in Eastern Europe of carrying out political and economic reforms that could eventually lead to the setting up of market economies and multi-party political systems. In this connection he argued that "finlandization" could serve as a possible model for Soviet-East European relations. "Finlandization", according to Migranyan, implies that

In exchange for its readiness not to hinder developments in that direction, the USSR would receive the necessary guarantees from the East European countries that in foreign policy they undertake to act responsibly regarding the USSR

In short, this means not challenging "Soviet foreign policy interests".¹⁷⁸ The official Soviet stance is to discuss the topic only in the broader context of a gradual dismantling of *both* NATO and the Warsaw Pact. A recent article in *Moscow News* addressed the question of a neutralization of Eastern Europe as follows:

not refusing to discuss the issue of a likely "neutralization" of one or another East European country, I'd say there is no reason to speed up a change in their allied status. In fact, under the new situation, being members of the alliance, they lose nothing and take no risks, whereas renouncing membership, they may create a disbalance in Europe.¹⁷⁹

The shape of future Soviet-East European relations remains to be decided. The "theory of socialist international relations", however, has outlived its role as an instrument in the management of Soviet relations with its smaller allies.

Notes

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1. From President Mikhail S. Gorbachev's telegram to Polish President Wojciech Jaruzelski on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the German attack on Poland. *Pravda*, September 2, 1989, p. 1.
2. M.S. Gorbachev in conversation with Georges Marchais in the Kremlin, September 22, 1989. *Pravda*, September 23, 1989, p. 1.
3. This paragraph was written in mid-November 1989.
4. For an argument to this effect, see John C. Campbell, "Soviet Policy in Eastern Europe: An Overview", in Sarah M. Terry (ed.), *Soviet Policy in Eastern Europe*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984, p. 27.
5. Charles Gati, *Hungary and the Soviet Bloc*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1986, p. 187. Karen Dawisha has made the same point, see "The 1968 Invasion of Czechoslovakia: Causes, Consequences, and Lessons for the Future", in Karen Dawisha & Philip Hanson (eds.), *Soviet-East European Dilemmas: Coercion, Competition and Consent*, New York, 1981, p. 19 *et passim*.
6. For an extreme case of using this approach in an analysis of Soviet deliberations during the Polish events of 1980-81, see Sidney I. Ploss, *Moscow and the Polish Crisis. An Interpretation of Soviet Policies and Intentions*, Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1986.
7. Teresa Rakowska-Harmstone, "Socialist Internationalism' and Eastern Europe - A New Stage", *Survey*, vol. 22, no. 1 (Winter 1976), p. 38.
8. *Ibid.*
9. "Perestroika mezhdunarodnykh otnoshenii - puti i podkhody", *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia* (MEMO), 1989, no. 1 (January), pp. 58-70.
10. "Po povodu odnogo spora", MEMO, 1989, no. 2 (February), pp. 156-57. A similar incident occurred in August this year, when the reformist historian Viacheslav Dashychev published an article in *Moscow News* which heavily blamed Stalin for the poor state of Soviet relations with Britain and France before the Second World War. In a subsequent issue of *Pravda* the responsible publisher, Novosti press agency, expressed its serious dissatisfaction with the publication of the article. See *Moscow News* no. 35, 1989, and *Pravda*, August 26, p. 5.
11. Aleksandr Bovin, "Mirnoe sosushchestvovanie i mirovaia sistema sotsializma", MEMO, 1987, no. 7 (July), p. 6. For comments on the process of adjusting to new leadership signals, see the discussion referred to above, in MEMO, 1989, no. 2 (February), p. 62.

12. "Gosudarstvennye, natsional'nye i klassovye interesy vo vneshnei politike i mezhdunarodnykh otnosheniakh", MEMO, 1989, no. 2 (February), p. 66.
13. Franklyn Griffiths, "Sources of American Conduct. Soviet Perspectives and Their Policy Implications", *International Security*, vol. 9, no. 2 (Fall 1984), p. 10.
14. Ibid., p. 10.
15. Ibid., p. 42.
16. Ibid., p. 43.
17. For a related discussion with particular relevance for the pre-1985 period, see Lilita Dzirkals et al., *The Media and Intra-Elite Communication in the USSR*, Santa Monica: Rand, R 2869, September 1982. The introduction gives a useful summary of some of the findings of the study.
18. Boris Meissner made a convincing case for these, somewhat self-evident, conclusions in his "Die Breshnev-Doktrin". *Dokumentation*, Köln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1969. An abbreviated version of the book appeared in English: *The Brezhnev Doctrine*, Kansas City: Park College, 1970. Especially the German edition of the work provides a good guide to relevant contemporary Soviet, East European and Chinese statements.
19. Quoted from Meissner, *The Brezhnev Doctrine*, p. 53.
20. The letter from the leaders of the CPSU and the East European parties (except the Rumanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu) signed in Warsaw on July 15, 1968, expressed the various grievances against the Czechoslovak leadership. See *Pravda*, July 18, 1968.
21. See *Pravda*, July 19, 1968.
22. See the argument in Christopher D. Jones, *Soviet Influence in Eastern Europe. Political Autonomy and the Warsaw Pact*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1981.
23. The Warsaw letter.
24. Kovalev, in *Pravda*, September 11, 1968.
25. The Warsaw letter.
26. Kovalev in *Pravda*, September 26, 1968.
27. Ibid.
28. Brezhnev's speech to the congress on June 7, 1969, printed in *Pravda* the following day.
29. *Pravda*, 26 September 1968, as translated in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* (hereafter CDSP), vol. XX (1968), no. 39.
30. G.I. Tunkin, *Voprosy Teorii Mezhdunarodnogo Prava*, Moscow 1969, p. 327, as quoted in Meissner, *The Brezhnev Doctrine*, p. 28.
31. Iu.S. Novopashin et al. (eds.), *Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia novogo tipa: Voprosy teorii i praktiki mirovoi sistemy sotsializma*, Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, 1978, pp. 62-63.

32. See for example *ibid.*, p. 70 *et passim*.
33. A.P. Butenko, *Sotsializm kak mirovaia sistema*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1984.
34. E. Usenko, "International Legal Principles of Relations Between Socialist Countries", *International Affairs*, 1973, no. 8 (August), p. 50.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
36. In fact, Butenko's position dominates works on the subject. See for instance the 1978 book by Novopashin et al., p. 62 *et passim*.
37. See Butenko, p. 192 *et passim*.
38. Butenko, *op.cit.*, p. 195.
39. Usenko, *op.cit.*, p. 50.
40. On this point, formulations are often almost identical. For one example, see *Ukreplenie edinstva sotsialisticheskikh stran. Voprosy teorii*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka" 1977, p. 23.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 99.
42. *Ibid.*, pp. 131-32.
43. V. Aleksandrov, "Fundamental'nye printsipy vneshnei politiki sotsializma" *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, 1980, no. 4 (April), p. 17.
44. *Ukreplenie edinstva sotsialisticheskikh stran. Voprosy teorii*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka" 1977, pp. 117-18.
45. K. Katushev, "Ukreplenie edinstva sotsialisticheskikh stran - zakonomernost' razvitiia mirovogo sistema sotsializma", *Kommunist*, 1973, no. 16 (November), p. 23.
46. B. Ladygin & Iu. Pekshev, "Zakonomernost' postepennogo zblizheniia sotsialisticheskikh stran", *Kommunist*, 1977, no. 5 (March), p. 24. The argument was a very common one; for another example, see Oleg Bogomolov's article in *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, 1980, no. 6, pp. 59-68.
47. M. Suslov, "Istoricheskaia pravota idei i dela Lenina", *Kommunist*, 1980, no. 4 (March), p. 24.
48. *Kommunist*, 1958, no. 6, as quoted in Ken Jowitt, "Moscow "Centre"", *Eastern European Politics and Societies*, vol. 1 (1987), no. 3, p. 300.
49. Mátyás Szűrös, "The Reciprocal Effect of the National and International in the Development of Socialism in Hungary", *Társadalmi Szemle*, January 1984, as quoted in Charles Gati, *Hungary and the Soviet Bloc*, Durham (N.C.): Duke University Press, 1986, pp. 203-4.
50. "Of [sic] the national and the international" *New Times*, 1984, no. 16 (April), pp. 12-14. Cf. the discussion below, p. 29-31.
51. Ceausescu's speech on the world Communist conference in Moscow, June 7, 1969, printed in *Pravda* on 9 June.

52. See for instance "V edinstve - nasha sila", editorial in *Kommunist*, 1983, no. 16 (November), p. 8.
53. From the report of the Central Committee, delivered by Brezhnev to the 24th Congress on March 30, 1971. Translation from *Reprints of the Soviet Press*, vol. XII, nos. 9-10 (May 14, 1971), p. 8.
54. K. Katushev, "Mirovaia sistema sotsializma: glavnye tendentsii razvitiia", *Kommunist*, 1972, no. 5 (March), p. 17.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
56. For an illustration of this point, see Kh. Momdzhian, "Edinaia sushchnost' i mnogoobrazie form stanovleniia sotsializma", *Kommunist*, 1972, no. 6 (April), pp. 30-41.
57. A. Sobolev, "Bor'ba KPSS za edinstvo mezhdunarodnogo kommunisticheskogo dvizheniia, protiv opportunistizma i revizionizma", *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, 1972, no. 3 (March), pp. 78-79.
58. O.B. Borisov (which appears to be a pseudonym for O.B. Rakhmanin, first deputy chief in the Central Committee Department of Liaison with Communist and Workers parties of Socialist Countries), "Uchenie V.I. Lenina - nauchnaia osnova real'nogo sotsializma", *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, 1980, no. 8 (August), p. 5.
59. A. Sobolev, "Bor'ba KPSS za edinstvo mezhdunarodnogo kommunisticheskogo dvizheniia, protiv opportunistizma i revizionizma", *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, 1972, no. 3 (March), p. 7.
60. Report of the Central Committee to the 26th CPSU Congress, delivered by Leonid Brezhnev on February 22, 1981. Translation from *Reprints from the Soviet Press*, 23 February - 3 March 1981, pp. 10-11.
61. See O.B. Borisov, "KPSS o razvitiu mirovogo sotsializma i ukreplenii edinstva bratskikh stran", *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, 1981, no. 9 (September), pp. 15-29; and "Sozidatel'naia moshch' kollektivnogo opyta", editorial in *Kommunist*, 1982, no. 5 (March), pp. 3-13.
62. Novopashin et al., 1978, pp. 18-19.
63. B. Kozin, "Edinstvo i splochnost stran sotsializma", *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, 1974, no. 2 (February), p. 4.
64. For a discussion of the theory of "sblizhenie" as it evolved in the first half of the 1970s, see Teresa Rakowska Harmstone, "Socialist Internationalism" and Eastern Europe - A New Stage", *Survey*, vol. 22, no. 1 (Winter 1976), pp. 38-54, and no. 2 (Spring 1976), pp. 81-86.
65. K. Katushev, "Ukreplenie edinstva sotsialisticheskikh stran - zakonomernost' razvitiia mirovogo sotsializma", *Kommunist*, 1973, no. 16 (November), p. 23.
66. See for example *Ukreplenie edinstva sotsialisticheskikh stran. Voprosy teorii*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka" 1977, pp. 38 and 132.

67. B. Ladygin & Iu. Pekshev, "Zakonomernost' postepennogo zblizheniia sotsialisticheskikh stran", *Kommunist*, 1977, no. 5 (March), p. 23; and K. Katushev, op. cit. (1973), p. 25.
68. Report of the Central Committee to the 25th CPSU Congress, delivered by Leonid Brezhnev on February 24, 1976, as translated in *Reprints from the Soviet Press*, 1976, spec. no., p. 11.
69. Brezhnev's report at the 26th CPSU Congress, op. cit., p. 15.
70. "V edinstve - nasha sila", *Kommunist*, 1983, no. 16 (November), p. 7. See the following discussion of the June CC Plenum 1983.
71. Andropov's speech to the Plenum, in *Spravochnik partiinogo rabotnika 1984*, part I, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1984, p. 20.
72. Oleg T. Bogomolov, "Plodotvornoe sotrudnichestvo", *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, 1980, no. 6 (June), p. 61.
73. Brezhnev's speech on 22 February 1981, op.cit., note 69, p. 15.
74. V. Kulish, "Sotsialisticheskie mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia: sushchnost' and tendentsii razvitiia", *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, 1983, no. 7 (July), pp. 79-87. V. Kulish, presumably, was Vasilii M. Kulish, a researcher in the Academy Institute of the Economy of the World Socialist System.
75. See for instance K. Savinov, "Ukreplenie mezhdunarodnykh otnoshenii novogo tipa", *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, 1983, no. 9 (September), pp. 96-97.
76. Kulish, op.cit., p. 80.
77. Ibid., p. 85.
78. See for example Andropov's speech at the June 1983 Central Committee plenum, and O.B. Borisov, "KPSS o razvitiu mirovogo sotsializma i ukreplenii edinstva bratskikh stran", *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, 1981, no. 9 (September), p. 23 (on need for preserving the purity of marxism-leninism); V. Nekrasov, "Edinstvo i splochnost' - zalog dalneishikh uspekhov sotsialisticheskogo sodruzhestva", *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, 1982, no. 8 (August), pp. 36-37; and O.V. Borisov (Oleg Rakhmanin), "Soiuz novogo tipa", *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, 1984, no. 4 (April), pp. 34-49.
79. For discussions of this dispute, see A. James McAdams, "The New Logic in Soviet-GDR Relations", *Problems of Communism*, 1988, no. 3 (September-October), pp. 47-60; and Martin McCauley, "Soviet-GDR Relations under Gorbachev", *East Central Europe*, vol. 14/15 (1987-88), pp. 461-482. See also the documentation contained in Ronald D. Asmus, *East Berlin and Moscow: the Documentation of a Dispute*, RFE Occasional Papers, Munich: Radio Free Europe, 1985.
80. Matyas Szuros, "The Reciprocal Effect of National and International Interests in the Development of Socialism in Hungary", *Társadalmi Szemle*, 1984, no. 1 (January), pp. 13-21, as quoted in Ronald D. Asmus (1985), pp. 22-23.
81. Ibid., p. 23.

82. Michal Stefanak and Ivan Hlivka, "The National and the International in the Policy of the CPCPS", *Rude Pravo*, March 30, 1984; as quoted in *ibid.*, p. 26.
83. O.V. Borisov (1985), p. 45, as translated in Ronald D. Asmus (1985), p. 31.
84. *Pravda*, March 12, 1985, p. 3, "Vystuplenie general'nogo sekretaria ...".
85. Gorbachev's speech to the Plenum on 23 April, 1985, in *Spravochnik partiinogo rabotnika 1986*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1986, p. 32.
86. O. Vladimirov, "Vedushchii faktor mirovogo revoliutsionnogo protsessa", *Pravda*, June 21, 1985, pp. 3-4. Rakhmanin's article was preceded by a *Pravda* editorial which argued along well-known traditionalist lines. *Pravda* emphasized the need for strengthening "cohesion" and "unity" and ensuring "the leading role of the ruling communist and workers' parties" within the WTO. The editorial also alluded to the Hungarian deviations, stressing the necessity of "a correct balancing of national and international interests". Communists, according to *Pravda*, regarded it as their duty "to remain true to Marxism-Leninism and socialist internationalism". See *Pravda*, June 15, 1985, p. 4, "Internatsionalizm v deistvii".
87. Iu. Novopashin, "Politicheskie otnosheniia stran sotsializma", *Rabochii klass i sovremennyi mir*, 1985, no. 5 (September/October), pp. 55-65.
88. *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60.
89. *Ibid.*, p. 59 *et passim*.
90. *Ibid.*, pp. 61-64.
91. *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.
92. *Ibid.*, p. 64.
93. O. Bogomolov, "Soglasovanie ekonomicheskikh interesov i politiki pri sotsializme", *Kommunist*, 1985, no. 10 (July), pp. 82-93.
94. Karen Dawisha & Jonathan Valdez, "Socialist internationalism in Eastern Europe", *Problems of Communism*, vol. 36, no. 2 (March-April 1987), p. 3.
95. *XXVII S'ezd Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soiuza. Stenograficheskii otchet*, Moscow: Politizdat, 1986, vol. 1, p. 95.
96. Translated in *Reprints from the Soviet press*, vol. XXXVIII (1986), nos. 9-10, p. 91.
97. K. Savinov, "Socialist Internationalism - The Basis of Mutual Relations Among Fraternal Countries", *International Affairs*, 1986, no. 7 (July), p. 15, quoting Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1964, vol. 22, p. 347.
98. For the relevant paragraphs in the 1961 program, see for example *Kommunisticheskaia partiia Sovetskogo Soiuza v rezolutsiiakh i resheniiakh s'ezdov, konferentsii i plenumov*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1986, vol. 10, p. 97.
99. *XXVII S'ezd*, vol. 1, p. 608-609.
100. *Ibid.*, p. 562.
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103. Vadim Zagladin, "Kommunisticheskoe dvizhenie v sovremennom mire", *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil*, 1987, no. 1 (January), pp. 9-17.
104. *Pravda*, April 11, 1987, Gorbachev's speech on April 10.
105. *Pravda*, March 4, 1987, translated in CDSP, vol. XXXIX (1987), no. 9.
106. The interview was also printed in *Pravda* on May 20, 1987. Translation in CDSP, vol. XXXIX (1987), no. 20.
107. Oleg T. Bogomolov, "Sotsialisticheskie strany na perelomnom etape mirovogo ekonomicheskogo razvitiia", *Kommunist*, 1987, no. 8 (May), pp. 102-111.
108. T. Bul'ba, "Sodruzhestvo sozidatelei i bortsov", *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil*, 1987, no. 13 (July), pp. 17-18.
109. G. Cherneiko, "Mirovoi sotsializm - moshchnoe obrazovanie novogo tipa", *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, 1987, no. 7 (July), p. 82.
110. *Ibid.*, p. 85.
111. TASS, November 4, 1988, as translated in *Reprints from the Soviet press*, vol. 45 (1987), nos. 10-11, p. 69.
112. On the possible significance of this last point, see the discussion below, pp. 47-48.
113. *Pravda*, November 3, 1987, as translated in CDSP, vol. XXXIX (1987), no. 45.
114. O. Bogomolov, "Mir sotsializma na puti perestroiki", *Kommunist*, 1987, no. 16 (November), pp. 92-102.
115. In addition to the earlier mentioned articles, see the contributions "Sotsialisticheskie strany na perelomnom etape mirovogo ekonomicheskogo razvitiia", *Kommunist*, 1987, no. 8, (June), pp. 102-111; and "Sotsialisticheskii mir na perelomnom etape", *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, 1987, no. 11 (November), pp. 3-14.
116. Bogomolov, "Mir sotsializma", pp. 92-93.
117. K.I. Savinov, "Prioritetnoe napravlenie mezhdunarodnoi deiatel'nosti KPSS i sovetskogo gosudarstva", *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, 1988, no. 4 (April), pp. 42-55.
118. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
119. Bogomolov, *op.cit.*, pp. 92-93, 98.
120. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
121. Savinov (1988), pp. 46-48.
122. *Ibid.*, pp. 48-50.
123. *Literaturnaia gazeta*, May 18, 1988; and a follow-up interview in *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, June 19, 1988.
124. *Pravda*, March 19, 1988.
125. Aleksandr Bovin, "Mirnoe sosushchestvovanie i mirovaia sistema sotsializma", *MEMO*, 1987, no. 7 (July), p. 9.

126. The speech was printed in *Pravda* on June 29. Here quoted after the translation in *Reprints of the Soviet press*, vol. 47 (1988), no. 1, p. 32.
127. *Ibid.*
128. Vladimir V. Kusun, "Gorbachev's Conference Speech: Possible Implications for Eastern Europe", RAD Background Report/123, 1. July 1988, p. 5. For similar comments, see the same author's article "An evaluation of the Party Conference", Radio Liberty Research, vol. 32 (1988), no. 28.
129. Gorbachev's speech, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
130. Bovin, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
131. Gorbachev himself made a very similar comment during his visit to Poland after the 19th CPSU Conference. Calling for a new approach to relations between socialist countries, he said: "[A]lso in the past there was no lack of good principles. What was lacking was a serious will to use them as guides for action." See "Vystuplenie M.S. Gorbacheva", *Pravda*, July 12, 1988, p. 2.
132. Bovin, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
133. I.P. Aboimov, "Razvitie i ukreplenie otnoshenii SSSR s sotsialisticheskimi stranami", *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, 1988, no. 9 (September), pp. 40-41.
134. Vadim A. Medvedev, "K poznaniu sotsializma: Otveti na voprosy zhurnala "Kommunist", *Kommunist*, 1988, no. 17 (November), p. 7.
135. Gorbachev's speech was printed in *Pravda* on December 8, 1988. For excerpts in English, see the same day's issue of *The New York Times*.
136. For a useful brief summary of the main elements of "new thinking" in Soviet foreign policy, see Jürg Kastl, "Das neue Denken in der sowjetischen Aussenpolitik", *Europa Archiv*, 1988, no. 20 (October), pp. 575-582.
137. Translation from CDSP, vol. XL (1988), no. 49, p. 3. Cf. Gorbachev's statement on Soviet television on 18 August 1986, when he said that "new thinking" was incompatible with efforts "to make other peoples happy by one's protection and lecturing about how to behave and which course to choose - the socialist, capitalist, or any other.
The Soviet Union is of the opinion that each people, each country, has the right to command its own destiny and its own resources, independently (suverenno) decide its social development, take care of its own security and take part in the organization of an all-compassing system of international security." *Pravda*, August 19, 1986.
138. CDSP, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
139. "Konferentsiia MID SSSR", *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, 1986, no. 9 (September), p. 23.
140. From interview in *Sovetskaia kultura*, as quoted and translated in *Socialism: principles, practise, prospects*, 1989, no. 3 (March), p. 9.
141. Charles Gati, "Eastern Europe on its Own", *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 68 (1988/89), no. 1, p. 111.
142. Late November 1989.

143. Ronald Asmus, "Evolution of Soviet-East European Relations under Gorbachev", Radio Free Europe, RAD Background Report/153 (Eastern Europe), 22 August, 1989, p.2.
144. Mikhail Bezrukov & Andrei Kortunov, "What kind of alliance do we need? Prospects for the development of the Warsaw Treaty Organization", *New Times*, 1989, no. 41 (October 10-16), p. 7.
145. *Pravda*, October 24, 1989, p. 3, "Vneshniaia politika i perestroika".
146. R.C. Toth, "Soviets Appear to Soften Policy of Intervention", *Los Angeles Times*, December 28, 1987.
147. Vladimir V. Kusin, "The Yugoslavization' of Soviet-East European Relations", RAD Background Report/57, March 29, 1988, pp. 3-4.
148. Teague, op. cit.
149. As quoted in Charles Gati, op. cit. (1989), pp. 103-104.
150. Henry Kamm, "Gorbachev Said to Reject Soviet Right to Intervene", *The New York Times*, April 2, 1989, quoting the Hungarian telegraph agency M.T.I.
151. Andranik Migranyan, "An epitaph to the Brezhnev doctrine. The USSR and the other socialist countries in the context of East-West relations", *Moscow News*, 1989, no. 34, p. 6.
152. *Rudé Právo*, February 20, 1987, as quoted in Gordon Whightman, "Gorbachev, Czechoslovakia and Reform", *The Journal of Communist Studies*, vol. 3 (1987), no. 3, p. 316.
153. Vladimir Kusin, "Gorbachev, Jakes, Dubcek, and a Missed Opportunity", RFE Research, Czechoslovak SR/1, January 1988, p. 13
154. See *Moscow News*, August 28, 1968.
155. Quoted in Elizabeth Teague, "Relevance of "Prague Spring" Discussed", Radio Liberty Research, 368/88, August 15, 1988. For related information, see Teague's paper, and the article in *The Los Angeles Times* quoted above.
156. Yuri Levada, "A reactive recoil. Rethinking the Prague spring", *Moscow News*, 1989, no. 34.
157. See Adam Michnik's interview with Shevarnadze in the October 27 issue of *Gazeta Wyborcza*.
158. *La Repubblica*, August 13-14, 1989; as quoted in Kevin Devlin, "Brezhnev Doctrine Dead: No More Invasions", Radio Free Europe, Background Report/150 (Eastern Europe), August 16, 1989.
159. See *Pravda*, August 19, 1989, p. 5, "Zaiavleniia v Varshave i Prage".
160. Valery Leonidov, "In search of the truth", no. 24; Yevgeny Ambartsumov, "Imre Nagy's sacrifice", no. 27; Vladimir Dorokhin, "Hungary, 1956", no. 29.
161. P.N. Lashchenko, "Vengriia, 1956 god", *Voenna istoricheskii zhurnal*, 1989, no. 9 (September), pp. 42-50.

162. Oleg Bogomolov in *Sovetskaia kultura*, July 12, 1988; as quoted in Ronald Asmus, op.cit. (August 22, 1989), footnote 8, pp. 20-21.
163. For a relevant example, see the Soviet contribution in "East-West Relations and Eastern Europe (An American-Soviet Dialogue)", *Problems of Communism*, vol. 37 (1988), May-August, especially pp. 61-62.
164. L.F. Shevtsova, "Neizbezhnost' obnovleniia sotsializma (Opyt reform v sotsialisticheskikh stranakh)", *Rabochii klass i sovremennyi mir*, 1988, no. 3 (May/June), p. 7.
165. For discussions of this last point, see Paul Marer, "Has Eastern Europe Become a Liability to the Soviet Union? (III) - The Economic Aspect", in Charles Gati (ed.), *The International Politics of Eastern Europe*, New York, 1979, p. 59-81; and Michael Marrese & Jan Vanous, *Soviet Subsidization of Trade with Eastern Europe*, Berkeley: University of California, Institute of International Studies, 1983. For a critical discussion of the Marrese/Vanous position, see Paul Marer, "The Political Economy of Soviet Relations with Eastern Europe", in Sarah Meiklejohn Terry (ed.), *Soviet Policy in Eastern Europe*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984, pp. 155-188.
166. William Zimmerman, "Hierarchical regional systems and the politics of system boundaries", *International Organization*, vol. 26 (1972), no. 1, p. 36.
167. The concepts of "viability" versus "cohesion" as analytical tools to understand the basic dilemma facing the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe were introduced by James F. Brown in the mid 1970s. Since then they never fail to make their appearance in papers on Soviet-East European relations. I judge it inappropriate to distance myself from this honourable tradition. See Brown's *Relations Between the Soviet Union and its Eastern European Allies: A Survey*, Santa Monica: Rand, R-1742, November 1975. See also his "Detente and Soviet Policy in Eastern Europe", *Survey*, vol. 20, no. 2/3 (Spring/Summer 1974), pp. 46-58. The quotation here is from the latter work, p. 46.
168. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
169. The 1970s was characterised by renewed efforts at "socialist economic integration", no doubt as part of the Soviet effort to forge cohesion in the bloc after the intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968.
170. Gorbachev's speech in the United Nations on 7 December 1988 contains the main element of the "new thinking" in Soviet foreign policies. For excerpts, see for example *The New York Times* from 8 December, 1988.
171. This point has repeatedly been made by the Soviets themselves. See for instance Shevarnadze's remarks on Polish television during his visit to Poland in October 1989. Speaking about the socialist countries of Eastern Europe, Oleg Bogomolov has argued that "these countries act as a sort of proving ground, in which the different ways of dealing with contemporary problems are being worked out and tested". See his "Socialism's changing image", *Moscow News*, 1989, no. 28, p. 3.
172. Gorbachev's speech to the Council of Europe on 6 July, as printed in *Pravda*, 7 July, p. 2.

173. From Gorbachev's and Mitterand's joint press conference on 5 July, 1989, as referred in *Pravda*, July 7, 1989, p. 3.
174. *Pravda*, October 24, 1989, p. 3, "Vneshniaia politika i perestroika".
175. See *Pravda*, October 28, 1989.
176. See *Pravda*, August 26, 1989, p. 4, "V press-tsentre MID SSSR".
177. Oleg Bogomolov at a press conference, February 8, 1989.
178. Andranik Migranyan, "An epitaph to the Brezhnev doctrine...", *Moscow News*, 1989, no. 34.
179. Yevgeny Ambartsumov, "Change creates hope, not agony. Reforms in Eastern Europe and the future of socialism", *Moscow News*, 1989, no. 46 (November 12), p. 12.

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The Demise of the Brezhnev Doctrine

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The Demise of the Brezhnev Doctrine

Following the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia on 21 August 1968, the Soviet bloc entered into a period of strictly limited tolerance to deviations from the Soviet model of socialism. The theory of «socialist international relations» became the theoretical rationalization of the new drive for bloc unity. Since the late 1970s, however, the collapse of economic and political stability in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union itself undermined the whole concept of cohesion in the bloc. This study examines the evolution of Soviet thinking on Soviet-East European relations from 1968 to late 1989, and discusses the role of the «theory» for relations between socialist states. From the early 1980s, the Soviets were forced to adjust their thinking to keep pace with developments in Eastern Europe. During 1989 the «theory» finally disappeared as a Soviet foreign policy instrument.

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