

**A Study of Soviet Attitude Towards Nuclear Arms Race,
1982—1987**

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
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the award of the Degree of
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

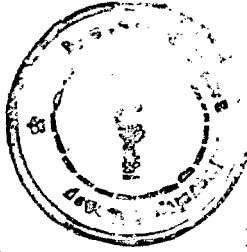
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CERTIFICATE



This is to certify that the dissertation entitled " A Study of Soviet Attitude Towards Nuclear Arms Race, 1982-1987", submitted by Mohammed Quamrul Haque in fulfilment of six credits out of total requirements of twenty four credits for the Degree of Master of Philosophy(M.Phil) of this university is his original work according to the best of my knowledge and may be placed before the examiners for evaluation. This dissertation has not been submitted for the award of any other degree of this university or of any other university.

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19.4.1988

The Dy. Registrar(SIS)
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Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter dated 7.4.1988, the Faculty reconsidered the topics of Shri Pramod Kr. Singh and Shri Quamrul Haque and resolved to accept the suggestions made by the CAS&R. Reformulated topics are as follow:-

Shri Pramod Kumar Singh

'Soviet Perception of Mrs. Indira Gandhi's Policies'.

Shri Quamrul Haque:

'A Study of Soviet Attitude Towards Nuclear Arms Race 1982-1987'.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,



(R.R. SHARMA)

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PREFACE:-

In this study we have made an attempt to present the Soviet perception towards the concept of arms control and disarmament. In order to understand Soviet approach, it is essential to have a clear cut understanding of the Marxist-Leninist Theories of War, peace and disarmament and how for these are related to the actual Soviet practices.

This dissertation divided into four Chapters. The first two Chapters deals with the ideological perspective and the Soviet Strategy of disarmament respectively. These two chapters are intended to provide theoretical background to an empathic understanding of Soviet policy towards nuclear arms race. The remaining two Chapters are directly related with the subject matter. In these two Chapters we have attempted to give a detailed description of the Soviet proposals in the field of arms control and disarmament during the period of Andropov, Chernenko and Gorbachev.

We hope that we have succeeded in our attempt to focus on the problems of nuclear arms race and the Soviet initiatives to check the mad race towards it.

In the preparation of this dissertation, I am extremely grateful to many, whose knowledge and experience I have freely utilised. First of all, I owe a great debt of gratitude to my affable supervisor, professor(DR) Shamsuddin. I am extremely fortunate to have benefited from his valuable suggestions, constructive criticisms, friendly hospitality and unflagging interest and continuous support and encouragement at all stages of this work. Without his support it would have been difficult for me to complete this work.

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NEW DELHI
DATED: 21.7.85.

Mohammed Quamrul Haque
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CHAPTER - I

MARXISM - LENINISM AND THE CONCEPT OF
DISARMAMENT

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MARXISM - LENINISM AND THE CONCEPT OF DISARMAMENT

Policy of War and Peace in Soviet Union, is based on Marxist - Leninist ideology, which considered war as a socio-political phenomenon arising at a definite stage in the course of Social development. War promotes political ends of certain classes in an exploitative society. When war took place, it brought along with it, a cruel method of resolving social antagonism and helped the dominant classes to persue their economic and political aims. Thus, war is considered by Marxists as a continuation of the policies of certain classes or states by forcible means ¹ and these classes with the possession of the private property played an important role in the outbreak of war.

According to Marxism - Leninism the private property, and ownership of the means of production are responsible for the outbreak of war. War will be banished only with the fall of private property and classes based on antagonistic social relations. This in turn will eliminate the need to maintain armies and armaments. ²

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1. Vassilii Mamontov : Disarmament - The Command of the Times (Moscow, Progress Publisher, 1979) p. 15.
 2. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The German Ideology (Moscow, Progress Publisher, 1972) p. 14.

Lenin in his analysis of war was influenced by the German military theoretician Clausewitz. He gave a picture of the relationship between war and politics. War he said, "is only a part of political intercourse, therefore, by no means an independent thing in itself".³

Marx, Engels and Lenin evolved their theories of the true nature of War by empirical analysis of wars in the condition of capitalism and imperialism. They regarded politics not as an expression of abstract interest of society as a whole but as an expression of definite class interests.⁴ By doing so their main aim was to reveal the political content of war and the connection between its aims and the material interests of a particular class.

Lenin was of the opinion that war and politics were not to be contrasted to one another because according to him war represented the continuation and consummation of

3. Karl Von Clausewitz, On War (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1949) Vol. 3, p. 121.

4. V.I. Lenin, "War and Revolution" in Karl Marx, F. Engels, V. Lenin, On Historical Materialism: A Collection, Compiled by T. Borodulina, (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1972) p. 5 21.

the policy of a particular class. Politics on its part embodies the relations between large masses of people and reflect their conflicting interests and aspirations. Thus Lenin considered that all wars are inseparable from political systems that endangered them. ⁵

While supporting the famous dictum of Clausewitz on war, Lenin added to it the phrase 'Violent means' which in Marxist-Leninist military vocabulary means. Weapons, the armed forces and the entire military organization or instrument of warfare. Lenin, does not see anything wrong in war and violence. He said "much has been left in the world that must be destroyed by fire and iron". ⁶ Hence Marxism-Leninism defines war as an armed violence or organized armed conflict between different Social classes, states, groups of State and nations in order to achieve definite economic and political goals.

It must however be pointed out that Marxism-Leninism does believe in an era ^{of} lasting peace. But this according to

5. V.I. Lenin, Collected Works (Moscow, Progress Publishers 1964), Vol, 24. p.400.

6. V.I. Lenin, n. 5, p.400.

them, would be possible only when the proletariat have captured political power and when all exploitation has come to an end. And when the ideas of universal communism achieved, there would be no need of armies because there class antagonism would cease to exist. Thus according to Lenin " a world proletarian revolution is the only escape from the horrors of a world war". ⁷

War in the correct sense of Marxism-Leninism "inevitably means an interruption of the peaceful constructive activity of people, which diverts enormous material value to unproductive purposes and is attended by destruction of what has already been built. This is still more true of a thermonuclear war, which could throw the Socialist countries back from the levels they have attained in economic and cultural developments". ⁸ Lenin advocated in 1915 pacific means, instead of resorting to war.

Marxism-Leninism advocates the theory of peace as the direct opposite of the theory of war as a continuation of politics by other.

7. K.S. Murty and A.C. Boquet, Studies in Problems of Peace (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1960), p.256.

8. V.I. Lenin, n. 5, p. 469.

violent means. " War is the synonymous with politics in general but comprises only part of it that politics in addition to war commands a large portion of various non-violent means, which it can enlist to attain its goals without resorting to war.⁹ To achieve its goal by peaceful means is one of the most important aims of the Soviet foreign policy. Hence the Soviet Union appeals to the Western powers, especially to its partner in the arms race to solve all international disputes by negotiations and not by war. Moreover, peace is necessary and essential to ensure peaceful conditions for ~~construction~~ of Socialism and Communism in the Soviet Union.

In pursuit of its goal to build Socialism and Communism in the USSR, it has accepted disarmament as a strategy of peace and today it has become the most important Soviet foreign policy objectives. Its acceptance of disarmament is not new. Long before Lenin's support to it, Marx and Engels viewed disarmament favourably.

Marx and Engels discussed about the concept of disarmament

9. V.D. Sokolovskii, Soviet Military Strategy (London Rand Corporation, 1963) pp. 271-72.

in their work on European security. They both agreed that disarmament was necessary and urgent to bring about peace and security in Europe. Their view on disarmament were evolved at a time when militarism was tightening its grip over Europe and devouring her. ¹⁰ In the catastrophic atmosphere, Marx and Engels realised that disarmament was the only solution, for peace in Europe.

Later Engels formulated a systematic disarmament plan, which was meant for a step by step and proportional reduction of military force of regular armies of all countries. Thus it was basically Engel's plan on disarmament that laid down the basic foundation of the Marxist-Leninist concept of disarmament.

Lenin gave a scientific interpretation of the Marxist concept of disarmament. In the beginning of his writings, he did not accept disarmament as an alternative to war. He bitterly opposed it, calling it "bourgeois - pacifism", which serves to distract the worker from the revolutionary struggle. Lenin's ideas on disarmament were evolved at a time, when he was struggling to dislodge the czar and bring

10. Igor Vsachev, A World Without Arms,
(Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1984)

Socialism in his country.

Disarmament was unacceptable to Lenin because according to him, it was impossible to attain it in a bourgeois society, where there was exploitation and oppression of individual by individual. In such a type of society he believed in arming of the proletariat for the purpose of disarming bourgeoisie. But he maintained that "only after the proletariat has disarmed the bourgeoisie, will it be able, without betraying its World-historical mission, to throw all armaments on the scarp heap, the proletariat will undoubtedly do this, but only when this condition has been fulfilled, certainly not before".¹¹

Hence, when the bourgeois classes are completely eliminated the state becomes unnecessary and in the absence of any class antagonism it slowly withers away, as a result of which classless society formed and in which, says Lenin, "disarmament becomes the ideal of Socialism. There will be no war in Socialist society, consequently disarmament will be achieved"¹² without any difficulties.

11. V.I. Lenin, n. 5, p. 316

12. Ibid

After the Russian Revolution in 1917, Lenin's aim of overthrowing the bourgeois class in his country was successfully achieved, while that of establishing a classless society and withering away of the State were yet to come. In order to achieve these two goals, Lenin refused to compromise and accept disarmament as an alternative to war. But due to certain compelling factors, he was forced by the circumstances, to accept disarmament and initiate massive campaign for its success.

When the Bolshevik Communists led by Lenin came to power in Russia, the first World war was still raging. The country was tired of fighting. The existing conditions at that time forced the Bolshevik to conclude a Peace Treaty with its adversaries. Hence to Soviet Russia, the need of the hour at that time was to establish peace with its neighbour in order to survive. This realistic understanding led the Bolsheviks to adopt the 'Decree On Peace' on 8 November, 1917.

Due to these developments, Lenin, spoke on the need for " reviewing old treaties between Tsarist Russia and other countries and for rejecting all clauses which provided for plundering and violence against other nations. But all clauses where good neighbourly conditions and economic agreement **are**

provided we shall welcome, we can not reject them".¹³ The founder of Soviet State saw nothing incompatible in its existing side by side with capitalist powers. The 'Decree On Peace' itself proposed to all warring peoples and their governments to begin immediately negotiations for a just and democratic peace.

Also during this time Germany posed a threat to the Security of Russia. It rejected all proposals for a just peace with Russia and ordered her troops to march deep into the Russian Territory. In a dangerous situation like this Lenin took two steps backward and signed the treaty of Brest-Litovsk with the Germans. The treaty was a national humiliation to the Russians, as they were pushed back from the Black sea.

Added to this tragedy, civil war broke out in Russia, which lasted almost for three years. The intervention by Western countries in the civil war further complicated the situation. Ultimately, Soviet Russia was victorious. The victory demonstrated to the world that newly formed communist state had the will and the strength to survive any onslaught from outsiders.

13. Andrew Rothstein, Peaceful Co-existence, Penguin Books Ltd, London, 1955) p. 28.

In short critically analysing the consequences of the war in Russia, it can be said that war hit it hard, it disrupted its economy, there was a serious decline in grain production, several rural areas suffered near famine. On the industrial production sunk to one seventh of the pre-war regime.¹⁴ Further, the sudden stoppage of Russian land trade with the West plus the sea blockade which shut off the Baltic and Black Sea proved to be disastrous for Russia. The latter's railway, also suffered severely from the strains of war most of it led towards the most highly industrialised regions and those had passed out of Russian hands by Brest-Litovsk Treaty.

Taking into consideration the prevailing atmosphere in Soviet Union, it can be said that it urgently needed peace in which to rebuild its ravaged economy. It needed not only respite from war, but economic assistance from the capitalist countries, without modifying its belief in the inevitability of war and the necessity of world revolution, the Soviet leaders resolved to take some steps back ward, in order to consolidate and strengthen the forces at home

14. Donald Treadgold, 20 Century Russia
(Chicago, Rand Menally and Company, 1959)p.200.

and abroad that would enable the revolution to march forward at a later date.

Lenin, therefore, accepted disarmament as a means to avoid any future war with the West and to create peaceful conditions for all round development. More or less similar consideration influenced Lenin's foreign policy, when he sought to establish diplomatic and economic relation with the imperialist countries of the West.

During the twenties Soviet foreign policy characterised by "breathing space" was intended to pursue the following objectives:

- (i) to strengthen as much as possible the alliance between the proletariat of the USSR and the Western European proletariat and the oppressed people aiming at the developments and victory of the international proletarian revolution,
- ii) to carry on the policy of peace, which must be the core of the government's entire foreign policy and which must guide the government's basic actions and statements;
- iii) to carry on economic reconstruction with a view to transforming the USSR from an importer of machinery and equipment into a producer of machinery and equipment,

In order to reduce her dependence on the capitalist countries. This was intended to ensure an independent role for the newly born socialist country in international politics for carrying the revolutionary message and to provide leadership to all the workers of the World and particularly to extend support to the oppressed colonial and semi colonial peoples;

iv) so far as possible, to prepare economic reserve that will insure the country against all eventualities in both domestic and foreign markets, and lastly to take every possible measures to consolidate the defence of the country and to increase the power of the Red Army, the Red Navy and the Air fleet. ¹⁵

On the whole, the main aim of Soviet foreign policy during this time, was to lengthen the 'breathing space' to gain time to build the policy of the national economy and at the same time consolidate Socialist position both within and out side the country. In keeping with this policy, Lenin's tactical position on disarmament shifted sharply in 1921. He gave importance to disarmament and made every effort to

15. V.I. Lenin, On Peaceful Co-Existence: Articles and Speeches (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1971), p.7.

achieve it, though till the end of his death he could not see it. The Western Countries rejection of his disarmament plans made him confirm his earlier views that disarmament is possible only after the fall on capitalism".¹⁶

The recovery from the economic depression and rebuilding of its military forces, influenced the Soviet disarmament policy during Lenin's time. The proposals which Soviet Russia made on disarmament during this time laid stress on general disarmament. Guided by the Marxist-Leninist concept of disarmament, the Soviet general disarmament plan stood for the limitation of armaments.

Lenin's approach to disarmament was reflected in the number of proposals that his representatives submitted to the disarmament conference. The first conference which Soviet Russia attended under his guidance was the Geneva Conference for the Economic and Financial Reconstruction of Europe on 10th April, 1922. At that forum, the issue of disarmament was for the first time placed on a business like footing by the Soviet representatives, George V. Chicherin,

16. Ibid.

the people's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, stated on behalf of the Soviet government that his "delegation intend to purpose, in the course of the conference, the general limitation of armaments, and to support all proposals tending to lighten the weight of Militarism".¹⁷ At the same time, he proposed to ban the most barbaric forms of Warfare, such as poisonous gas, air warfare, etc., and the means of destruction aimed against civilian populations. The most important part of the proposal was the guarantee, Soviet Russia was willing to give, to carry out limitations of its armaments on condition of complete reciprocity with necessary guarantee against any sort of attack upon or interference in its internal affairs.

At the Moscow Conference on the Limitation of Armaments, held in December, 1922, the Russian delegation proposed mutual and proportional reduction of armaments, that is, to reduce the army to one quarter within a period of eighteen months to two years. A suggestion was also made to dissolve all irregular military units, to limit military expenditure by imposing a limit on spending on servicemen and to establish

17. The USSR Proposes Disarmament, Compiled by Ye.Potyarkin and S.Kortunov, (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1986), p.23.

neutral zones along the border. ¹⁸

Similar disarmament proposals were made by Soviet Union at the Lausanne Conference in 1924. At all these Conferences the Soviet delegates pressed for reduction of armaments. To Soviet Russia disarmament from 1921 to 1924, meant the reduction of armaments.

When Joseph Stalin assumed power after the death of Lenin, he continued to be guided by Lenin's precepts on the subordination of World revolution to the goals of disarmament. This was mainly because his country had not yet fully recovered economically and militarily to face any military challenge from the capitalist countries. It was weaker than the great powers of that time. The prevailing International situation was of deep concern to Stalin, who viewed it as a serious threat to his country. Speaking at the plenary session of the central committee of the party on 19, January, 1925, he said, "In the event of complication arising in the countries around us, we must be prepared for all contingencies". ¹⁹

18. Xenia Joukoff Eudin and Others, Soviet Russia and the West. 1920-1927: A Documentary Survey (California, Standford University Press, 1957), p. 315.

19. J.V. Stalin, Works, (Moscow Foreign Language Publishing House, 1954), Vol. 7 p. 14.

Stalin adopted a more flexible policy on disarmament than Lenin, especially after 1926. In September 1927, answering a question put by an American Labour delegation, he said " I think that the existence of two opposite system, the capitalist system and the socialist systems, does not exclude the possibility of agreements. I think that such agreements are possible and expedient in condition of peaceful developments", again he said the same thing may be proposed in regard to the diplomatic field. We are pursuing a policy of peace, and we are prepared to sign a pact of non-aggression with bourgeois states. We are persuing a policy of peace, and we are prepared to come to an agreement concerning disarmament, including complete abolition of standing armies, which we declared to the whole world as far back as the time of Geneva Conference".²⁰

Thus, with utmost care, Stalin made peace with the Western Countries and allowed his country to actively participate in the League of Nation's Disarmament Conference. In the beginning of his regime, Soviet delegates at the League of Nations Preparatory Commission On Disarmament stood firmly

20. Andrew Rothstein, n. 13, p. 39.

for the limitation of armaments. Stalin also favoured general and complete disarmament in view of the prevailing militarization and growing threat of capitalist intervention. Moreover as the economic pressure was increasing at home, in order to solve it speedily, he was for strengthening his country's relations with the Western powers by adopting a flexible approach towards disarmament. As a result of which at the Fifteen Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in December 1927, Stalin declared " The maintenance of peaceful relations with the capitalist countries are based on the assumption that the co-existence of two opposite systems is possible. Practice has fully confirmed this."²¹

Stalin's flexible approach to Disarmament was reflected in the general and complete disarmament proposals of 1927, presented by the Chief Soviet delegates, Maxim Litvinov, at the League of Nations Preparatory Commission on Disarmament. The proposal envisaged the disbandment of all armed forces, the destruction of all weapons, military supplies, means of chemical warfare and other means of annihilation, the dismantling of fortresses and Naval and air bases, the abolition of war ministers, the dissolution of general staffs, the prohibition of military training and other measures to ensure complete disarmament. However the countries rejected the proposals.²²

21. Ibid

22 A. Beryozkin and Others, History of Soviet Foreign Policy: 1917-1945, (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1969) p. 267.

The non-cooperation by the Western Countries did not discourage the Soviets from campaigning for disarmament. In fact, when the Western powers rejected the Soviet proposals on total disarmament, the Soviet Union proposed partial disarmament in 1928, with more broad based terms to the West. But unfortunately, the plan was not responded favourably by the Western Countries, though it stood for the reduction of armaments. The most important feature of this proposal was that it provided for an 'inspection system'.²³

In 1929, when Soviet Union's proposal for partial disarmament could not meet with any success, the Soviet Union again revived their proposals for general and complete disarmament. The Japanese and German military build up and Japanese aggression against China were mainly responsible for the Soviet support for disarmament. During this time Germany was also rearming herself under the leadership of Hitler. Alarmed by these significant developments, which posed threat to its own security, and the risk of war breaking out, Soviet Russia advocated total disarmament.

Almost all Soviet proposals on disarmament, presented to the League of Nations under the guidance of Lenin and Stalin

23. Ibid. p. 268.

were rejected by the West. The Soviet too did not agree with any of the Western proposals on disarmament. They considered them as "nothing but a propaganda smoke screen for the continuing arms race".²⁴ This mutual rejection was mainly due to the basic differences about verification and control.

In regard to verification and control, in the beginning, the US did not favour the principle of supervising and controlling disarmament measures on the spot in national territories. At the League Preparatory Disarmament Commission the US delegates stated on 27 September, 1926, that the proposition to establish supervision and control of national armaments by an International agency must rest primarily on international good faith and respect for treaties.²⁵

The Soviet disarmament proposals submitted to the League of Nations from 1928 to 1923, on the other hand, contained elaborate machinery for international inspection. The partial disarmament proposal of 1928, provided for effective inspection and the setting up for this purpose a standing International Inspection Commission consisting of representatives of all

24. A. Beryozkin and Others, n. 22, p. 291.

25. Allen Dulles, "Disarmament in the Atomic Age", Foreign Affairs (New York), Vol. 25, p. 209.

the countries participating in the convention. Interestingly the Soviet Union was favouring arms control on the spot, while the United States was opposed to it.

In 1932,, the Soviet Union pointed out that it was premature to discuss the question of control before real disarmament had started. The Soviet delegation during this time insisted that first agreement had to be reached on what to control that is, the extent of armament reduction and then it would be possible to agree on how to implement control.²⁶

In 1933, the US modified its stand on disarmament by accepting the principle of effective supervision of arms limitation. In doing so, it was influenced by the German rearmament policy, which it considered as a threat to the security of its European allies. In order to check this trend it accepted effective supervision of arms limitation. Announcing his country's decision at the Disarmament Conference on 22 May, 1933, the US representative Norman Davis's speech focussed on the importance of the effective supervision of arms limitations, and indicated the American willingness to participate in the supervision in order to faithfully

26. Izvestia(Moscow), 25 September, 1932.

implemented the disarmament proposals. ²⁷

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Towards the end of the League period, the Soviet Union and the United States accepted the principle of effective supervision of arms limitation and worked for its success. Their joint collaboration on this particular aspect was to expose Germany military build up, which they both feared. To the Russians, German militarism posed an immediate danger to its security. Whereas to the American it constituted a threat to the security of its European allies. Adolf Hitler, who understood the motives of the communist as well as the Western powers, refused to yield to their pressure to accept the principles of effective supervision of arms limitation. As a protest, Hitler withdrew from the League of Nations. Unfortunately, even the joint collaboration between the Soviet Russia and the United States failed to check the danger from German rearmament.

Despite the failure of Disarmament during the inter war period (1921-1938), it brought peace and helped Soviet Russia to consolidate economically and militarily, in order to face

27. John W. Wheller, ed, International Affairs 1933, (London, Oxford University Press) p. 211.

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new military challenge from the West. It also reinforced the correctness of the Marxist-Leninist view that disarmament was possible only after the fall of capitalism. So strong was their belief in this, that the sixth Congress of the Communist International, which met in Moscow from 17th July to 1 September 1928 said " the aim of the Soviet proposals was not to spread pacifist illusions, but to destroy them; not to support capitalism by ignoring or toning down its shady sides, but to propagate the fundamental Marxian postulates; that disarmament and elimination of war were possible only after the overthrow of capitalism".²⁸ The belief remained in force till the death of Stalin in 1953.

In view of this ideological lines, the Soviet Union still consider disarmament as a strategy essential to bring peace and security to its country and creates conditions for preventing future wars against the Soviet Union.

Not withstanding the failure of the League of Nations, disarmament continued to gain considerable importance in International affairs, as a step towards restoring peace and security in the World. To the Soviet Union, it is particulaly

28. James Degras, ed, The Communist International: 1919-1943 (London, Oxford University Press, 1960) Vol. 2, p.450.

significant to achieve its goal of creating peaceful condition for building Socialism and Communism.

However in the nuclear age, the changes of achieving disarmament have become far too complicated. This is mainly because of the introduction of the most destructive weapons systems. Hence after Second World War, the issue of curbing and halting arms race took a new qualitative dimension. Nuclear weapons threaten to destroy mankind, and has changed commonly accepted ideas on what is possible and admissible in International affairs.

When the United States dropped atomic bombs on Japan, the military effect of these new weapons escaped no one but their impact on future strategy was only dimly understood, and a subject of controversy. The consensus of the Scientific Community, which had designed the new weapons held that by virtue of their unprecedented destructiveness as well their imperviousness to defences, they had fundamentally and permanently altered the nature of warfare. Once other countries had acquired the ability to manufacture similar weapons, they would become unusable. With more than one power disposing of nuclear weapons, they could not be employed with impunity, as they had been

by the US against Japan. " Hence they would have only one conceivable function and that would be to deter others. Since victory in nuclear war was out of the question, nuclear weapons could not be rationally put to offensive purposes".²⁹

This outlook didnot gain immediate ascendancy, President Truman and Eisenhower, confronting communist aggression in Europe and Asia and unable to stop Soviet expansion with conventional forces, had no choice but to rely on the threat of nuclear response. That this threat could be effectively used, Eisenhower demonstrated in 1953, when he compelled North Koreans to accept an armistice. Later he and his Secretary of States, John Foster Dulles, coined the slogan " massive retaliation", with which they hoped to contain the Soviet Union and its clients at minimum cost and without resort to unpopular military draft.

Such nuclear blackmail, of course, was possible, only as long as the United States retained a monopoly on the manufacture of nuclear weapons and the vehicles, able to deliver them to other continents. This monopoly eroded faster than expected. The Soviet explosion of fiision bomb in 1949 and fusion(hydrogen)

29. Richard Pipes, "Team B: The Reality Behind the Myth", Commentary(New York, Published by American Jewish Committee Oct, 1986) Vol. 82, No.4, p. 25.

bomb four years later shocked the United States. This shock contributed to the decision announced by President Truman on 31 January 1950 to speed up work on thermo nuclear weapons. Such bombs have a yield many times greater than the atomic bomb used in Japan and the decision to develop them marked a major new stage in nuclear arms race. In spite of Soviet breakthrough in nuclear technology, United States did not abandon the strategy of "massive retaliation" because the Russian lacked adequate means of delivering these explosive device against the United States. These means they acquired in 1957 when Sputnik demonstrated their ability to launch intercontinental missiles. Since there existed at the time no effective means of intercepting such missiles, certain to be armed with nuclear charges, the United States faced for the first time in its history, a direct threat to its national survival.

With the launching of Sputnik , the world entered the age of balance of terror. Untill then, while the Soviet Union had been vulnerable to US nuclear strikes capable of being carried out by the strategic Air command from the American bases all around USSR, the US had been immune from Soviet strikes against its homeland. The inter continental ballastic missiles

ended the United States' invulnerability once and for all. At the same time, the powerful rockets of the Ballistic Missiles enabled each of the two super powers to launch satellites of various categories to keep the adversary under continuous surveillances.

The decade of the 1960s saw the beginning of the greatest over arms race. Such a massive buildup of arsenals by both Soviet Union and United States, with an overkill capability to destroy the world many times over was based on the accepted strategic doctrine called Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD). Under this doctrine each side must have adequate capability to inflict unacceptable damage on the other side with each sub-arsenal strategic triad (land-based, and sea based missiles and bombers) after absorbing a first strike by the adversary. The assumptions regarding the adversary's future build-up, the extent of survivability of own's arsenal in a first strike, the survival arsenal required to inflict unacceptable damage on the adversary and the operationality factor, each calculated on a conservative basis, boosted the arsenal considered to be necessary to such overkill levels.

There was yet another aspect of the action-reaction phenomenon that fuelled the arms race. The Soviet Union was attempting to establish a capability to defend itself against

nuclear attacks by intercepting the incoming nuclear war heads and destroying them in space by exploding a nuclear warhead on the path of the incoming one. The United States on its part was developing a force multiplier capability by putting into each missile a multiple number of warheads each of which was programmed to hit a separate target. This was possible with miniaturisation of electronics and improving the 'yield-to-weight' ratios of warhead.³⁰

These developments led to the debate on anti-ballistic missile systems. The Soviet Union justified its erection of the ABM systems on the ground that they were purely defensive and morally it was preferable to defend its population than acquiring additional capacity to inflict increased damage on the adversary. It was further argued that the capability to intercept nuclear warheads would enable a country more time to carefully assess the adversary's attack and respond in measure and secondly it was a shield against the attack of smaller nuclear powers. Initially these arguments prevailed and the United States too launched on a programme of erection of a light ABM shield which was further modified to one to protect the missile fields only. At the same time it was urged

30. K. Subrahmanyam, "The Struggle for Nuclear Disarmament" Strategic Analysis (New Delhi) April 1985, p.50.

by sections of the US Strategic Community that the ABM with the then prevalent technology was technologically far from effective and adversely affected the stability of deterrence based on the mutually assured destruction. The doctrine of MAD was based on the perceived capability to inflict assured destruction by each side on the other, and any injection of uncertainty by the introduction of a filtering system such as the ABM, was considered as affecting adversely the basic stability of deterrence. All these arguments have now revived with the current debate on President Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI). While in the 1960s the Soviet argued in favour of defensive systems, currently it is the American, doing so, while the Soviets are arguing along the lines the American then did. ³¹

Thus, a state which increases its arms supply defends it on grounds of security. Others follow suit and an arms race begins. Tensions increase and each 'competitor' suspects the other to be the first potential aggressor. Mutual apprehension aggravate the arms race. Psychological tension invest even ordinary events with extraordinary implications. Minor incidents are interpreted as causing incalculable damage to national

31. Phil Williams, "Soviet American Relations" Proceedings of The Academy of Political Science (New York) Vol. 36, No.4, 1987, p. 65.

prestige or national security. The governments which are already psychologically on the brink of war, easily plunge into full scale hostilities at the slightest provocation.³²

It is argued that armaments remain the fundamental cause of war. But, on a closer analysis, "arms are caused by the danger of war for more than war is caused by the presence of arms".³³ A desperate competition in arms may surely lead to war, but what is more important to note is the combination of factors leading to an arms race. Arms are the product of insecurity, and a preparation of war. So long as war remains the final instrument of protecting or promoting national interest, arms will be stocked. This is a wrong notion, for an arms race once begun never stops, and gathers its own momentum. It certainly does not ensure security.

However inspite of the American cry against Soviet 'adventurism', due to its involvement in Hungary(1956), Poland (1980), Angola (1975), Ethiopia (1977-78), Afghanistan(1979) etc., it gave the call for peaceful co-existence without war and for general and complete disarmament, from the very

32. Rajvir Singh, War and Peace in the Nuclear Age, (New Delhi, Intellectual Publishing House, 1987) p. 1-15.

beginning of its formation. Peaceful co-existence has greater relevance in the age of overkill. Apart from capitalist and Socialist Co-existence it implies renunciation of war as a means of settling international disputes between states. Though, the Soviet Union due to the threat of annihilation and to lessen the tension from the world, accepted the theory of arms control for the time being, its main goals are general and complete disarmament, that is a world free of nuclear weapons.

The Soviet Union, also proposed general and complete disarmament, due to the pressure in its economy. During 1960s there was failure of the agricultural programme in Soviet Union. The Soviet Union decided to improve its relations with US , in order to ease the strains of a massive build up. It could then concentrate on economic development by diverting the resources towards solving the agricultural as well as other economic problems at home.

For the USSR, the benefits society would receive if the resources used in military activities were applied for other purposes have been extremely high. For several decades, defence has taken a large share of at least one-tenth of Soviet gross national product (GNP).³³ Defence has competed with

33. Helmut Sonnenfeldt, ed, Soviet Politics in the 1980s (Boulder, West View Press, 1985) p. 131.

civilian heavy industry, receiving a substantial share of metallurgical products and much larger share of machinery. Man power allocated to defence industry and the armed forces has limited the growth of the civilian labour force, which has suffered from the near and long term consequences of war time casualties.

The Soviet system of priorities strongly favours military activities, so that the civilian economy suffers disproportionately from the shortage of materials and services that are an essential feature of the Soviet Planning system. This massive commitment of resources and the overriding priority that favours defence activities have resulted in substantially slowed growth of the Soviet economy. In the early 1970s the continuing decline of capital productivity and the impending reduction in the growth rate of the labour force put in question, the USSR's capacity to continue meeting its priority objectives. At that time, General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev strongly stated the problem. He said that " only by raising the economy's efficiency is it possible to find assets and resources sufficient to ensure simultaneously significant growth in the worker's wellbeing, resources for the economy's rapid development in the future and the requirements for maintaining at the necessary level of country's defence capability".³⁴

34. L.I. Brezhnev, "On The Fifteenth Anniversary of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics", Pravda, December 22, 1972.

If Soviet policies continue on their present course, the USSR seems headed for a crisis in the next decade. What it faces is not a purely economic crisis, but an economic political crisis brought on by the failure of the economy to provide the resources required to sustain at once the welfare - state and the Soviet empire in its competition with the West. Thus economic constraints are exerting pressure on Soviet policy towards strategies of accommodation in the field of arms control and disarmament.

Hence the concept of Marxism and Leninism played a significant role in the formulation of Soviet policy of disarmament. Marx, Engels and Lenin developed the theories of war by empirical analysis, in the condition of capitalism and imperialism. They considered politics not as an expression of abstract interest of society as a whole but as an expression of definite class interests. Lenin supported the Clausewitz's view on war and added to it his own concept of 'violent means'. Hence Marxism-Leninism defines war as an armed conflict between different Social classes, state and nations in order to achieve definite economic and political goals. On the other hand Marxism-Leninism also believes in the concept of peace. Due to the realisation of the destructive quality of war Lenin advocated pacific means and accepted

disarmament as an alternative to war. After Lenin, Stalin adopted a more flexible policy on disarmament. However in the nuclear age, due to the introduction of most destructive weapon systems, disarmament became a complicated issue. In spite of complication Soviet Union has always favoured complete disarmament as it would help The USSR divert its resources for economic development. Thus the General and Complete disarmament had a important place in the Soviet policy of disarmament and for the Russians it would mean not only the end of the institution war but also a fundamental requirement for the continued development of Soviet economy and society.

CHAPTER - II

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EVOLUTION OF SOVIET POLICY TOWARDS NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT :

After the Second World War, the Soviet disarmament strategy took a new qualitative dimension. The advent of nuclear weapons has changed the commonly accepted ideas on what is possible and admissible in International affairs. They played an important role in the formation of its disarmament policy. Change of leadership in Soviet Union also facilitated the modification of Soviet strategic doctrines and revision of the doctrine of the "inevitability of war" in particular.

The existence of nuclear weapons has made it essential to establish a system which would reliably guarantee durable peace based solely on disarmament. Besides, the permaount task in the struggle for disarmament today is to curb and halt the arms race in its most dangerous area involving the development and modernisation of nuclear weapons. Soviet diplomacy took into account the fact that the problem of reducing nuclear armaments substantially differed both in character and complexity from the disarmament issues faced before the Second World War, and therefore required other than military solution.

The first US nuclear test at Alamagorodo on 16th July, 1945, was not merely a significant event in the history of international

affairs but also a turning point in East - West relations. It tilted the balance of power in favour of the US and posed nuclear threat to the security of the Soviet Union which was a non-nuclear weapon state then. On August 6 and 10 that year, two bombs shattered the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The destroyer of the world-as Robert Oppenheimer who produced the bomb called it quoting from the Gita as he watched the first test - was now at the command of man, beset with all his human weaknesses.¹ Ever since, the nuclear weapons has dominated the life and thoughts of the people of this planet confronted with this threat to their very right to existence.

Despite the nuclear challenge, Stalin declared the Marxist-Leninist theory of the "inevitability of war" remained in force. In order to reduce the risk to the Soviet Security, Stalin adopted a two fold strategy to develop a Soviet nuclear strike capability on the one hand and to persue a policy of nuclear disarmament. Hence, the Soviet disarmament policy laid stress on the banning and destruction of nuclear weapons. Simultaneously it also appealed to the UN to set up an Atomic Energy Commission (AEC). The AEC was finally set up. The first resolution of UN General Assembly, passed on January 24, 1946, established the UN Atomic

1. K. Subrahmaniyam, " The Struggle for Nuclear - Disarmament", Strategic Analysis, (New Delhi), April, 1985, p.49.

Energy Commission comprising members of the Security Council and Canada, which was asked to draw up plans for control of atomic energy and elimination of atomic and all other major weapons of mass destruction.

At the Atomic energy commission, the US representatives to the UN Bernard Baruch submitted a proposal known as the "Baruch Plan". The fourteen point plan envisaged the setting up of an independent international authority which would own, operate and manage all facilities handling dangerous nuclear material. Being an independent body, its task was to create an effective control system, as a pre-condition of atomic disarmament, exercised independently of the Veto power of the UN. It was also for a ban on the manufacture and use of atomic weapons and the disposal of the existing stocks. It will supervise the whole atomic complex from the control of raw materials to managerial control or ownership of all atomic energy activity potentially dangerous to world security. The commission would also have the power to comprehend and detect misuse of atomic energy. ²

The Soviet Union rejected the Baruch Plan outrightly.

2. Evan Luard, (Ed.), First Steps To Disarmament, (London, Thames and Hudson, 1965) p. 66.

Opposing the American plan the Soviet Union said that it would consolidate the American monopoly of the atomic weapons and assure them a leading role in the atomic weapon industries of the world. Moreover, it also felt that as the US plan envisaged the relinquishment by the US of its atomic monopoly in favour of an international control agency, it would certainly deny other nations the possibility of creating an independent atomic industry,³ and therefore it was unacceptable to them.

The Soviet reply to the Baruch plan was the "Gromyko proposals" of 19 June, 1946, according to which, it demanded unconditional abolition of all atomic weapons, the destruction of all stocks of atomic bombs, and the prohibition of their future manufacture. It was for the destruction within three months, stocks of finished and semi finished atomic weapons. Any violation of the above proposals was to be considered as a grave international crime against humanity.⁴ The United States rejected the Gromyko proposals.

The rejection of each others plan led to further negotiations on the control of the atomic energy. On 23, October, 1946, in

3. V. Khovostov, " Disarmament Negotiations", International Affairs (Moscow, January, 1961) p. 193.

4. Evan Luard, n. 2., p. 67

an interview with United Press Agency of America, Stalin pointed out that atomic power should have "strict international control if necessary".⁵ Also at the Security Council, the Soviet Union introduced on 18, February, 1947, draft amendments and addition to the first report of the AEC dated 31 December 1946, saying that an effective system of control of atomic energy should be established within the framework of the Security Council and that there should be an International Convention outlawing the production and use of atomic weapons as an essential part of any such system of international control. Although in the beginning, the Russians insisted on these measures being carried out without any provisions for inspection or control, latter on, they admitted the need for some form of supervision, but they demanded to place all these action under the Veto of Security Council.⁶ The United States again disagreed with the Soviet plan.

The Soviet Union also offered proposals in a commission for conventional armaments of the United Nations, to limit non-atomic arms and manpower. This was proposed along with its efforts to ban nuclear weapons and establish a machinery

5. "J.V. Stalin Replies", Soviet Weekly , London no.250, 31, October, 1946, p. 4.

6. Evan Luard, n.2, p. 67.

for international control of atomic energy, as a general disarmament plan of Soviet Union. The main Soviet suggestion was a reduction of all armed forces by one third, to take effect simultaneously with the ban on atomic weapons. It also felt the necessity of a peace pact to be signed between the US., UK., France, China and the USSR. These Soviet proposals however, were not acceptable to western powers.

On 29 August 1949, the Soviet Union tested its first atomic bomb. The United States detected the first Soviet test and made it public, to the apparent surprise of the Soviet government, which had made no announcement. News of the test caused a shock in Washington where, despite some accurate forecasts, it was generally believed that the Soviet Union would not have an atomic bomb until the early 1950s.⁷ This shock contributed to the decision announced by President Truman on 31 January 1950 to speed up work on thermonuclear weapons.⁸ Such bombs have a yield many times greater than the atomic bombs used in Japan and the decision to develop them marked a major new stage in nuclear arms competition. The decision was a particularly controversial one in the American Scientific Community, and the General Advisory Committee of the

7. David Holloway, The Soviet Union And The Arms Race, (London, Yale University Press, 1983) pp. 23-24.

8. Robert J. Donovan, The Devastating Time (Washington, Wilson Center, 1979) p. 20.

Atomic Energy Commission, under Oppenheimer's Chairmanship had recommended in October 1949, against an all-out effort, arguing that "the extreme danger to mankind inherent in the proposal wholly outweighs any military advantage that could come from this development."⁹

Even after eliminating the US monopoly of nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union continued with its effort to ban the bomb. It refused to accept the French Plan of disarmament (11 October, 1949) on the ground that it imposed conditions on the reduction of conventional armaments and avoided the question of collection of information in the atomic field. In return it proposed that the Security Council should recognize as essential the submission by states of information both on armed forces, conventional armaments and on atomic weapons.¹⁰ The Security Council rejected the Soviet proposal.

It is not difficult to trace the connection between these two Soviet proposals and Soviet strategic thought. A ban on atomic weapons, and the destruction of all stocks, would have applied only to the United States, and would have deprived the West of the only weapon in which America was superior to the

9. Herbert York, The Advisors : Oppenheimer, Teller and the Bomb, (California, W.H. Freeman and Co, 1976) p. 29.

10. Sipri Year Book of World Armaments and Disarmaments, 1968-69 (Stockholm, Almquist and Wiksell, 1969) pp. 286-87.

Soviet Union. Further more a one third cut in conventional forces would have increased the superiority of the Soviet Union over the West in these forces, and enhanced still further the power of the Soviet deterrent on the border of Western Europe. For in 1948-49, the Soviet land army consisted of 175 divisions, while the strength of the US Army was down to 12 divisions. Under the Soviet disarmament plan, with no atomic weapons in the hands of United States, with a much reduced Strategic Air Command and a tiny army, the whole of Western Europe would have been at the mercy of Soviet military power.¹¹ This might be one of the main cause for US rejection of Soviet disarmament proposals.

The Soviet Union also disagreed with the Western power on the question of verification. When the newly formed Disarmament Commission (1952) adopted a plan on the question of verification it responded negatively. The Disarmament Commission plan was for the disclosure and verification of all armed forces including the elimination of weapons of mass destruction and an important proposal was added namely the procedural time-table for giving effect to the disarmament programme. According to Soviet

11. Evan Luard, n.2, p.68.

Union, the plan gave priority to disclosure and verification without any attempts to abolish atomic weapons and to reduce conventional armaments and armed forces. The Soviet Union was for reducing the armed forces and armaments and the prohibition of atomic weapons,¹² while rejecting the proposal for disclosure and verification of forces and armaments. They feared that the Western proposal for verification was for espionage and spying in Soviet territory.

The only issue on which the Soviet Union agreed with the Western Powers was on prohibiting chemical and biological warfare in Korea. On 13 June, 1952, the Soviet Union submitted to the Security Council, a draft resolution calling on all states to accept the 1925 Geneva protocol, which prohibits the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and all analogous liquids, materials or devices.¹³ It supported the United States stand regarding the biological warfare and agreed that they should henceforth be included as an essential part of a comprehensive and balanced disarmament programme.

In brief, it can be said that, the Soviet disarmament strategy during the US nuclear monopoly period and under the

12. Sipri Year Books of World Armaments and Disarmament.
1968-69, no. 10 p. 289.

13. Disarmament and Security : A Collection of Documents - 1919 - 1956 (Washington, Government Printing Press, 1956.) pp. 169-70

leadership of Stalin mainly focused on banning the bomb, international control of atomic energy and for reduction in the armaments and armed forces.

The negative response by Western powers to the Soviet disarmament proposals convinced the Soviet leadership that disarmament can never be attained in a capitalist society. Stalin's disarmament policy was profoundly influenced by Lenin's belief that disarmament is impossible without the fall of imperialism. Even if it could be reached, it would impede the dialectical process towards world revolution. Both these Leninist dogma underwent a significant change after the death of Stalin.

After Stalin's death in March 1953, many of the restraints were removed from military thinkers in the Soviet Union, and a large scale debate began on the true meaning of atomic weapons for the security of the Soviet Union. Although the full range of the debate is not clear, it seems that one group of Soviet leaders believed that the possession of a nuclear capability by both the Soviet Union and the United States created a form of mutual deterrence. It might even ruled out global war, and allow the Soviet Union to conduct a flexible military and political policy in other spheres. In 1954 Mr Malenkov and Mr. Mikoyan spoke of the possibility of averting nuclear war, and

thus avoiding the ruin of the world civilization. A number of leading Soviet soldiers drew the conclusion that if this was the case, then the military thought of Stalin's day was not outdated, and they warned against any downgrading of the priority for the conventional forces. First among the protagonists of this point of view was Stalin's War Minister, Marshal Vasilevsky. ¹⁴

Other political and military figures, including Mr. Khrushchev and Marshal Zhukov, concentrated their attention on the mounting degree of destruction which the United States Strategic air command could inflict on targets inside the Soviet Union, and came to the conclusion that whether or not nuclear weapons implied some form of mutual deterrence, " it would be an act of criminal negligence not to prepare the Soviet armed forces to wage a global nuclear war in which the most important factor would be the ability of the United States airforce to inflict tremendous damage within the Soviet Union itself".¹⁵ It is now a matter of History that the view of Mr. Khrushchev and the military thinkers associated with him prevailed in the debate.

14. Evan Luard, n.2, p. 69.

15. Ibid.

By 8 August 1953, after the first Soviet thermonuclear test the 'Balance of terror' had set in, by which not only the United States but also the Soviet Union possessed a nuclear capability sufficient to wreck whole sale destruction of the other in one swift, deadly strike. On 8, December 1953, the US President Dwight Eisenhower observed that human civilization would probably be destroyed if a nuclear war broke out".¹⁶

The Russians too had a similar view. G. Malenkov, who succeeded Stalin, though first maintained that in a nuclear war capitalism would be destroyed, soon changed his views and said on 12 March 1954 that a nuclear war would mean "the destruction of world civilization".¹⁷ He was convinced that a future war was not inevitable and, therefore ruled out any military conflict with the western powers that would annihilate the whole world. Influenced by the impact of the new nuclear weapons, Malenkov instead of intensifying the arms build up called for a more flexible disarmament policy. The shift in the policy was reflected in the Soviet representative's speech to the UN General Assembly in 1954, that his government was willing to negotiate on the basis of principles laid down in

16. New York Times, 9 December, 1953.

17. Pravada, (Moscow), 13 March, 1954

the western proposals (Anglo French Memorandum) of 11 June, 1954 on nuclear and conventional disarmament.¹⁸

In February 1955, Mr. Malenkov resigned the premiership and Mr. Khrushchev assumed control of the Soviet State. With the change of leadership, the Soviet stand on disarmament underwent further change. The Soviet Union adopted a new defence posture and reorganized its forces in accordance with two main principles. First, the new military policy - makers insisted that should nuclear war break out between the Soviet Union and United States, the Soviet State must be prepared to receive and survive a very heavy nuclear attack from the Strategic Air Command. Therefore, the air defence of the Soviet Union must be reorganized as a separate arm of service comprising interceptor aircraft, conventional anti-aircraft artillery and ground to air guided weapons.

The second principle of the new Soviet defence strategy aimed at organizing and deploying the remaining Soviet land, sea, and air forces to enable them to avoid the worst effects of nuclear destruction inside the Soviet Union during the initial air attack, and then to play a key role in the continuation

18. Disarmament and Security : A Collection of Documents, 1919 - 1956, no.43, p. 332.

of the war in its later stages. In other words, the Soviet Strategist adopted a survival policy for their forces and reserves, and required their defence chiefs to ward off or minimize the effects of an American nuclear strike against Soviet territory, while preserving, if necessary by dispersal, the conventional forces to fight another day. All this changed Soviet proposals on disarmament.

When Nikita Khrushchev, assumed power in the Soviet Union, he laid stress on the principle of peaceful co-existence, first advocated by Lenin. In the midst of his efforts to improve his country's relations with the United States, he showed a qualified interest in the negotiations with the US. As late as March 1955 Mr. Malik, the Soviet delegate to the United Nations Disarmament Commission, maintained that the only foundation for a real disarmament agreement would be the elimination of nuclear weapons and a cut of one third in the forces of the great powers. But quite suddenly, on 10 May 1955, the Soviet Union put forward proposals apparently based on their new strategic outlook. So unexpected were these proposals that a meeting of the world peace council in Helsinki scheduled for May 1955 had to be postponed for a month in order to allow time for the new line to be taken into consideration. ¹⁹

19. David Holloway, n. 7, p. 23.

Under its new plan, the Soviet government suggested a two stage disarmament programme, which would start in 1956 and be completed by the end of 1957. There would be an immediate 'freeze' of all forces as of 31 December, 1954; and the first stage of disarmament would bring the conventional forces of the great powers down to the limits already suggested by the Anglo French Plan of 1954.²⁰ Not later than June 1956 there should be a world disarmament conference to formulate a ban on testing nuclear weapons, fix the disarmament obligations of all states, and begin the gradual elimination of military bases on foreign soil. During this period, all countries would undertake not to use nuclear weapons, even in self defence, except in accordance with a decision of the Security Council. In 1957, the remaining reductions in conventional forces would be carried out, and all foreign bases would be given up. Half way through this stage, the , the production of nuclear weapons would cease, and all stocks would be abolished. By the end of 1957, each of the great powers would have a conventional army, navy and air force of fixed size, without nuclear weapons or foreign bases. The plan made number of concessions to the West on control and inspection. It proposed stationing

20. Disarmament and Security : A Collection of Documents, 1919 - 1956, no. 13, p. 293.

observers belonging to a international control body at large ports, railway junctions, roads and airfields. The control organ would have the right to demand information on the progress of the plan, and would have access to national records of defence expenditure. In the later stages it could inspect on a continuing basis to the extent necessary to ensure implementation of the convention, and its observers could have access to all objects of control. Violation of the agreement would be reported to the Security Council.²¹ On the whole, the Soviet proposal was a major step to reduce the levels of armed forces of the big five, namely the US, USSR, UK, China and France.

There are two significant links between these proposals and new Soviet Strategy. First, it is clear that if the proposals had been accepted by the West and put into effect, the Soviet Union would have retained its superiority in conventional forces at every stage. This would have been particularly, true of the crucial sector in Western Europe of the 'bridgehead' now organized militarily under NATO. A freeze of conventional forces as of 31, December, 1954, would have left 28 Soviet line division in Eastern Europe, backed by

21. Soviet News(London) no. 3162, 11, May, 1955, pp. 2,3,4.

60 - 70 in Western Russia, facing 16 NATO formations of the same type, none of which had been provided by West-Germany. During the period of troop reductions, the US would be bound not to use nuclear weapons even if attacked, and the Soviet Veto could have prevented the Security Council from approving their use, the Veto would also prevent any Security Council action to deal with violations of the disarmament agreement. NATO would have been at the mercy of the Soviet forces in Eastern Europe and Western Russia. In any case, NATO would have disappeared as soon as the United States bases abroad were dismantled in 1957. When the Soviet Scheme was complete, the Soviet Union would have been completely secure from nuclear attack from the United States, while still enjoying military superiority in Europe. ²²

The second significant link between the May 1955 proposals and Soviet Strategy is one of motive. There is good evidence that parts of the proposals originated in the Soviet Union's awareness of United States long-range striking power, and the danger of surprise attack. ²³

22. Evan Luard (ed.) no.2, p. 73.

23. Ibid.

Thus according to A. Alexeyev, the Soviet proposal of May 1955 " represent a new approach to international control of arms reduction and prohibition of atomic weapons". He added, " this new approach gears the extension of the rights and powers of the contemplated international control agency to the implementation of the disarmament programme and to measures aimed at creating an atmosphere of confidence among states." 24

Even the Americans were full of praise for the Soviet proposal of May 1955. The US representative to the Sub-Committee of UN Disarmament Commission, James J. Wadsworth said, " ideas which have been advocated by Western powers as long ago as 1947 are at last being seriously considered by the Soviet Union." 25

Though the Soviet proposal was welcomed by the western powers, no initiative was taken to implement it.

Apparently the negative response of the western powers to the Soviet proposals of May 1955, emanated from deep suspicion of the Soviet Union and from the fear of surprise attack on the outbreak of an accidental war. In order to guard against such

24. A. Alexeyev, " The USSR Disarmament Proposals - A major contribution to peace," International Affairs, (Moscow) July 1955, p. 20.

25. Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 32, no. 831
30 May, 1955, p. 90.

incidents, the US President Dwight Eisenhower, at a Geneva Conference on 21 July, 1955, proposed a reciprocal aerial inspection plan. On the basis of President proposal, the US delegation submitted on 30 August, 1965 to the Disarmament Commission sub-committee the "Open Skies Plan".²⁶ The Soviet Union suspected that the "Open Skies" plan was a camouflage for espionage of the Soviet territory. The Soviet reaction was therefore that, "it said nothing about disarmament" and it was "designed to provide the pentagon with military - strategic data about the Soviet Union".²⁷ In the words of the Chairman of the Council of ministers, N.A. Bulganin "such a aerial inspection would lead to a weakening of vigilance towards the still existing threat of violation of peace generated by the arms drive."²⁸ In order to prevent it and in the interest of international peace and security, he proposed the prohibition of atomic weapons and reduction of armed forces of the big five namely, USSR, USA, UK, France and China.

The Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister V. Zorin, stated in reply to the US representatives John J. Mcloy that "such control,

26. Paul E. Zinner, ed, Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1955 (New York, Harper and Brothers, 1956), pp. 434 - 5.

27. A. Shevchenko, "Disarmament : A problem that can be solved" International Affairs, (Moscow) May, 1971, p. 66.

28. "Letters from N.A. Bulganin to President Eisenhower" Soviet News, no. 3259, 27 September, 1955, p. 2.

which in actual fact would mean control of armaments, would deteriorate into an international system of legalised espionage, and this naturally, is unacceptable to any state concerned for its security and for the preservation of world peace." 29

Similarly commenting on Zonal inspection, V. Khvostov said that "Zonal inspection, which in the US draft has now replaced blanket inspection, hardly excludes collection of vital military information about rocket for example, Zonal inspection may lead to disclosure of the whole system of defences before the weapons which may be hurled against these defences are abolished. The threat to the safety of the USSR becomes even more pronounced because, as a result of the submission of information on armaments and the control measures provided for by the US draft in the stage- I, the other side may learn something new and organize the production of weapons, especially rockets, which it did not previously have in its possession." 30

The Soviet Union's proposals on disarmament were never taken seriously by Washington, though it did make concessions, which are favourable to the western powers. Nevertheless, Moscow

29. " Letters from the USSR Representative to the US representative in Bilateral Soviet - American Disarmament Negotiations", New Times (Moscow), Supplement no. 41, 11 October, 1961, p. 24 .

30. V. Khvostov, " The prospect of Disarmament", International Affairs (Moscow), November 1962, p. 48.

was deeply concerned about the spiralling arms race and continued to work for disarmament. During this time it was also strengthened in its belief in the possible destruction of the capitalist and communist systems, in the event of a nuclear war, if the nuclear arms race continued unabated. Hence Khrushchev announced at the twentieth party Congress in 1956, that war was no longer fatalistically inevitable and that the future war would be a nuclear war in which both the communist as well as the imperialist will perish and that a peaceful transition to socialism was therefore essential. This was a fundamental shift from the traditional Marxist - Leninist theory of the inevitability of war.

Arguing in favour of revising the Marxist - Leninist theory of the inevitability of war, Khrushchev observed that "this precept was evolved at a time when imperialism was on all-embracing world system and the social and political forces which did not want war were weak, poorly organised, and hence unable to compel the imperialist to renounce war". He then noted "people usually take only one aspect of the question and examine only the economic basis of wars under imperialism. This is not enough. War is not only an economic phenomenon. Whether there is to be a war or not depends in large measures on the correlation of class, political forces, the degree of

organization, and the awareness and resolve of the people. These factors according to him were important for the inevitability of war. However, he said in that period this precept was absolutely correct. At the present time, however, the situation has changed radically. Now there is a world camp of socialism, which has become a mighty force. In this camp the peace forces find not only the moral, but also the material means to prevent aggression".³¹ Thus under the present circumstances war was not inevitable. Khrushchev's revised theory about inevitability of war supported by the Soviet leaders and military theoreticians.

The rethinking about war in the nuclear age by Khrushchev was influenced by the growing threat of nuclear annihilation. According to this view, disarmament was possible without the fall of imperialism and it will not impede the dialectical process of world revolution.³²

Hence, Khrushchev vigorously campaigned for nuclear and conventional disarmament during this time. In a

31. N.S. Khrushchev, Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the 20th party Congress, February 14, 1956 (Moscow, Foreign Language Publishing House, 1956) pp. 41. 42

32. G. Malenkov, Speech at the 20th party Congress of the Communist Party of Soviet Union (Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1956) p. 33.

new Soviet proposal of 27, March 1956, it was suggested that conventional armaments and armed forces were to be reduced in two years, rather than three years as proposed earlier. Detailed provisions for inspection were also included. Ground Control Posts were again mentioned with the specification that they would be enumerated in a special agreement that would also extend to the signatories of foreign bases. The control organ was authorized to have unlimited access to all military units, stores or military equipments and ammunition, land, naval and air bases, factories manufacturing conventional armaments and ammunition. The plan was not acceptable to the western powers. ³³

In the late 1950s, faced with the momentum of the nuclear arms race and the fear of a nuclear war due to the East - West tension, American policy maker turned to Arms Control. According to United States, the main aims of the arms control doctrine measures were confidence building, tension reduction and nuclear war prevention. ³⁴

The late 1950s, also witnessed important technological break through by the Soviet Union, especially in sending a

33. UN. Documents. DC/83, Annex 5, 4 May , 1956 pp. 1-5.

34. Richard J. Barnet, "The American Approach to Disarmament" in Ernest W. Lefever, ed. Arms and Arms Control : A Symposium, (London, Thames and Hudson, 1962) p. 80.

Sputnik into the orbit in 1957 followed by the testing of the first Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM). These spectacular events had a tremendous impact on the defence policy of the United States. It created the missile crisis in the US which resulted in a crash programme to increase both the quantity and quality of the nuclear arms race between the two nuclear giants and increased the tension between the East and West. Both side feared a surprise nuclear attack or an accidental nuclear war. In order to eliminate these fears the Soviet Union proposed in the United Nations, the prohibition of nuclear tests, aerial photography and demanded safeguards against surprise attack. The Soviet Union also called for general and complete disarmament.

The Soviet Union agreed to co-operate with the United States to take necessary steps against surprise attacks. Consequently a conference on surprise attack was held in Geneva on 11 November 1958. At this Conference the Soviet Union declared on 28 November 1958, that the danger of a surprise attack can be prevented only if the use of atomic and hydrogen weapons were prohibited. The declaration also suggested practical steps for reducing the danger of a sudden attack by means of creating ground control posts and aerial photography in certain regions.³⁵ The United States agreed that in order to avoid a surprise attack, aerial inspection was necessary, with ground posts and mobile ground team. Both

35. Documents On Disarmament : 1945-1959 (Washington, Department of State Publication, 1960) Vol. 2, p. 1266.

the super powers accepted in principle that aerial and ground inspection supervised by UN personnel be set up in strategically comparable zones to guard against surprise attack. However there was no agreement regarding the area or the inspection techniques to be adopted. Hence the proposals for preventing surprise attack and accidental war could not be implemented. ³⁶

The Soviet willingness to ease tension in the East - West relations was also demonstrated in regard to aerial photography. In 1956, during the Suez crisis, the Soviet government was willing to consider the question of using aerial photography in Europe, where military forces of the NATO and WTO were deployed to a depth of 800 kms. Similarly, the Soviet Union submitted several proposals for banning nuclear tests. ³⁷ Its efforts bore fruit in August 1963, when Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) was signed by the Soviet Union, the US and the UK.

The Soviet plan for general and complete disarmament was another significant step in the direction of disarmament.

36. Ibid.

37. Documents on Disarmament : 1945 - 1959, n. 35, pp. 736 - 737

At the fourteenth session of the UN General Assembly, on 18 September, 1959, Khrushchev presented his proposal for General and Complete Disarmament (GCD). The Soviet leader said : " So long as there exist large armies, air forces and navies, nuclear and rocket weapons, there is no guarantee of stable peace". The only "way out of the deadlock should be sought along the lines of general and complete disarmament".³⁸ For international peace and security, he proposed general and complete Disarmament.

Khrushchev's proposal on general and complete disarmament stood for complete elimination of the Conventional forces, except those required for maintaining internal law and order. All military bases had to be dismantled. All nuclear and thermo nuclear warheads except those mutually agreed to be kept at the disposal of the UN, were to be destroyed and their production discontinued. The energy from fissionable material was to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes.³⁹

Besides, the proposal was also for the elimination of all military rockets except those rockets which could be used as a

38. For General and Complete Disarmament : N.S. Khrushchev's speech to the General Assembly of the U.N.S and Declaration of the Soviet government on General and Complete Disarmament. (New Delhi, Information Department of the USSR Embassy in India, 1959) p, 15.

39. N.S. Khrushchev, Let us Live in Peace and Friendship, (Moscow, Foreign Language Publishing House, 1960)pp.158-59.

means of transportation and for the conquest of outer space for the good of all mankind. Emphasis was laid on the destruction of chemical and bacteriological weapons. In order to make it effective, an international machinery (International Disarmament Organisation) was to be set up, to exercise strict control over all disarmament measures. ⁴⁰

In case the proposal on general and complete disarmament was not acceptable to the western power, Khrushchev also suggested an alternative proposal, known as partial measures for disarmament. It proposed the setting up of a control and inspection zone with reduction of foreign troops on the territory of the West European Countries. It asked for the creation of an atom-free zone in Central Europe, the withdrawal of all foreign troops from the territory of European states and the dismantling of military bases on foreign territory, the conclusion of a non-aggression pact between the member states of NATO and WTO and an agreement on the prevention of surprise attack by one state on another. ⁴¹

The United States reacted favourably to the Soviet proposal

40. Ibid, p. 159.

41. Ibid, p. 162.

on general and complete disarmament. Commenting on it, the US Secretary of State, Christain A. Herter said, " It is in its details something that can be looked at with skepticism, but represents an effort of mankind to reach the solution of one, at least, of the major problems of the world which is a great threat to the world itself." ⁴²

On 15 January, 1960, the Soviet Union proposed that it would be willing to reduce its forces to the level of 2.5 million men and withdraw or substantially reduce its troop in Eastern Europe. ⁴³ The 1960 proposal for force reduction was justified on the ground that they would actually enhance the overall Soviet strength. In a message of Khrushchev delivered at the Fourth session of the Supreme Soviet on 14, January, 1960, he said that the reduction of forces would cut the expenditure helping to increase their country's economic power, provide additional opportunities of promoting the standard of living, build more homes and increase the material wealth. ⁴⁴

Unfortunately, these peace initiatives had to be halted

42. Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 41, no: 1059
12 October, 1956, p. 503

43. K.U. Chernenko and others, Soviet Foreign Policy: Basic Acts and Documents of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, 1956-1962 (Moscow Foreign Language Publishing House, 1962) pp. 169-172.

44. *Ibid* , p. 150.

because of a certain provocative incidents. On 1 May 1960, a US reconnaissance aircraft, U-2 was shot down in the Soviet territory. The aerial espionage created a furor in the country. The Soviet military leaders began to question the wisdom of the Kermlin policy makers in view of the American provocation. After a prolonged debate between the party and the military leaders they ultimately decided to halt the Soviet unilateral reduction of force levels.

Another development, which compelled the Soviet leaders to change their policy on disarmament was the Berlin crisis, in 1961. Simultaneously the Sino-Soviet relations also deteriorated. On the domestic front, there was failure of the agricultural programme.

In view of all these problems, the Soviet Union, besides strengthening militarily decided to improve its relations with the US. By doing so, it hoped that the strains of a massive build up would ease. It could then concentrate on economic development by diverting the resources towards solving the agricultural as well as other economic problems at home. The Soviet Union and the United States therefore returned to general and complete disarmament in 1961. This had resulted in the joint statement of agreed principles called the McCloy -

Zorin statement, according to which "the goal of negotiations is to achieve agreement on a programme which will ensure that, disarmament is general and complete and war is no longer an instrument for settling international problems", and the programme for disarmament should be "accompanied by the establishment of reliable procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes and effective arrangements for the maintenance of peace in accordance with the principles of the UNs charter." Further, the joint, statement added "that States will have at their disposal only those non-nuclear armaments, forces, facilities, and establishments as are agreed to be necessary to maintain internal order and protect the personal security of citizens".⁴⁵

Simultaneously, the McCloy-Zorin statement wanted the disbanding of armed forces, dismantling of military establishment, including bases, cessation of the production of armaments as well their liquidation or conversion to peaceful uses. It was also for the elimination of all stockpiles of nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and other weapons of mass destruction including the means of delivery and for the abolition of military expenditures.⁴⁶ The plan was to be implemented through an

45. Richard P. Stebbins with Elaine P. Adam, ed., Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1961, (New York, Harper and Brothers, 1962) p. 201.

46. Ibid. p. 202.

international machinery for strict and effective international control.

In 1962, the Soviet Union and the United States submitted draft treaties outlining in details, their plan for general and complete disarmament within three successive stages and an agreed time-frame. General and complete disarmament should be implemented, according to these treaties under strict international control. An international authority called the international Disarmament Organization would be set up for this purpose. ⁴⁷

General and Complete disarmament had a special place in the Soviet foreign policy objectives because its implementation would enable the USSR to divert enormous sum of money to build school, hospitals, homes, roads etc. Besides it would also have beneficial effect on the living standard of the population. In other words, for the Russians, it would mean not only the end of the institution of war but also a march toward a classless society to achieve the goal of communism.

However, Khrushchev cautioned that "even after the fulfilment

47. Richard P. Stebbins with Elaine P. Adams, ed, Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1962 (New York, Harper and Row Publishers, 1963) pp. 127-128.

of general disarmament programme contradictions between states, particularly between states with different social and economic systems, will remain. These contradiction will not, however be resolved through military clashes but only by peaceful economic competition, by the struggle of ideas and by other peaceful means, as prescribed by the UN chapter. ⁴⁸

Peaceful co-existence, originally advocated by Lenin and subsequently revived by Khrushchev, has greater relevance in the age of overkill. Apart from the imperialist and Socialist Coexisting, it "implies renunciation of war as a means of settling international disputes between states, and their solution by negotiations, equality, mutual understanding and trust between countries, consideration for each other's interests, non-interference in internal affairs, recognition of the right of every people to solve all the problems of their country by themselves, strict respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries, promotion of economic and cultural co-operation on the basis of complete equality and mutual benefit. ⁴⁹

When the Americans first introduced the term " Arms Control",

48. N.S. Khrushchev, World Without Arms, World Without Wars, (Moscow, Foreign Language Publishing House, 1962) p. 506.

49. Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union: The Road to Communism (Moscow, Foreign Language Publishing House, 1962) p. 506.

the Russian objected to it strongly. Igor Globolev, a leading Soviet Social Scientist observed that "in capitalistic countries persons active for peace use the term 'arms control' for measures limiting the use of nuclear weapons. Whereas, in reactionary circles it is understood to mean the disguised 'arms race'.⁵⁰ In general, the Soviets characterized it as an attempt by the western powers to legalise the arms race. Therefore it was not acceptable to them.

The Soviet skepticism of the term "arms control", is based on their realization that it has been used by the West not to achieve disarmament but to legitimize, nuclear arms race and designed to collect military intelligence in the Socialist Countries.⁵¹ The American however, rejected the Soviet allegation against the arms control doctrine.⁵²

Subsequently, the Soviet Union accepted the arms control doctrine for two reasons. Khrushchev's flexible approach to disarmament was indeed one important reason. His enthusiastic support to general and complete disarmament was an example.

50. Igor Glagolev, " East-West Dialogue On Disarmament - Continues". War and Peace Report (New York) Vol, 3, no.7, August 1963, p. 4

51. Vassili Mamontov, Disarmament - The Command of the Times (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1979) p. 117.

52. John Baylis and others, ed., Contemporary Strategy: Theories and Concepts. (London, Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1987) p. 167.

When he found that these proposals were not acceptable to the West he turned to arms control measures. An important measure of arms control which he introduced in the mid 1950's was the concept of " Nuclear Weapon Free Zones". Khrushchev's successor, L.I. Brezhnev also attached great importance to the setting up of Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zones in different parts of the globe.

Another reason was the advancement of science and technology and its impact on the uncontrolled nuclear arms race, which was viewed by Soviet Union as a threat to its security. They preferred arms control to a nuclear war by accident miscalculation or by design. Hence it supported arms control measures like the Partial Test Ban Treaty(1963), Space Treaty (1967), Tlateloco Treaty (1967), Non-Proliferation Treaty(1968), the SALT - I (1972), SALT - II (1979), etc.

From 1950 to 1970, the Soviet Union was favourably inclined towards arms control measures, without accepting the US interpretations of the meaning of the term "arms control". But when it concluded SALT - I , talks with the US in 1972, it fully endorsed the American view of arms control as a tension reduction, confidence building and a war prevention measures.⁵³

53. A.N. Arkadyev, " Towards a World Disarmament Conference". New Times (Moscow) no. 31, July 1972, p. 4.

To the United States which introduced the term "arms control" first, it meant any formal or informal international action placing limitations on armed forces, armaments and military expenditure.⁵⁴ The American doctrines of arms control aimed at avoiding a general nuclear war between the super powers.

The Soviet Union, therefore, described arms control as an effective means of ensuring a system of International Security, which would preclude any possibility of the use of nuclear weapons to solve international disputes.⁵⁵

L.I. Brezhnev included it in the peace programme of the Twentifourth Party Congress (1971). Explaining the main goal of the peace programme, Brezhnev said that, "efforts to end the arms race and to promote disarmament have been and remain as the peace programme requires one of the main trends in the foreign political activity of the CPSU and the Soviet Government. Today this objective is more vital than ever".⁵⁶

54. Thomas B. Larson, Disarmament and Soviet Policy : 1964 - 1968 (Washington, Prentice-Hall Inc, 1969) p.4.

55. UN Documents. A/C. I/PV 1748, 2, November, 1970, p.1.

56. L.I. Brezhnev, Our Course : Peace and Socialism : A Collection of Speeches, March 1971 - December 1972 (Moscow, Novostipress Agency Publishing House, 1975) p. 27.

Brezhnev's speech underlined the importance of Soviet Union's support to arms control measures. The Soviet Union believed that arms control would enhance the objective security of all states and contribute to the good will and thrust that would alleviate the need for armaments. Soon there after the Soviet Union took decisions that made progress possible at SALT , and opened the way to negotiations on force reductions in Central Europe, which began in Vienna in 1973, and to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which led to the Helsinki Agreement in 1975. These decisions, as well as Soviet anxiety about growing Sino-American ties, laid the basis for the Moscow summit meeting of May 1972, at which the SALT - I Agreement were signed. Brezhnev and Nixon decided also to conclude a trade agreement and signed a document setting out the basic principle of relations between their two countries. ⁵⁷

The SALT Agreement provided a visible sign of strategic parity between the two countries. The basic principles stressed that " they should conduct their relations on the basis of equality, reciprocity, mutual accommodation and mutual

57. "Basic Principles of Relations Between USA and USSR,"
Department of State Bulletin, June 26, 1972, pp. 898-9

benefit." ⁵⁸ The Soviet Union had pressed for a document of this kind, presumably in order to signify that the United States recognize not only strategic parity, but also Soviet equality as a superpower. The Soviet leaders evidently regarded this as an important achievement. In the late 1920s the party had adopted the historic mission of catching up and overtaking the advanced capitalist powers. The same goal had been espoused once again after the war. Khrushchev had claimed strategic and political equality. In one of his letters to Kennedy during the Cuban missile crisis, Khrushchev had rather plaintively asked why the United States was demanding withdrawal of the Soviet missiles from Cuba when it had missiles in countries close to the Soviet borders: " How then does the admission of our equal military capabilities tally with such unequal relation between our great states ? This cannot be made to tally in any way".⁵⁹ The Cuban debacle had shown that Khrushchev's claim to equality were premature. Now atlast, however, the Soviet Union had attained strategic parity, and had forced the United States to recognize that fact. The Soviet leaders

58. David Holloway, n.7 , p. 89.

59. Arnold Horolick and Myron Rush, Strategic Power and Soviet Foreign Policy, (Chicago Press, 1966) p.212

evidently hoped that strategic equality would lead to a recognition of overall equality and thereby bring political and economic gains for the Soviet Union.

In June 1979 after many years of negotiations the Soviet Union and US agreed on SALT - II. Under this both sides agreed to reduce their total strategic delivery vehicles to a ceiling of 2,250. But the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan marked the end of Soviet - American detente. Soviet action was seen by the Carter Administration as a particularly outstanding example of Soviet expansionism. The American reaction to this was the non-ratification of the SALT - II Treaty and the imposition of economic sanctions. This clearly indicated that one chapter in Soviet - American relations had been closed.⁶⁰ The second half of the 1970s saw a major new dimension added to the nuclear race between two super powers.

Thus, the development of nuclear weapons gave an altogether different direction to the formulation of Soviet policy of disarmament, in the post Second World War period.

60. David Holloway, n. 7, p. 55

During the US nuclear monopoly period Soviet Union faced tremendous risk to its security which led Stalin to follow a two fold strategy to develop a Soviet nuclear strike capability and to pursue a policy of nuclear disarmament. The negative response by Western powers to the Soviet disarmament proposals, during Stalin period, convinced Soviet leadership that disarmament can never be attained in a capitalist society. But this belief underwent a significant change, when balance of terror had set in due to first Soviet thermo nuclear test in 1953. The threat of annihilation of both the socialist as well as capitalist block, called for a more flexible disarmament policy and forced Khrushchev to change its age old doctrine of "inevitability of war" towards "Peaceful Co-existence". Also, the slow growth of Soviet economy, due to high costs of defence, forced it toward strategic accommodation with USA. But the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and the US attempt to regain its strategic superiority marked the end of detente which for the time being was a serious set back to disarmament issue.

CHAPTER - III

CHANGES IN SOVIET LEADERSHIP AND NEW INITIATIVES
TOWARDS NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT - ANDROPOV AND
CHERNENKO - .

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CHANGES IN SOVIET LEADERSHIP AND NEW INITIATIVES TOWARDS NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT-ANDROPOV AND CHERNENKO-

Any analysis of the Post-Brezhnev period must start with a clear cut understanding of the eighteen years reign of the man who was elevated to highest seat of power in October 1964. Unlike his predecessor, Leonid Ilich Brezhnev brought relative stability to the Soviet Union. He sought to make his mark on Soviet History and took series of policy initiatives that not only dealt with the major problem facing the nation but also disarmed his critics.

The Brezhnev era marked by major new policy initiatives and the formulation of a new vision of the Soviet future were designed to lead the Soviet Union through the second industrial revolution and in to the further maturation of 'developed socialism!'¹

Brezhnev's years in power emerge as nearly two decades of cautious political and policy initiatives designed both to consolidate the General Secretary's hold on power and to implement economic and social reforms that would improve the standard of living and move the Soviet Union smoothly through

1. Donald R. Kelley, Soviet Politics from Brezhnev to Gorbachëv, (New York, Praeger, Publishers, 1987) pp. 1 - 4.

the second industrial revolution.

Like Khrushchev, Brezhnev sought to make his mark by bold initiatives in agriculture, consumer good production, and foreign policy, but unlike his predecessor, he moved with caution, seeking to balance bold initiatives in one area with concession in another or to adjust himself with his critics and their programmes rather than opting for confrontation.² Brezhnev emerged as a clear policy initiator rather than merely as a balancer of major Kremlin interests, although he was quick to change his new programme in light of policy failures or in the face of opposition. Brezhnev was able to maintain a style of leadership that stressed consensus building and tacit negotiations. As first among equals, his task was to define his own policy initiatives in ways acceptable to the major institutional forces and to foster the emergence of a consensus among them. The fact that he was able to secure the adoption of most of his major innovations testifies to the wisdom of his cautious strategy and to his skill as a politician rather than to his ability to dictate to his colleagues.

Thus Brezhnev left a country that was incomparably stronger

2. William Hyland and Richard W. Shryock, The fall of Khrushchev (New York : Funk and Wagnals 1968) pp., 23. -

in military terms than when he took over in October 1964. He presided over a massive build up in Soviet nuclear strength that gave the country parity with the United States at the end of 1960s. His another major achievement was the establishment of detente with the west. In Western Europe Brezhnev managed to negotiate a settlement of most of the outstanding political issues left after the Second World War. The peace treaty with West Germany in 1970, the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin in 1971, and the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 recognized the territorial status quo and laid the basis of a new relationship between the Soviet Union and Western Europe. Brezhnev also helped to evolve a more stable way of living with the United States in the early 1970s. Four meetings with American Presidents in two and half years symbolized a degree of cooperation and dialogue that had never occurred before.

Despite, Brezhnev's bold steps and courageous initiatives in different fields, the final years of Brezhnev era was beset with immobilism and stagnation. The detente of 70s did not last long. Brezhnev left his successors with a situation of increased tension and risk. A new cold war was underway, characterized by American efforts to put economic and political pressure on the Soviet Union to change its foreign and defence policies and liberalize its internal system. The three major

States of Western Europe - England, France and Germany -, though more willing than Washington to maintain normal relations with Moscow, were led, on Brezhnev's death, by governments that were more anti-Soviet than those of the early and mid 1970s. They were less committed to detente than their predecessors.³

In the third world, Brezhnev bequeathed an undeclared but apparently hopeless war against rebels in Afghanistan. The Soviet invasion had lost Moscow the support of the Islamic World and most members of the non-aligned movement. It spoiled relations with Iran, one of the Soviet Union's most important neighbours, and with Pakistan.

While the malaise and immobilism of the last years of the Brezhnev era underscored the need for new and forceful leadership, they also compounded the difficulties already inherent in setting the stage for political succession. Having thwarted the attempts of earlier would-be rivals and claimants to the throne, Brezhnev was understandably reluctant until the very end to designate a visible heir apparent.

Brezhnev's death on November 10, 1982, ended the long

3. Jonathan Steele, The Limits of Soviet Power (England, Penguin Books Limited, 1984) pp., 4 - 6.

period of waiting. It provoked a vigorous struggle within the politbureau in which the final remnants of his personal entourage clashed with a more heterogeneous coalition that backed Andropov. The relatively long delay separating Brezhnev's death and the public announcement of his demise suggest that the politbureau found it difficult to come to any consensus on the difficult choice of a successor.⁴ Two days passed between the death between eight and nine in the morning on November 10th and the formal announcement on November 12th. The sketchy accounts available suggests that the politbureau was in virtually constant session on November 11th with the first bid for power initiated by the Chernenko faction. The original scenario provided for a careful staged show of unity among the closest of Brezhnev's former associates and an attempt to bridge any potential gap between party and state. Chernenko first proposed premier Nikolai Tikhonov for the top party post. Citing his advanced age, he declined and nominated Chernenko in his place.⁵

It is likely that Chernenko's losing coalition numbered

4. Donald R. Kelley, n. 1, pp. 44.

5. Ibid.

no more than three or four full members of the politbureau, united as much by their desire to block Andropov's rise as by any direct loyalty to Brezhnev's chosen heir. Other than Chernenko himself, the coalition probably included Tikhonov, a Brezhnev loyalist whose own hold on the Chairmanship of the Council of Ministers would be endangered by widespread reforms, and D.A. Kunaev, the first Secretary of the Kazakh party organization. ⁶

It is also possible that Viktor Grishin first secretary of the Moscow party organization, backed Chernenko. While some other sources placed him in the Andropov camp, it is also known that he clearly sided with the old guard to block Gorbachov's rise after Chernenko's death in 1984. ⁷ Given his own reputed desire for higher office, it is quite possible that his association with either faction in the fall of 1982 was designed simply to buy time for his own candidacy to mature as more forceful rivals among the senior members of the politbureau neutralized one another. And in the event Andropov rose to power and thereby discredited Chernenko's bid to represent the forces of stability.

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6. Mark D. Zlotnik, "Chernenko's Platform", Problems of Communism 31 (November/December 1982).
 7. Ilya Zemtsov, Andropov (Jerusalem, IRICS Publishers, 1983), p. 94.

Andropov's own willing coalition was far more diverse, reflecting both his efforts to court backing from heavy industry and the military and the impact of the campaign to portray himself as a forceful leader. At the center of this group of Backers were Dmitrii Ustinov, the minister of defence, and Andrei Gromyko, the foreign minister.

Although senior members of the politbureau, they had risen to prominence because of their recognized expertise in defence and foreign affairs rather than because of any close association with Brezhnev's personal entourage.

Several factors motivated their support of Andropov. It is likely that their personal resistance to the elevation of Chernenko played an important role, whatever their thoughts concerning his suitability for office, they probably had long resented his sycophancy relationship with the General Secretary and his status as the designated heir who had risen to within grasping range of power solely through the patronage of his mentor.⁸ Chernenko's questionable qualities as a potential leader must also have played a role. With virtually no independent leadership experience in either party or state to

8. Mard D. Zlotnik, n. 6.

his credit, Chernenko was at best a weak prospect to take firm control of an increasingly disorderly system. Moreover, Chernenko's attempts to establish himself as a proponent of pro-consumer line in the economy and a vaguely populist and anti-bureaucratic posture in terms of administrative style would hardly endear him to the military and the more conservative elements of the foreign policy establishment.

On the positive side, there was much to attract Ustinov and Gromyko to Andropov's side. Given the demise of Kirilenko, who was removed from the politbureau at the November 22 regular session of the central committee that quickly followed Andropov's rise to power, the former KGB Chief was the only logical candidate around whom a stop - Chernenko coalition could form. Other senior figures such as Ustinov and Gromyko themselves had failed to broaden their narrow institutional constituencies, and Romanov and Grishin had at best limited bases in Leningrad and Moscow. Andropov's long experience in foreign policy and defence as head of the KGB also undoubtedly weighed in his favour, as did his reputation as an effective administrator who had brought the sprawling domestic and foreign activities of the agency under control.

Despite the initial conflict that delayed the announcement

of Brezhnev's death, the eventual public disclosure of the selection of Andropov was handled so as to produce the appearance of unanimity. Chernenko formally nominated him at the November 12th session of central committee acting on instruction from the politbureau to demonstrate his endorsement of Andropov's selection.⁹

For the 15 months he remained in power Andropov sought to place his stamp on the nation. In the field of foreign policy, and particularly the policy of nuclear disarmament, pursued by Andropov regime, differed little from that of its predecessor. The general deterioration of Soviet - US relations, which began in the latter years of the Carter administration because of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and accelerated with the military build up of the Reagan administration, continued despite Soviet call for a return to detente. The new leadership soon found itself facing a turning point in East-West relations because of the breakdown of the intermediate nuclear Force (INF) and strategic arms reduction (START) talks and the approaching deployment of US Pershing II and cruise missiles in Western Europe. While it launched new initiatives in its dealings with the people's republic of China and the

9. Pravada, November 13, 1982.

middle East and expressed a tentative hope for a political settlement in Afghanistan, the regime, undertook no major revisions of existing policies until it had become apparent that efforts to block deployment of American missiles would prove unsuccessful. ¹⁰

Given the new regime's domestic agenda and the nature of the coalition that backed its rise to power, it is hardly surprising that arms control issues should occupy secondary priority or that the conventional wisdom of the 1970s should guide the new leadership. The new regime chose to direct its greatest energies at the problems of economic reforms and inefficiency and corruption at home, issues that hopefully not only forged a new coalition on which Andropov could consolidate power but also that forced USSR to turn inward. ¹¹ The priority given to economic reforms further underscored the leadership's interest in returning to the detente of mid-1970s and preventing an acceleration of arms race, especially at the level of intermediate range missiles forces, where the Soviet had acquired tactical advantage through the development of SS-20 missiles in Western Europe.

10. Zhores A. Medvedev, Andropov (New York : Norton, 1983) p. 115

11. Donald R. Kelley, n. 1 , pp. 88 -89.

The most immediate problem facing the new Soviet leadership was the deadlock over arms control efforts. Having rejected a "fatally flawed" SALT-II agreement, the Reagan administration shifted the terms of discussion to focus on a new round of talks about strategic weapons, now known by the acronym START and a new set of discussions about medium range missiles known as the INF talks. US position in both negotiations were hardly conducive to agreement. In the START talks, the American scrapped much of the framework of the successfully negotiated but never implemented SALT-II agreement and argued instead for deep cuts that weighed disproportionately against the Soviet reliance on its strategic missile forces, and in the INF talks, they initially pursued a "zero option" position that was designed to provide time for the deployment of Pershing-II and Cruise missiles in Western Europe. While the Soviets warned of counterdeployments and sought to influence potential host nations to reject the placement of US intermediate range weapons on their territory, they continued to call for an improvement in Soviet - US relations.

Andropov's first pronouncements on arms control stressed Soviet interest in returning to detente. In his first major address before the central committee on November 22nd 1982, he argued that " the policy of detente is by no means a stage that

is over and done with. The future belongs to it." ¹² He warned, however, that "we are not a naive people" and rejected "the viewpoint of those who are trying to impress people with the idea that force and weapons decide everything," ¹³ an ambiguous formulation perhaps directed as much at domestic critics who urged new Soviet armaments effort in the light of US build up.

Speaking at a ceremony commemorating the 60th anniversary of the formation of the Soviet Union, Andropov reiterated proposals dealing with both strategic and intermediate range weapons, including a 25 per cent reduction of strategic arms, to be matched by a similar US cutback, and a freeze on the further expansion of strategic arsenals. He also repeated the Soviet pledge to reduce the number of missiles aimed at West European targets to the total of the combined British and French missile forces, a move that would have considerably cut the number of SS 20 but also would have forestalled the deployment of US Pershing II and Cruise missiles. He warned, however, that the USSR would respond to further American advances at both the strategic and intermediate levels with equal build-ups.

12. Jonathan Steel and Eric Abraham, Andropov in Power, (Oxford, Martin Robertson and Company Ltd; 1983) p. 174.

13. Ibid.

By March 1983, however, Andropov's tone had grown more louder. While he continued to urge mutual restraint and to suggest that Reagan's bellicose tone was primarily intended for a domestic audience, he accused the President of "deliberate untruths" in describing Soviet actions and noted that it "does not become those who scuttled the SALT- II Treaty ... to try to pose as peacemakers." He warned that the Reagan administration was on a "dangerous path" and lectured on the wisdom of such action. He said "question of war and peace must not be treated so lightly. All attempts to achieve military superiority over the USSR will be unavailing. The Soviet Union will never allow this ; it will never be caught unarmed in the face of any threat. Let Washington learn this well. It is time that people there stopped thinking up more and more new ideas on the best way to unleash a nuclear war in the hope of winning it. Doing this is not just irresponsible, it is insane." ¹⁴

Foreign Minister Gromyko and Defence Minister Ustinov soon added their own condemnations to the increasingly sharp attacks on the Reagan administration.

At a press conference early in April, the former warned

14. A.L. Adamishin and others. Soviet Foreign Policy, Vol.II, (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1983) pp. 347 - 378.

that the "strong words" are no way to do business", while the latter warned that the deployment of missiles in Europe would not go "unpunished" and bring "retribution" directly against the United States in event of war in Europe. ¹⁵

In mid - April, 1983, Andropov acknowledged that the talks on intermediate range missiles were "dead locked" and expressed the fear that a new arms race was outdistancing the talks. Just over a week later, he again lectured the Reagan administration on the implications of the deployment of Pershing II and Cruise missiles, his comments conveying a growing fear about the destabilizing. He spoke that " we are at a very crucial point ; one has only to pull the string, and the ball will start rolling. The deployment of American Pershing and Cruise missiles in Western Europe is capable of playing such a role. If after all arguments of reason not withstanding, matters come to this, a chain reaction is inevitable. The USSR, the GDR, and the other Warsaw Treaty members countries will be compelled to take retaliatory measures." ¹⁶

On August 18, in his last public appearances, Andropov took a more conciliatory tone in a meeting with nine visiting

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

US Senators. While he characterized the current state of Soviet - US relations as " tense in virtually all fields, he emphasized that the success at the Geneva talk was still possible if the US side would accept the Soviet proposal to limit the number of intermediate range missiles to a balance of forces between the combined British and French arsenals on the NATO side and an equivalent number of SS-20s. Andropov also devoted greater attention to the militarization of outer space, offering to dismantle the primitive Soviet antisatellite weapon system in exchange for an American pledge not to develop similar weapons. ¹⁷

A week later, he offered another concession to forestall the deployment of American missiles. In his answers to questions posed by Pravda, Andropov promised to dismantle all Soviet intermediate range missiles as a part of an overall reduction to cut the number of SS-20s to the combined British and French levels. Previous positions had merely spoken of their removal from the European theatre, posing the threat that they would be redeployed in Asia or held in reserve closer to potential Western targets. ¹⁸

17. Martin McCauley, The Soviet Union After Brezhnev (London, Heinemann Educational Books, 1983) p. 149.

18. Ibid.

The worsening tone of Soviet - US relations received another sharp setback on the night of August 31st, when Korean airlines flight 007 was shot down while in Soviet air space. While it seems likely that the decision to bring down the aircraft was made by the regional Commander, the response of higher Soviet authorities in the first week after the crisis revealed both confusion on how to deal with such an embarrassingly aggressive act at a time when the Kremlin was attempting to blunt US rearmament efforts and an apparent lack of leadership that may have resulted from Andropov's declining health. The initial official response came from low-level figures within the Foreign Ministry of Defence, and it was not until September 7th that Soviet official acknowledged publically that they had intercepted the plane. Even when the Kermlin responded with greater frankness more than a week after the crisis, the burden of explanation fell to Marshall Ogarkov, Chief of the General Staff and First Deputy Minister of Defence. 19

Perhaps more important was the impact of the KAL - 007 crisis on the tone of Soviet - US relations. The Reagan administration condemned Soviet action in the sharpest possible tones, and the Kermlin responded in kind, accusing the US

leader of "pathological anticommunism" and charging that the destruction of the plane was being used as a cause to destroy all hopes of agreement in Geneva.²⁰ Holding to its line that the USSR had acted properly to defend its airspace against a blatant espionage mission, Soviet commentators sharpened their attacks on US motives and on the President himself.

Accusing the United States of pursuing a "militaristic course", Andropov soon offered the sharpest personal attack on Reagan yet heard. Rejecting the moral outrage of the West over the KAL - 007 incident as blatant hypocrisy, the statement charged Reagan with "heaping mountains of slander on the Soviet Union and on socialism as a social system, and the tone is being set by the US President himself. It must be said straight out that its a sorry sight when, setting themselves the goal of denigrating the Soviet people, the leader of such a country as the US resort to what amounts to foul language, alternating this with hypocritical preaching about morality and humanness."²¹

Despite the escalation of the verbal confrontation, a month later Soviet authorities linked a final concession on

20. Pravada, September 7, 1983.

21. Yuri Andropov, Selected Speeches and Articles, (Moscow, Politizdat, 1979), pp. 91.

overall intermediate weapons levels with a warning. In an statement issued in the name of the ailing Andropov, the USSR reiterated its willingness to limit the number of SS-20s to that of combined British and French forces and then added the concession that it was willing to deal with the issue of strategic aircraft capable of reaching Soviet targets by "establishing for the USSR and for NATO equal aggregate levels of medium range delivery planes in a mutually acceptable quantitative range, even if these levels differ substantially from our earlier proposal." ²² Observing optimistically that if US negotiators were to display a genuine desire to reach a mutually acceptable accord, not much time would be required to work out an agreement.

After a brief period of hope that the two sides might reach agreement based on informal exchanges between the heads of the two delegations, Soviet officials rejected such approaches as American tactics to create an illusion of progress, and withdraw from the Geneva talk on intermediate nuclear forces and subsequently from the START talks on strategic weapons and the Vienna based talks on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions, both of which had also deadlocked. In his statement concerning

22. Ibid.

the withdrawal, Andropov abrogated Soviet commitments to observe a moratorium on the deployment of new SS-20s in Eastern Europe and announced plans to accelerate the placement of such weapons in Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic. He also announced the deployment of Soviet Submarine launched missiles to create a situation in which the threat to the American homeland would be equal to the threat the American missiles that are being deployed in Europe will create for Soviet Union.

Soviet withdrawal from the talks froze Soviet - US relations at a level of hostility, that remained unchanged until after Andropov's death. Speaking at the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, Foreign Minister Gromyko lamented the "dangerous slide towards the abyss" and accused the United States of flagrant violations of its commitments under international treaties and accords. In his last statement on arms control, Andropov demanded that the United States "show a readiness to return to the situation that existed before the deployment of the Pershing II and Cruise Missiles began". Accusing Washington of lacking serious intent in the arms talks, he lamented that "from all indication the American leadership has not renounced its intention to conduct talks with us from a position of strength, from a position of threats and pressure. We resolutely

reject such an approach. In general, moreover, attempts to conduct " power diplomacy " with us are futile".²³

Despite the incomplete nature of Andropov's victory in November and the obvious struggle for position that occurred as his health worsened, there is little indication that such differences affected the basic line of Soviet Disarmament Policy. Pre-occupied with the deployment of US missiles, the new leadership found even its best intentioned efforts to build better ties to Western Europe subsumed under its concern over worsening Soviet - U.S ties.²⁴

The death of Yuri Andropov on February 9, 1984, marked the end of the long deathwatch that had pre-occupied Kremlin leaders for virtually the last half of his brief tennure in office. Andropov's death caught Kremlin leaders in a deep internal division about the choice of a new leader. It is unlikely that Chernenko's supporters constituted a majority within the polit-bureau at the time of Andropov's death and highly probable that

23. Donald R. Kelley, n. 1 , p. 95.

24. Ibid, p. 99

former General Secretary's reformist coalition split apart in the absence of his firm leadership. The naming of a successor was delayed for several days, suggesting that considerable time was required both to confirm the choice of a new General Secretary and to work out the political arrangements that would characterize his leadership. ²⁵

The months that preceded Andropov's death had been marked by signs of increasing infighting among Soviet leaders. From September onward, when Andropov could not take part in the regular weekly meetings of the politburo, a careful political balance was reached in which the sessions were chaired in turn by Chernenko, Romanov and Gorbachov.

Chernenko's rising political fortune were evident shortly before Andropov's death. He was second only to Andropov in the number of districts in which he was nominated as a candidate in the approaching Supreme Soviet elections. ²⁶

Whatever the political development that preceded Andropov's death, the events of the first few days of the Post Andropov period suggested that the choice of a new leader was proving to be

25. Mark Zlotnik, "Chernenko succeeds" Problems of Communism 33(March April, 1984) ; 17-31.

26. Ibid.

difficult. Although Andropov's long anticipated death occurred on February 9, the politburo did not name Chernenko to head the funeral commission until the following day, and the public announcement was delayed until the 11th. Although, this strongly hinted that Chernenko was the likely successor, the final choice was not made public until the Central Committee Plenum on February 13th, resulting in the longest formal transition in party history. Thus in the Central Committee Plenum held on February 13, Tikhonov, a long standing Brezhnev ally, nominated Chernenko's name as the leader of the Soviet Union.

The impasse in Soviet - US relations that had begun even before Brezhnev's death continued for at least the first half of Chernenko's tenure in office, although there were early hints that the new regime was searching for some formula through which to return to the INF and START talks that had been ended shortly before Andropov's death. Few new initiatives appeared in Soviet dealings with other major problem areas. Approaches made towards Western Europe were shaped almost totally by Soviet interest in preventing further deployment of US intermediate range Pershing II and Cruise missiles and securing the removal of those weapons now in place.

The new regime succeeded in reopening the arms talks, under

the guise of a new format for negotiations. The search for a break in the impasse was not evident in the initial pronouncements of the new regime, which demanded an end to further deployment and the withdrawal of Pershing II and Cruise missiles as a precondition for the resumption of talks. Although the new General Secretary's first speeches to the Central Committee Plenum that confirmed his selection and to his constituents two weeks later did not fully spell out Soviet demands, his answers in a Pravada interview published on April 9, 1984, made it clear that the West " must take steps to restore the situation that existed before the deployment of new American missiles in Western Europe began".²⁷ The only early break in the Soviet position came in March with the reopening of the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions talk in Vienna, although no substantive progress emerged from the resumed discussions.

Despite his unyielding position on arms control issues, Chernenko still publically called for an improvement in Soviet - US relations and reiterated the argument that the deterioration of ties was solely the fault of the Reagan administration. It was evident that Moscow's tone was prompted as much by its

27. Pravada, April, 9, 1984.

unwillingness to strengthen the hand of Ronald Reagan's bid for reelection as by its desire to hold firm on the issue of US missiles in Europe. It hoped to sway public opinion and effect the out come of the election. Soviet leaders undoubtedly felt that a prolonged deterioration of bilateral ties and the absence of any progress on arms control would swing public opinion against the incumbent administration, and conversely that any hint of seeming Soviet willingness to reopen the talks under US pressure would suggest that Reagan's unyielding posture had extracted concessions from Moscow. ²⁸

In addition to its preoccupation with US missiles in Europe and the upcoming US Presidential election, the Soviet leadership repeatedly returned to the question of the militarization of space, an issue that had occupied center stage since Reagan's proposal for the so called " Star Wars" or Strategic Defence Initiatives (SDI) in March 1983. From the outset Chernenko repeated his predecessor's call for an agreement to prevent the extension of arms race into space.²⁹ Responding to an appeal from US scientists, the General Secretary reiterated the Soviet position in late May, charging that such a system

28. Jerry Hough, Soviet Leadership in Transition (Washington D.C., The Brooking Institution, 1986, p.122

29. K.U. Chernenko, Edited by Robert Maxwell, Speeches and Writings (OXFORD, Pergamon Press, 1984) p. 217

"cannot be regarded as anything but designed for carrying out nuclear aggression with impunity" and warning that "faced with a threat from space, the Soviet Union will be forced to take measures to reliably safeguard its security". He reminded Western audiences that the USSR had unilaterally declared a moratorium on the further development of anti-satellite missiles in which it was regarded as having a short-term technological lead, and called upon the Americans to take similar actions.³⁰

Returning to the issue late in June, 1984, Chernenko called for a new round of talks on the prevention of the militarization of space, with the first session to be held in September in Vienna, a location suitably removed from the Geneva site of the arms talk. The talks would focus on "the complete and mutual renunciation of anti-satellite systems", and would be accompanied by a mutual moratorium on the testing and deployment of such weapons concurrent with the negotiations.³¹

Apparently expecting a quick US rejection of its proposal, which in itself broke no new ground on the issue of space weapons, Moscow was stung by Washington's qualified acceptance. The

30. Ibid.

31. Jonathan Steele, n.3, p.50.

Reagan administration took the opportunity to suggest that such talks deal, not only with anti-satellite systems but also with the whole range of strategic and intermediate range weapons systems covered by the suspended Geneva negotiations. Moscow now found itself on the position of dilemma of its own making. To accept the US proposal for comprehensive talks would be to return to a modified Geneva format without having obtained the withdrawal of Pershing II and Cruise missiles from Europe, which had been the oft-repeated precondition for the resumption of talks. Yet, to jump back from its own proposal for arms talk of any sort would label the Soviet call for negotiations as ineptly planned and deliberate deception, to say nothing of the loss of face among European and other disarmament groups Moscow wished to court. The Soviets escaped from the dilemma by narrowly interpreting their initial summons; according to Moscow, the agenda of the talks was to have limited to preventing the militarization of outer space. Since Washington refused in advance to accept the implication that the only purpose of the negotiations was to prevent the development of anti-missile defensive systems, much less to withdraw its counter proposal that strategic and intermediate range system be included, Moscow judged the US response as inadequate and pronounced itself unwilling to meet with US officials. ³²

32. Ibid.

Soviet behaviour at Stockholm Conference on European security also reflected preoccupation with nuclear and space weaponry. Called as a follow-up meeting to the Madrid Conference and initially slated to deal conventional weapons, the Stockholm meetings quickly became a forum for the USSR to press its case for an end to US deployment of intermediate range weapons in Europe and prohibition of anti-missile and anti-satellite systems. The latest round of talks, focused on Soviet demands for agreement on the non-first use of nuclear weapons, a nonaggression pact among conference participants, and a freeze on military expenditures, including funds for nuclear and anti-missile systems.

Chernenko's return to active political life early in September 1984, did little to change the diplomatic stalemate. Offering an "honest dialogue" with Washington, he repeated the common charge that the US had rejected the Soviet call for negotiations on the militarization of space and argued that the current administration was "obsessed by force" and "losing its sense of reality".³³

33. Donald R. Kelley, n. 1, pp. 139 to 145.

The first hint of a break in the impasse came late in October. In an interview with the Washington Post, Chernenko took the next step implying that progress on at least one of the essential questions of arms control could lead to improved relations and perhaps a resumption of bilateral talks on strategic and intermediate range weapons, the General Secretary call for a positive US response on the militarization of space, a mutual freeze on nuclear weapons arsenals, ratification by the United States of the test ban treaty, or a US pledge not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. He offered his strongest endorsement of detente since assuming power, arguing that "there is no sound alternative at all to a constructive development of Soviet - US relations". Although he professed to see no inclination in Washington toward improved ties, he labelled himself an "optimist" and promised that "if what the President has said about readiness to negotiate is not merely a tactical move, I wish to state that the Soviet Union will not found wanting".³⁴

Even as Chernenko presented his public assurances that the USSR wished to pursue arms talks with Washington, Chernenko privately was urging the Reagan administration to return to the

34. Washington Post, October 17, 1984.

bargaining table. In a message to the White House, the General Secretary proposed another Shultz-Gromyko meeting without insisting on the withdrawal of newly deployed American missiles in Europe or on a moratorium on the testing of space weapon as preconditions. It was quickly accepted, and on November 23rd the Soviet media carried the announcement that the foreign ministers would meet in Geneva on January 7-8, 1985, to discuss a new series of talks that would deal with the entire range of questions relating to nuclear and space arms. ³⁵

The meeting produced a new formula for discussions that closely resembled Reagan's proposal for umbrella talks. Three separate negotiating tracks were to be created, each dealing separately with the intermediate range missiles, strategic weapons system, and space weapons. Most importantly to the Soviets, the three tracks were to be linked and has to be resolved in their inter-relationship. Thus, the Soviet leadership had secured a forum for the discussion of its most pressing concern, the militarization of space and the US SDI proposals, and made it clear from the pointed references to the inter-relationship of all issues that progress in areas of greatest concern to the United States of Soviet strength in heavy strategic

35. Martin McCauley, The Soviet Union after Brezhnev, (England, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, 1985) p. 143-53.

missiles and the development of intermediate ranges SS-20s would be checked to move forward on its priorities. It had also secured the creation of new talks, avoiding the embarrassment of returning to the previously separate negotiations, that it abandoned shortly before Chernenko assumed power.

Chernenko in his speech to his constituent on February 22, which is also his last public comment took an almost imploring tone to urge the Americans to take the up-coming talks seriously. Referring warmly to the war time alliance of the two nations, he argued that they could face a common danger such as the threat of nuclear war despite the differences in their social systems. But he also once again underscored the importance of simultaneous progress on all three tracks, which he termed absolutely necessary to success in this matter. ³⁶

Thus, the Soviet reversal on arms control negotiations marked the most significant change towards the Soviet policy of nuclear disarmament during the brief period of Chernenko administration.

36. K.U. Chernenko, Speeches and Writings, edited by Robert Maxwell, (Oxford, Pergamon Press, 1984), p. 215.

CHAPTER -IV

SOVIET NUCLEAR POLICY UNDER GORBACHEV.

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Soon after his election to the coveted post of General Secretary of the CPSU Mikhail Sergeevich Gorbachev, took whole World by storms by his radical rethinking on domestic and international matters. He emerged as a political dynamo, a policy innovater of a sort not seen in Soviet Union since Khrushchev. Like the latter, Gorbachev evidently considers fresh policy initiatives and tactical flexibility to the more effective strategy for attainment of Soviet objectives than an offensive, ideologically rigid approach as practised in the past. ¹ Arms control and disarmament therefore, ranked, high in priority, in his scheme of things. A series of proposals put forward by him not only reflects a new approach but has also put the US on the defensive.

Some of these measures are - firstly in July 1985, he imposed unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing despite the fact that Reagan administration had earlier made it clear that it would not join. Secondly in early September 1985, he endorsed a proposal for creation of a zone in Central-Europe free of all chemical weapons, agreed to by all East-European

1. R.E. Miller, and Others, Gorbachev At The Helm: A New Era In Soviet Politics, (London, Croom Helm, 1987) p.2.

nations. The proposal was dismissed by Reagan on grounds of unfeasibility of verification.² Thirdly, he announced a six months moratorium on the deployment of new medium range missiles in Europe which was due to expire on November, 1985. Lastly, he further carried his "peace offensive" to the very heart of Europe when he visited Paris to negotiate directly with France and Britain to resolve the Euro-missile tangle. The purpose was to project new Soviet image to the Western alliance and to decouple the NATO countries from the US.

Gorbachev's proposals and initiatives predictably, did not cut much ice with the Americans. They were dismissed as mere propaganda ploys. At the same time the Regan administration failed to offer any counter-proposals to match the Soviet offer. Gorbachev was quick to see it. He intensified his efforts to project an image of Soviet initiative. He called upon the US for a deep cut of fifty-per cent on strategic missiles in exchange of limits on fundamental research on space programmes. The proposal took the West by surprise. The West's expectation of deep cuts never approximated Gorbachev's offer of fifty per cent reduction. Soviet proposals could no longer be dismissed as a propaganda ploy

2. The Times of India, November 18, 1985

and artful dissimulation.³ The proposal was too tempting to ignore. Public pressure and alliance insistence grew and forced the Reagan administration to reconsider its reservation about coming to the negotiation table for arms control agreements.

Gorbachev spoke philosophically about his perception of the USSR's role in the World and the place of Soviet-US bilateral ties. He reiterated the theme that the two nations will "prove by force of example, not by force of arms, which is better", a message directed as much at a domestic audience concerned with economic priorities as at his US counterparts.⁴ Despite the arms talks, he described relations between Washington and Moscow as 'tense' and pointedly suggested that while relation between the two were an extremely important factor in international politics, the Soviet leadership "by no means looks at the world only through the prism of these relations," a reminder that more flexible Soviet diplomatic initiatives towards Western-Europe and Asia might well diminish Moscow's fixation with improved bilateral ties.⁵

3. The Times of India, November, 15, 1985

4. Pravada, April 8, 1985

5. Pravada, April 24, 1985

Throughout the late spring and summer of 1985, Soviet authorities attempted to increase pressure on the Reagan administration to back off its support of the strategic defence initiative. The attack came on two fronts, the first charging the White house with abandoning its commitment to the linkage among strategic, intermediate-range, and space Weapons talk at Geneva, and the second offering a series of positive incentives for agreement, including an end to Soviet countermeasures against American intermediate-range missile in Europe, a nuclear test moratorium, and the prospect for radical reduction, up to fifty per cent, of offensive weapons in exchange for a prohibition on the development of a protective umbrella. Charges that the Americans sought first strike capability through the deployment of a protective missile shield alternated with vague Soviet threats about potential counter measures and a resumption of an unbridled high technology arms race in the space.⁶ Particularly, Soviet concern centered on continuing de facto adherence to the provision of the unratified SALT-II treaty and on seeking a US reaffirmation of the Anti-Ballistic Missiles Treaty, which has limited each side to one defensive system and ostensibly proscribed research and development efforts, although the US

6. Pravada, May 6, 1985

side held that initial research on the star wars system was permitted. For its part, the Reagan administration countered the Soviet initiatives with mixed and frequently conflicting voices, some advocating serious exploration of Moscow's offer to consider deep cuts in strategic weapons and others arguing for rapid development of SDI.⁷

With all his initiatives and an open mind it was natural that Gorbachev would be looking forward to a summit meeting with Reagan. A summit would give practical shape to his proposals. At the same time he was quite circumspect about the out come of the summit"-it ought to produce practical results in key areas of limiting and reducing armaments and understanding should be reached on cessation of nuclear tests and abolition of intermediate range missiles in European zone; there is no sense in holding empty talks!"⁸

Reagan earlier, was not very much inclined to participate in a summit for arms control talks and had cost doubts on the value of past measures. Nevertheless, in the present context, he was willing to have a summit meeting with Gorbachev. But

7. Donald R.Kelley, no.1, p. 191.

8. Girish Mathur, " The Summit : Muted Expectations", World Focus, January 1986, p.22.

he wanted the summit to be a mere "generalised get acquainted summit without serious efforts to reach substantive agreement"⁹
 "Negotiations talks to him, were to air and compare perspectives, not to produce detailed negotiations, much less major agreements".¹⁰

Gorbachev had serious reasons for desiring a moderation of both the dangers and expense of the Weapons race. His central purpose is to overcome the backwardness that had hampered the Soviet system since Stalin's day and has damaged the Soviet prestige in the worlds. This task would demand concentration on domestic affairs and a significant shift in the allotment of Soviet Union's limited natural resources - a shift away from international political and military involvement and into internal investments. A better atmosphere would serve to free restrictions on East-West trade; encourage the US allies to explore their own rapprochement with Moscow.

The Geneva Summit was initiated by Reagan to neutralise a growing peace movement and to blunt the mounting criticism from the Congress and the US allies. The summit would create

9. James Petras, "Talking Peace, preparing war", Economic and Political Weekly, January, 25, 1986, p.156.

10. International Herald Tribune, November, 4, 1985.

a new climate which would confirm, both for domestic and European audience, the overall approach of Reagan to deal with the Soviet Union, while giving a chance to explore the Soviet position from closest quarter. For him, the summit could be used as one of the several policy instruments used to gain greater security. In this sense, summit for Reagan are no different from Weapon programmes or diplomatic initiatives or economic programmes.

Although late in the spring of 1985 Moscow pronounced the first round of Geneva, talks as the ending on 'unsatisfactory' note, it was soon drawn into both the realities and the atmospherics that surround super powers summitry.¹¹ Early in July, both capitals announced that Reagan and Gorbachev would meet for a two day summit in Geneva on November 19th and 20th. While both leaders sought the meeting for domestic as well as foreign policy reasons it was the first opportunity for the new Soviet leader to occupy the world stage and test his mettle against the Regan, and the President would find the trip to Geneva helpful in quieting his critics on the left and each also hoped that the meeting

11. Pravada, May 27, 1985

would emphasize his own version of Strategic security in a world of increasingly complex and costly weapons systems. Gorbachev's goal was to convince the US President of his serious intent to reduce overall strategic weapons, including intermediate range systems in Europe, in exchange for a suspension of SDI, and Reagan hoped to assure the Russians of the essentially defensive nature of his proposals for a nuclear umbrella.¹²

Soviet US relations further deteriorated over the summer with Washington's announcement that it would proceed with testing an anti-satellite weapons system, allegedly to counter previous Soviet research in the area, and with a brief flurry of concern over allegations that Soviet authorities had used a mysterious and potentially harmful tracking substance dubbed "spy dust" to monitor US diplomat in the Soviet Union.¹³ Although the successful test of the anti-satellite system did nothing immediately to upset the Geneva talks and the spy dust controversy eventually ended with a US admission that the danger to US personnel

12. R.E. Miller and Others, no.2, p.192.

13. Donald R.Kelley, no.1 p. 192.

was far less serious than initially imagined, both incident confirmed Moscow's suspicion that hardliners in Washington were intention pressing their technological advantage in the development of space weapons and in poisoning Soviet US relations prior to the autmn summit.

It was against this backdrop that Gorbachev painted a more pessimistic picture of summit prospects in an interview he gave to the Time magazine early in September; although he yielded slightly on the question of star war research.¹⁴ Describing himself as taking " a more cautious look at the prospects for the Geneva meeting than I did at the time we gave our agreement", he pictured Soviet-US relations as 'continuing to deteriorate" because of the US rejection of Soviet proposals for a nuclear test ban and other symbolic steps toward agreement. Gorbachev yielded only slightly on the issue of star wars research, arguing that purely laboratory bound activities were permissible under the Soviet interpretation of the anti ballistic missile treaty, a position that he also expressed to visiting US senator.¹⁵ Much of his spontaneous response after the formal question period was devoted to his professed bewilderment and anger at the

14. Pravada, September 2, 1985

15. Zores Medvedev, Gorbachev, (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1986) p. 230.

the Reagan administration's tone of hostility toward the USSR despite the President's proffered desire to build better relations. Pointing out that Washington still seemed to be a house divided on the issue of improved relations with Moscow, Gorbachev pictured certain circles in the administration as attempting to sabotage the upcoming talks. ¹⁶

If Moscow's approach to the summit lay along the path of playing the serious, if misunderstood suitor who wished to elevate the issues of space weapons and disarmament to that of improved bilateral ties, then Washington's approach took the tack that the discussions must deal with a host of issues, including troublesome regional conflicts and the treatment of dissidents in the USSR itself, and could produce little more than an opportunity for the two leaders to become personally acquainted. Reagan's comments at the 40th anniversary celebration of the creation of the United Nation in October set the tone, promising to raise the issue of regional conflicts to a first order priority during the talks, as did his interview with Soviet journalists early in November.¹⁷ On the critical issue of the creation of a defensive nuclear umbrella, Reagan interpreted the Geneva talks as a forum

16. Donald R. Kelley, no.1, p. 192.

17. Izvestia, November, 5, 1985

within which to seek a "balance of defensive and offensive capabilities. He reiterated the US pledge to cut strategic nuclear missiles to 5000 warheads for each side, a position that had long proven unacceptable to the Soviet's because of their heavy reliance on rocket forces to counter the US triad of land based missiles, submarine launched missiles, and aircraft and offered either a complete ban on all intermediate-range weapons systems, including the Soviet SS-20s and US Pershing II and Cruise missiles, or an interim partial limit on these weapons substantially below present deployment levels. 18

A month before the summit, the Soviets tabled a comprehensive disarmament plan at the Geneva forum. The proposal called for the complete prohibition of space strike arms for both sides and a radical reduction by 50 per cent in nuclear arms capable of reaching each other's territory. Departing from their initial insistence about the coupling of all three aspects of the talks, Moscow now offered to reach a separate accord on intermediate-range systems in Europe and to open bilateral talks with Britain

18. Izvestia, November 6, 1985

and France on their independent nuclear forces, an offer that was quickly rejected in London and Paris. ¹⁹

Gorbachev's state visit to Paris early in October provided an opportunity for the General Secretary to press for the new Soviet Plan. Although the ostensible purpose of the visit was to improve the state of France-Soviet ties, which had deteriorated markedly since Mitterrand's election, the dominant issues were the state of East-West relations in general and the approaching Reagan-Gorbachev summit in particular. While the General Secretary lost no chance to laud the Soviet proposals as a realistic package for disarmament and to point out potential strains between the United States and its European allies, he hedged on the linkage between the prevention of the militarization of space and the proposed fifty per cent reduction in strategic arms, suggesting in response to a question from the media that such issues should be left for the Geneva meeting itself. ²⁰

The pre-Summit development followed by a propaganda war by both the sides. Gorbachev's statement and initiatives were greeted by Washington with scorn and disbelief. They were dismissed as more propaganda plays aimed at misleading

19. Pravada, October 4, 1985

20. Pravada, October 5, 1985

world public opinion, sowing division in the West and that were inspired by sinister tactical motives. The American suspicion was equally matched by Soviet scepticism of Reagan's professed commitments to arms control. Given the Soviet mistrust of American intention and the exclusive publicity bound to surround any meeting like the summit, it was not surprising therefore that Gorbachev directed his statements not only to the US but also to the world at large.

With the summit in the offing, both the US and Soviet Union adopted different conception of what the summit would chiefly deal with. In the Soviet view it was imperative that the summit would have to make a breakthrough on the allegedly most pressing danger, that is the incipient militarization of the space. By contrast, the US stressed that the summit would have to be an across the board survey of all issues troubling their relationship from nuclear weapons to human rights and to Soviet conduct in the third world.²¹ And in the month proceeding, both parties manoeuvred to gain acceptance of their conflicting views. Finally the summit agenda included 26 issues ranging from nuclear weapons to

21. Jeremy, R., Azrael, and Others, " Super Power Balancing Act, " Foreign Affairs, Winter, 1985-86, p. 481

maritime boundaries to cultural cooperation. ²²

Before the summit, both the United States and the Soviet Union had agreed on the basic framework of the arms control talks. They had outlined their proposals on the broad issues of the arms talks - START, INF and SDI.

On strategic Weapons, the US position was that the number of long range missiles be limited to 5000 war heads atop submarine and land-based ballastic missiles and air launched Cruise missiles. The Soviet Union proposed a limit of 6000 warheads including weapons where the US has an edge, i.e. air borne Cruise missiles, gravity bombs and short range attack missiles launched from planes. ²³

On INF, the US wanted a freeze on weapons in Europe at the end of the year limiting each side to about 140 launchers, excluding the British and French forces. The Soviet Union wanted a ban on all US missiles in Europe except 120 Cruise missiles. The Soviet Forces would be reduced to match the US deployment plus those of UK and France. ²⁴

22. Time, November 18, 1985, p. 12

23. Ibid., p. 11.

24. Ibid.,

However, for Soviet Union the agreement on START and INF were not self-contained packages, that is agreements on these weapons were not to be achieved separately. A Soviet concession in those arms were to be linked with renunciation of the SDI.

On 'Star war' the US position was as before, that is research and testing would be held within the bounds of the ABM treaty. The Soviet position was diametrically opposed to that of the US. No research or testing or development of technology will be allowed at any cost.

After six years of suspicion, hostility and rhetoric from both sides that evoked the coldest days of the cold war, Gorbachev and Reagan finally broke the ice. On November 19 and 20, they met in Geneva for the first time.

The negotiations, as they turned out included lot of tough talking on both sides, particularly by Gorbachev. Each leader was trying to probe the mind of the other and convince the utility of the stance they had taken. Unfortunately the summit was destined to be a failure from the very beginning as the US had little interest in giving away anything of substance. An indication of the US approach was earlier hinted as the Weinberger memorandum to Reagan was leaked.

The note urged the President not to reach any agreement on strategic arms limitation or anti-ballistic systems, nor affirm earlier treaties on the subject.²⁵ This attitude was confirmed when Reagan shifted away the focus from arms control to other peripheral issues like human rights and Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Gorbachev tried with limited success, to make arms control the center of the talks.

At the Geneva summit, the SDI remained the most contentious issue of the negotiations. Both the leaders remained poles apart in their conception of the SDI. Reagan's categorical rejection of limits on SDI research in his mid-September press Conference as "too important for the world to trade away and not as a 'bargaining chip' had virtually sealed the chances of any compromising formula."²⁶

During the negotiations, Regan tried to sell the idea of a defensive system to Gorbachev. He argued against the irrationality of the concept of "mutual assured destruction" the current system of 'nuclear deterence' and the naked "balance of terror" that had governed the super power relation for

25. Girish Mathur, n.9, p.22

26. Azarel and Others, no. 22, p. 493

more than two decades. He argued that "peace can not be kept by threatening to blow each other away. There must be a better way" ²⁷ and the way for him was to reduce the offensive weapons while seeking their transition to more defensive systems.

Reagan suggested Gorbachev the idea of an "open-labs" where the scientists of each country can visit each others laboratory to confirm that neither side is working toward an offensive system. ²⁸ He offered to share the SDI technology with the Soviet Union after it is developed fully And he repeatedly assured Gorbachev that the SDI was not a gambit to disarm the Soviets with a "first strike".

Gorbachev's view was diametrically opposed to those of Reagan. The SDI, he argued was a clear violation of the ABM treaty. Hence, no research and testing would be permitted He was sceptical of Reagan's claim of not using the SDI for defensive purposes. The SDI, he argued would create an impenetrable shield which would be used for the purpose of gaining strategic superiority and first strike capability. Moreover, the technology might be used against Soviet satelites and target on earth. ²⁹

27. News Week, December 2, 1985, p. 14.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid., p. 17.

The SDI remained the key to the solution of other arms matters as START and INF. Negotiations on these matters could not be continued as both leaders failed to agree on the SDI. The summit failed to produce any agreement as both Reagan and Gorbachev remained firm over their respective stands.

Arms control negotiations for Gorbachev are a part of 'general political offensive'.³⁰ It is an instrument to achieve a larger objective of Soviet foreign policy, that is "equal security" with the US. Soviet negotiating behaviour centered around the fact that the Soviet Union has acquired acknowledged "nuclear parity" with the US after two decades of intense competition, an achievement that was acquired at considerable cost transferring vast resources from development to defence. The maintenance of this 'parity' was therefore the most cherished goal of Soviet arms control negotiations at Geneva.

The Soviet strategies for the negotiating talks are that Gorbachev used the summit as a "propaganda platform" from which he could project the image of Soviet initiatives while highlighting American intransigence. A summit, after a gap of six years

30. The Times of India, November, 21, 1985.

in the midst of the cold war was bound to generate public enthusiasm and media publicity. Gorbachev wanted to have the maximum mileage out of it. His announcement of unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing and deployment, fifty per cent reduction in strategic weapons and his assault on the SDI were to show to the world that the Soviet Union can go any extent of compromise. But Reagan's intransigence remains the only major obstacles to a radical reduction of nuclear arsenals. ³¹

Also, the unexpected Soviet offer to slash strategic nuclear arsenals by half was bound to generate pressure on Regan to apply breaks on the "star war" programme, both within the US and outside. At time when the American Congress was coming down heavily on the SDI, the Scientific World remained divided over its feasibility and the European allies opposition to it, the SDI was made more vulnerable by the frontal attack launched on it by Gorbachev.

The American strategy was operating from the assumption that Soviet Union enjoys potentially decisive military advantages in strategic arms. A parity can only be brought by a process of "US addition and Soviet subtraction". The American strategy was geared to this objectives. ³² Reagan wanted to

31. Azarel and Others, n. 22, p. 493

32 Strobe Talbott, "Build up and build down", Foreign Affairs, 1983, p. 590.

broaden the agenda beyond arms control to other issues of bilateral relationship was to ensure that nothing substantive emerges until an agreement is reached on international range (Strategic) Weapons, in which the Soviet Union has a definite edge.

The other purpose of expanding the agenda was to prevent Gorbachev from, wresting concessions through hard bargaining, under the severe time constraint of the two day meeting.³³ Also Reagan was aware of the fact the US holds the trump cards in the talks on INF and space weapons.³⁴ The Soviet have nothing to counter the US technical superiority in space-based weapons. Therefore, he had to try and push for Soviet concessions using these advantages.

The reason for Reagan's tough stance was due to the fact that Gorbachev, to the applause of a startled world and much to the chargin of America was calling the shots from almost the day he later took office. And Reagan could not be seen as mere reacting to Gorbachev's initiatives.³⁵ Further Reagan could not afford to allow Gorbachev to extract concessions from the US which will put Reagan and the US further in defensive

33. Jeremy R. Azrael and Others, n.22, p. 483

34. Zores Medved, n.16, p. 242

35. Times of India, May 5, 1988.

and possibly prevent the SDI from taking off. Therefore, not giving away anything of substance, he could get maximum ideological mileage and prove his determined leadership.³⁶

Considering the outcome of the summit, it was deemed as a victory for Reagan who always wanted to emphasize the process. He succeeded in deflecting "substance into style", and "negotiations into public relations". He succeeded in using the arms control talks to make legitimate a further escalation of arms build up by arguing that the Soviets were sobered down by the preceding massive military build up.³⁷ The summit was on the otherhand a setback for Gorbachev who had staked so much personal prestige on arms control break through.

The Soviet media coverage of the summit hinted that the meeting was less optimistically received in certain quarters. While commentators in Pravada and Izvestia spoke of their "Optimism and Satisfaction", the "breath of something new in the air", and the "new psychological climate created in Geneva", the military journal Krasnaia Zvezda was for less enthusiastic.³⁸ Instead of joining in the endorsement, it repeated the allegation that such summitry was intended to "conceal an intention to upset the existing military-strategic parity" and cited Western Press Commentary that Weinberger's

36. Ibid.

37. James Petras, n.10, p. 156.

38. Donald R. Kelley, no.1, p. 196.

hardline position in opposing any agreement with the Soviet actually reflected Regan's true intention.³⁹

Gorbachev's report to the Supreme Soviet a week after the Geneva meeting was more defensive in tone, suggesting that some element of the Kremlin leadership had been critical of the lack of progress on arms control issues. He offered the more cautious conclusion that the "overall balance sheet of Geneva is positive". He also took pains to justify the decision to meet with Reagan, and although he spoke of the "Sham Peaceableness" of Washington's pre-summit maneuvers, he argued that "the US international behaviour began to undergo changes, something that, needless to say, we could not fail to take into account in considering the question of a possible summit meeting". He stressed the importance of his private conversations with the President, which he described as a "stabilizing factor" in a world filled with conflict. On the critical issue of space weapons, he understandably neglected to mention Moscow's seeming new flexibility on pure research and countered that any attempt to gain advantage through the strategic defence initiative would produce a "response that will be effective, sufficiently

39. Pravda, November 23, 1985.

quick and perhaps, less costly than the American programme". 40

In terms of substance, the Soviet didnot achieve much. However, in a joint statement both the powers agreed in principle to accelerate the arms control negotiations. Both called for a fifty per cent reduction in nuclear arms and also both the leaders decided to meet twice more in Washington in 1986 and Moscow in 1987. 41

The Geneva Summit failed to achieve the desired objectives. Nevertheless, it could be considered significant in many waygs. It was the first summit in six years. Even more important was the fact that both the superpowers were running out of time for a meaningful bargain on arms control. Also considering the magnitude of the superpower hostilities in an era of nuclear stalemant no instant solution is in the offing. Thus the summit for all its failures provided the 'process for future progress. 42

The Geneva Summit, despite its failure, considerably narrowed down the differences between the super powers on

40. Pravada, November 28

41. Time, December 2, 1985, p. 15

42. News Week, 2 December 1986, p. 10

specific arms control issues. It showed among other things that 'personal diplomacy' in the form of summits can lead to a better understanding of the problem and an effort to curtail the arms race, provided there is the political will to do so. Even after the summit failed, Gorbachev continued his 'peace offensive'. Despite mounting opposition from conservative quarters in the politburo and the military he pursued measures that not only addressed to the US and its Western allies but also that restrained Soviet conduct in arms build up. These measures outlined by him in various proposals were. ⁴³

- 1) Extension of the unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing by the Soviet Union till January 1, 1987.
- 2) Call for elimination of all nuclear arms by 2000 AD
- 3) A 25 per cent reduction in the NATO and Warsaw pact troops.
- 4) Abolition of the two military blocs in Europe.
- 5) On site verification of arms control agreements as demanded by the US before.

Gorbachev's initiatives were part of his policies directed towards the US - West-European Countries and the Soviet Union's

43. Economic And Political Weekly, October, 25, 1986, p.1877.

East European allies. His comprehensive proposals skillfully blended with propaganda and substance were designed to promote detente in Europe. A conducive atmosphere, he hoped, would make the US allies to increase pressure on Reagan to be more forthcoming on issues such as nuclear testing and the SDI, taking into account the reservation of some European Countries on the SDI. The move to solve European Security problems within a "Pan-European Framework" was designed to strengthen the Western-European Voice vis-a-vis the US and to draw them closer to Soviet Union.⁴⁴ To lessen the European fear of Soviet Conventional arms superiority in June 1986 he called for a "Wider negotiating zone" on conventional arms (from the Atlantic to the Urals) that would also include the European part of the Soviet Union.⁴⁵

Moscow's walk out over the Geneva summit in 1983 and its hardening attitude towards the West had troubled its allies in Eastern Europe, especially, East Germany, Hungary and Romania. Discord within the Warsaw pact was beginning to grow as all of them pursued a policy of "damage limitation".⁴⁶

44. F. Stephen Larabee and Allen Lynch, "Gorbachev: The Road to Reykjavik," Foreign Policy, Winter 1986-87, p.10

45. Ibid, p. 9.

46. Robert English, " Eastern European Doves ". Foreign Policy Fall 1984, Vol. 56, p.44.

So Gorbachev's proposals and initiatives were part of an effort to soothe the nerves of the Soviet allies, by showing them that the Soviet Union is not interested in an unbridled arms race with the US.

Even after the Geneva summit failed, both Reagan and Gorbachev had kept their options open regarding another meeting between them. While the momentum seemed to be growing towards the Summit, at the end of the year a mini crisis broke out over the arrest of a Soviet diplomat at the UN and the retaliatory arrest of Nicholas Danilof.⁴⁷ The momentum towards the summit slowed down and Soviet-American diplomatic relations nose-dived. Despite the crisis however, both the leaders were firm in their decision to have a summit.

On September 19, 1986 Gorbachev wrote to Reagan on the need of the two leaders to involve themselves personally in another arms control talk so as to impart an impulse to the stalled diplomatic process.⁴⁸

On October, 11 and 12, 1986, Gorbachev and Reagan, for the second time in their career met at Reykjavik, the capital

47. Gerhard Wetting, "Gorbachev's Strategy for Disarmament and Security", Aussen Politik, Vol, 38, 1987, p.9

48. Michael Mandelbaum and Others, "Reykjavik And Beyond", Foreign Affairs, Winter, 1986-87, p.219

of iceland. The USA had expected the INF to be the main issue of the summit, where Gorbachev would probably link an INF agreement to an American Pledge to observe for another two or three years the strategic limits envisaged by the SALT-II treaty. Besides they expected the summit to deal with other proposals such as a ban on nuclear testing. But Gorbachev insisted on a greater range of proposals. So the summit came to include comprehensive disarmament proposals including the INF, strategic arms reduction talks (START), the SDI and other issues as nuclear testing. During the Summit both leaders engaged each other on the biggest and most difficult issue dividing them - how to structure and limit their huge stockpiles of nuclear weapons and then proceed to improvise most practical measures that could become part of achievable and verifiable agreements. 49

On INF proposals Gorbachev suggested that the American and Soviet missiles should be withdrawn from Europe. He agreed to scale down the Asia-based SS-20 INF Warheads from 513 to 100 which was to be equally matched by US based missiles. He also consented to freeze SS-21 and SS-23 shorter range

49. International Herald Tribune; October 8, 1986

missiles in Europe and to negotiate their reduction.

Reagan agreed to both the proposals. Besides he proposed on-site verification measures, the destruction of the missiles and their factories. Gorbachev agreed to them.

In his START proposals Reagan called for the elimination of all ballistic missiles within 10 years. In their place both side were to adopt defensive systems like the SDI. The proposal in effect, would have deprived the Soviet Union of its most formidable strategic missiles while leaving the US with an advantage in nuclear-armed bomber and Cruise missiles. Gorbachev on the other hand counter-proposed, a reiteration of his January proposal for elimination of all nuclear weapons. The proposal, if accepted would have liquidated the American advantage in medium-range missiles without affecting the Soviet edge in conventional arms. This was agreed by Reagan.

On long-range missiles Reagan proposed a stunning fifty per cent cut to 1600 delivery and 6000 war heads on each side.⁵⁰

50. The Observer(London), October 13, 1986

Gorbachev agreed to the proposal but linked it to restrictions on the research and testing of the SDI to 'laboratory'.

On nuclear testing an agreement on principle was reached on the banning of nuclear testing which would have provided the foundation for overall complete disarmament. But nothing concrete emerged out of the discussion.

On SDI, there has been a small and significant shift in the Soviet Union's position. While it still opposed any deployment of any space-based anti missiles system, in its June proposal, 1986, it accepted "laboratory research" of the anti-missile system.⁵¹ This change in stance was reflected in the Reykjavik summit where Gorbachev was willing to accept significant cuts in the Soviet missiles forces in return for an US agreement to confine the SDI to laboratory research and abide by the anti-ballastic treaty for the next 10 years.

A statement arose over Reagan's interpretation of the ABM treaty as permitting research, development and testing new technollgies - just about everything short of actual deployment.⁵² His justification as to how the SDI would

51. The Observer(London) October 9, 1986.

52. Time, October 20, 1986, p.11

produce a purely defensive shield against all offensive nuclear forces and was therefore a moral alternative to traditional deterrence based on "mutual assured destruction" (MAD). For Reagan the SDI was an "insurance policy against cheating, an insurance policy against some-body getting hold of these weapons".⁵³ The summit sank over the conflicting interpretation of the ABM treaty.

The summit which was almost on the way of producing the most comprehensive disarmament agreement failed over the question of SDI. The summit showed that the SDI plays a crucial role in Soviet thinking. And Gorbachev in his proposals and negotiating postures pursued a carefully calculated strategy aimed at restricting the debate to areas where he hoped to limit western options while preserving Soviet geo-political advantage.⁵⁴

In terms of outcome, the Rejkjavik summit turned out to be a great retreat from anything the world has been expecting from it in terms of progress towards disarmament. The summit represented simultaneously, the culmination and collapse of realistic hopes for arms control. The summit failed because

53. News Week, October 20, 1986, p.11

54. Jermy R. Azrael, n.22, p.482

both leaders" were engaged in a bout of feverish one-upmanship, with each trying to outdo the other in demonstrating his devotion to the dream of a nuclear free world.⁵⁵ The summit, underlined the fact that much can be achieved given enough political will on both sides. The only heartening fact was that the summit cleared the air and further narrowed the differences on INF, nuclear testing, deep cuts in offensive missiles and even in principle on types of missiles. The only snag remained the SDI.

Till the end of 1986 and early 1987, it appeared that an ice-age has set on Soviet-American arms talks. It appeared almost impossible to bridge their divergent positions on nuclear and space arms limitation. The impromptu Reykjavik summit came so near to an agreement, yet so far from it.

The Reykjavik efforts were beginning to be dismissed as a setback, when Gorbachev in a bold gesture gave a barrage of further proposals. After failing to encourage the United States to make concessions on the SDI and on the critical issue of interpretation of the ABM treaty, Gorbachev made another pragmatic proposals, catching the US by surprise.

55. Michael Mandelbaum, n.49, p. 323.

On February 28, 1987, Soviet Union declared that it would accept a separate agreement on the medium range missiles.⁵⁶ In the earlier two summits the INF issue was not a 'self contained package', that is any deal on them can not be made to the exclusion of agreements on space-based and strategic weapons.

Delinking the INF, issue from the 'Star Wars' and START, Gorbachev proposed that both sides remove their intermediate range missiles from Europe, with each retaining 100 missiles out side it; he committed to eliminate the medium-range missiles from the European part of the Soviet Union; agreed to exclude France and British nuclear forces from the talks; and finally declaring his intention to destroy the remaining 100 INFs based on the Asian part of Soviet Union without a parallel US commitment.⁵⁷

After Reykjavik Soviet Union wanted to held separate talks on short range missiles. This was firmly rejected by the United States since it left the possibility that the short-range weapons (with a range of 500-1000 kms) will remain unconstrained

56. Michael R. Gordon, " INF : A hallow victory," Foreign Policy, Fall 87, p. 167

57. Summit Chakravarti, " Reflection on Washington Summit," Mainstream, December 12, 1987, p.5

after an agreement on medium-range weapons took effect. From the beginning, the American position was that an INF accord should also set limits on short range missiles. The purpose was to prevent the Soviet Union from circumventing a treaty by moving further short range weapons into Europe. A treaty on short range missiles will also neutralise the Soviet advantage in Europe ⁵⁸ (the Soviet Union has 130 such missiles in Europe while the US had none). ⁵⁹ Soviet Union displayed further accommodating spirit by agreeing to remove all short-range missiles from the GDR and Czechoslovakia which had been installed in response to development of US inter-range missiles in Western Europe.

A new Soviet philosophy accompanied by continuity, caution and consensus had hitherto characterised a system which is revolutionary in doctrine but deeply conservative in practice. ⁶⁰ Gorbachev's outlook was a marked departure from the earlier Soviet world view. The basis of his 'new thinking' was the belief that the "situation created by nuclear confrontation calls for new approaches, methods and forms of relation-

58. Michael R. Gordon, n. 57, p. 167.

59. O.N. Mehrotra, " The INF Treaty: A Step Toward Nuclear Arms Reduction". Strategic Analysis, March 1988, Vol. XI, No.2, p. 1371.

60. Roderic Lyne, " Making waves: Gorbachev's Public Diplomacy" Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science(New York) 1987, p. 234.

ship between the two different social system".⁶¹

The new thinking extends to the sphere of ideology also. Socialism, the very basis of Soviet political and social system, came under a new rationalisation. Gorbachev called into question the theories of those who considered peaceful coexistence by definition counter-revolutionary. He accepted realistically that socialism can be built if a nuclear war can be avoided. A successful process of democratization and modernisation, he believed, will help Soviet Union gain more political and ideological terrain for socialist advances in other parts of the world. Hence, Gorbachev's disarmament policy therefore, created space for political and ideological offensive with much better perspective of success,⁶² because a successful disarmament policy would improve his political standing and help to create a stable political environment necessary for carrying out his innovations.

Gorbachev has explicitly placed Soviet economic interests at the centre of his foreign policy and gave priority to it.⁶³

61. The Hindu, 29 September, 1987

62. Bas Wielenga, "Moscow on the move: Gorbachev's balancing act," Economic and Political Weekly, January 2-9, 1988, p. 35

63. Henry Kissinger, "Summit the great danger ahead" Times of India, December, 21-22, 1987

The Soviet economy was bogged down under heavy military expenditure. His proposed economic reconstruction (Perestroika) programme was crippled by a heavy resource burden, a situation that could be avoided if money is diverted from defence to development. He therefore, restored the traditional primacy of economy over foreign policy. This realistic approach, further, led Soviet Union to propose arms control and disarmament measures, in order to lessen the defence burden.

This new approach gave a push to the arms reduction talks, culminating into Washington Summit on INF. The basis of the INF agreement was the 'zero-option' proposed first by Reagan in 1981. Washington offered to cancel its planned development of Pershing-II and Cruise missiles in Europe, if Moscow eliminates its already deployed SS-20, SS-4 and SS-5, missiles. But the proposal was largely for show and no one seriously expected Soviet Union to accept it.⁶⁴ The Soviet Union predictably, rejected the proposal - Brezhnev called it an absurd demand that would require the Soviet Union to disarm unilaterally.⁶⁵

The dramatic moves by Gorbachev since February 1987 converted the original 'Zero Option' for INF in Europe into 'Zero-Zero Option', which was to include both short range

64. Time, March 16, 1987

65. Michael R. Gordon, no. 57, p. 165

weapons and the INF. His proposal also envisaged a global 'Zero-Zero Option', which means scraping all such weapons throughout the world, thus gaining one step beyond Reykjavik.

After the stage was set and the main agenda finalised, the two leaders met December 7-10, 1987, in a three day talks. If not anything else, the summit represented an urgency involved in the issues of arms control. It showed that the Soviet-American negotiations and the summit process in particular was not dead as yet. The two leaders got around to the business of finishing the unfinished business of Reykjavik.

Under the treaty the USA over the next three years has to dismantle 436 nuclear missiles out of which 108 were Pershing-II missiles, 72 Pershing-IA, and 256 Cruise Missiles, stationed in West Germany, Great Britain, Italy and Belgium. The Soviet Union would scrap 703 nuclear missiles out of which 441 were SS-20, 130 SS-12 and 112 SS-4, and 20 SS-23 in East-Germany and Chzekoslovakia.⁶⁶

The main goal of the super powers had been to achieve

66. Ibid.

an agreement on fifty per cent reduction in long range weapons. The US has at present 7,900 nuclear war heads on nuclear missiles. while the Soviets Union has 10,057.⁶⁷ During the negotiations the US proposed a limit of 5,100. A compromise was struck. Both sides agreed in principle to limit their strategic missiles to 4,900 each.

The US for its part agreed that there could be limits on a number of sea-launched Cruise missiles as the Soviet Union had insisted. But the limits and procedures has to be made by separate agreement. The Soviet Union acceded to the US demand that there should be a ban on the encoding of the electronic signals during the missile tests. Some progress was achieved as to how to verify a new treaty on long range nuclear weapons and the 'counting rules' to determine how many war heads are carried on their missiles.⁶⁸

The INF accord would create an atmosphere that would encourage the denuclearisation of Europe and the institutionalisation of the arms control process. By paying a disproportionate cost in weapons destroyed, Soviet Union will achieve its

67. Editorials on File (Denver Post) December, 9 1987.

68. O.N. Mehrotra, n. 60, p. 1376.

principal military objectives - the elimination from Europe of Pershing-II missiles, a highly accurate and powerful one. Further a ban on US missiles fits the evolution of Soviet military doctrine which now stresses the importance of trying to limit any conflict in Europe to the use of conventional forces. 69

By single minded pursuit of his objectives, Gorbachev achieved something that seemed impossible before. By clinching an arms deal with Reagan, he not only displayed his statemanship but also in the process carved out for himself a place in history.

The accord symbolises the feasibility of disarmament approach, hitherto written off as Utopian. Till now the dominant philosophy of nuclear strategy was 'arms control', which seeks to manage the arms race than to eliminate it. The result of this approach has been the institutionalisation of the arms race. The INF accord goes one up on this approach and totally eliminate a particular class of weapons. It sets a new standard of openness on arms limitation agreements. It helped create trust and confidence, so vital to the progress on nuclear disarmament.

69. Michael R. Gordon, n. 57, p. 167

This, Gorbachev's radical approach provided a breakthrough to international peace and a new beginning to the process of nuclear disarmament. His initiatives reflects an innovation, not seen in Soviet Union since Khrushchev. He has displayed greater willingness to agree on arms control agreement than his predecessor.

In the beginning, Soviet proposals for arms control were rejected as a propaganda ploy. However the pressure of world public opinion and allies' insistence forced the US to reach an agreement on arms control measures with the Soviet Union. This realization has culminated into three summit meetings between Gorbachev and Regan at Geneva, Reykjavik and Washington respectively. The first two meetings could not produce any substantial result. However, it considerably narrowed down the differences between the super powers on specific arms control issues ultimately resulting in the signing of the historical agreement on INF at the Washington summit. Hence, Gorbachev's bold and courageous initiatives in all these summits created an atmosphere, that would encourage the denuclearization of Europe and the institutionalisation of the arms control process.

CONCLUSION : EMERGING TRENDS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

Soviet policy of arms control and nuclear disarmament has passed through different stages of development. To begin with, it was directed to have a "breathing space" as the Soviet Union did not possess nuclear weapons. While advocating nuclear arms control, the Soviets worked vigorously to develop their own nuclear bomb. At the second stage the objective of the Soviet Policy was to achieve parity. Having achieved that objective the Soviets like the American realised the danger which nuclear weapons pose to the existence of the world. In a nuclear war they would neither be victor nor vanquished. Moreover, the danger of an accidental nuclear war and the burden of nuclear arms race has forced the Soviet Union and to a lesser extent to the USA too, to come to an understanding on this question.

Thus, we found that the Soviet initiatives towards arms control and disarmament first arose out of the genuine fear of the strategic encirclement of the Soviet Union during US monopoly period. During this period Soviet Union faced tremendous risk to its security which led it to follow a two fold strategy to develop a Soviet nuclear strike capability and to prepare a policy of nuclear

disarmament. The Soviet Union had to resort to the development of nuclear weapons and to continue with the policy of nuclear diplomacy. Hence, the Soviet campaign for arms control and disarmament is viewed as a part of the Soviet nuclear diplomacy to avoid nuclear confrontation, to reduce East-West tension and if possible to build confidence in each other. Though the West, particularly the US rejected outright the Soviet proposal for disarmament on the plea that it was a clever Soviet move to weaken the Western Security, the fact remains that at least in the mid 1950s, the US nuclear weapons were a symbol of America's nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union more than anything else. With the attainment of mutual deterrence and mutual assured destruction capability by the super power, the Soviet fear of US nuclear weapons diminished. After achieving strategic parity the Soviet felt confident about defending their security interest. That explain the more confident Soviet response to US nuclear weapons now, instead of the nervous reactions of the 1950s.

We have also observed that the slow growth of Soviet economy due to high costs of defence, forced it towards strategic accommodation. Only an improved relations with

the US, in the field of arms control, could enable Soviet Union to divert its resources towards solving economic problems at home. Hence, economic constraints are exerting pressure on Soviet Union to pursue a policy of nuclear disarmament.

The above study showed that despite Brezhnev's daring steps and bold initiatives in the field of arms control and disarmament, the final period of his reign was beset with immobilism and stagnation. The detente of 70s did not last for a longer period. Brezhnev left his successor with a situation full of risk and increased tension. A new cold war came into forefront and the new Soviet leadership prudently decided to reformulate its external and defence policies and liberalize its domestic system.

Thus, the malaise and stagnation of the final years of Brezhnev era underlined the need for new and forceful leadership, which led to the selection of Andropov to head Soviet Union. For the fifteen months, he stayed in power, Andropov sought to place his mettle on the nation. Despite his initiatives towards nuclear disarmament and arms control measures, the regime differed little from

that of its predecessor. The setback to Soviet-American relations, which began in the latter phase of Carter administration because of Afghanistan problem, accelerated with the defence buildup of Reagan administration, which continued despite Soviet call for a return to detente.

The deadlock in Soviet-US relations that had begun even before Brezhnev's death continued for at least the first half of Chernenko's reign in office. Chernenko's regime succeeded in responding to the arms talks and proposed a new format for negotiations. Hence the Soviet reversal on arms control negotiations marked the most significant change towards the Soviet policy of nuclear disarmament during the short period of Chernenko's administration.

But the coming of Gorbachev to Soviet scene marked by radical rethinking created a new atmosphere in the field of arms control and disarmament. Gorbachev's outlook, marked by new thinking, was a real departure from the earlier Soviet World view. He believes that situation created by nuclear confrontation calls for a new approach between the two different Social systems.

While analysing in our study, the various aspects of

negotiations, in the field of nuclear disarmament we found that in the last four and a half decades, the US-USSR summit meetings have been rather common. And almost every summit meeting represented a fresh attempt to save the situation at a point when the feeling of imminent danger of a nuclear war had become acute, and unbearable. In the period of the cold war, Soviet - US summits represented a special high level effort to resolve the issues of war and peace and problems of security.

During the 1980s there started a period of uneasy lull in Soviet - US relations. Almost all the achievements of the previous summit became a casualty of second cold war. Militarism again raised its ugly head in the US and the bid for military superiority bred unprecedented mistrust between the two super powers and detente became a dead word.

The arms race not only assumed alarming proportions but began to get transferred to outer space. The threat of a nuclear holocaust loomed larger than ever before. The demand for an immediate halt to arms race grew universal.

Gorbachev's persistent efforts and bold peace initiatives

have begun to remove tensions between the two power blocs. The summit meeting between Gorbachev and Reagan in Geneva, ushered in a new era of Soviet - US as well as in East-West relations.

The leaders of the two countries for the first time recognised their special responsibility for maintaining world peace and agreed that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. They also recognised that any conflict, whether nuclear or conventional, between the two could have catastrophic consequences.

The Geneva summit paved the way for another Reagan-Gorbachev summit at Reykjavik. Unfortunately the negotiations stumbled due to star-war issues. In spite of failure, the Reykjavik summit provided a fundamental breakthrough in the two countries perception of the process of nuclear disarmament and narrowed down differences on a number of issues.

All this had created a congenial atmosphere for conclusion of the historic INF treaty by Reagan and Gorbachev, during their third summit meeting in Washington. This treaty on the total elimination of Soviet and US

intermediate and short-range missiles was a historic milestone in their quest for building mutual confidence in order to keep the world safe from the danger of a nuclear war.

Again, this process has culminated into a next super power summit at Moscow on May, 1988, on the question of Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty between Gorbachev and Reagan. This symbolises narrowing down of differences in the approaches of the two super powers towards faith in international peace.

However, in some circles the Moscow Summit, inspite of euphoria has been described as a failure and a setback for Gorbachev. There was no dramatic break either in arms control or in bilateral relations.

However, the Moscow summit cannot be treated as an isolated event apart from the renewed process of Soviet - American dialogue begun by Gorbachev and Reagan at Geneva in November 1985. The distance the two side have travelled since then is of great significance. The very high level of expectations that the latest summit had generated is itself indicative of the enormous change in the international

mood since the mid 1980s.

The four Summit between President Regan and General Secretary Gorbachev have demonstrated that ending of the four decades of cold war is a real possibility today. They have also indicated the outlines of a course that could take us from the current overarmed peace to a more rational and disarmed peace. They also show the possibilities for ending the vexing regional conflicts on a principled basis.

Thus for Gorbachev, the inability to get the START agreement need not be a setback. He has other avenues, particularly in Europe, to explore. In the coming period one can expect new initiatives from Moscow specially directed at Western Europe on conventional arms and other European concerns. We might also expect new moves on Asian peace and security.

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