

**THE COLD WAR AND PEACE POLICIES OF THE SOVIET UNION  
UNDER MIKHAIL GORBACHEV**

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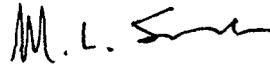


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CERTIFICATE

Certified that the dissertation entitled "THE COLD WAR AND PEACE POLICIES OF THE SOVIET UNION UNDER MIKHAIL GORBACHEV" by Ms. Suchismita Palai in partial fulfilment for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other university. To the best of our knowledge this is a bonafide work.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiner for evaluation.



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## PREFACE

This dissertation is an examination of Gorbachev's policies and signals for peace-building. It is difficult to write on Gorbachev without attaching various labels to his "New Thinking"; nor is it easy to avoid personal bias in reaching interpretations and conclusions about a world leader whose strengths and weaknesses in political performance not only affect the complexities of the Soviet system but also may condition the emergence of a new global ethic for the 21st century. I have attempted a jargon-free exposition in considering the broader questions of peace and conflict resolution and have viewed the Soviet leader's scenarios for peace within a spectrum of political and psychological evidence of his role as a rational and pragmatic agent.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the world is now under the grip of a movement towards 'New Thinking'. It is, therefore, necessary to highlight the major areas in which Gorbachev's policies, both foreign and domestic, have brought about remarkable changes in the direction of world peace and order.

In this study, I have attempted to incorporate an

historical-analytical form, the ingredients of 'peace research' which is relatively recent in its origin.

Peace has always been relative or contextual rather than absolute in International Politics. But now the survival of humankind depends on making peace indivisible and all-pervasive; it needs an overarching theory based on "Peace Paradigm". One can now study from this angle, eschewing of course tendentious moral debates, issue areas which will affect the very survival of humanity. An empirical analysis provides a useful category of political perceptions that can be used in different settings for social and political reconstruction.

It is high time that the "mainstream" political analysts recognised the importance of peace research in the field of international relations. So far the intellectual tradition has been to explore the problems of world politics from a perspective based on 'power model' of Morgenthau and other "realists" which depicts only a partial reality.

It is essential and timely to search for an alternative

and this is provided by 'Peace Research' which has achieved significant theoretical rigour.

If peace is a trend, a sustainable process, this dissertation is a modest attempt at providing a vignette - the evolving perspective of the Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachev.

In my first chapter, I have dealt with the Cold War situation in general. The second chapter highlights the internal conditions of the Soviet Union and Gorbachev's succession as the leader. My third chapter deals with 'glasnost' and 'perestroika, two of the most important elements in his policy making. The fourth one is devoted towards analysing the impact of New Thinkings on different areas. And in my concluding chapter I have summarized Gorbachev's New Thinking.

I take this opportunity to convey the heartfelt gratitude I owe to Professor M.L. Sondhi, whose unconventional and undogmatic way of thinking inspired me to choose this topic for my dissertation. His constant encouragement and assistance provided the necessary impetus to carry me through my work.

I specially thank Mrs. Nirmala Joshi who provided me with relevant information.

I owe a special gratitude to the staff of the JNU Library, the NML Library, Teenmurti and the ICWA, Sapru House.

I am very thankful to all my friends specially Abani, Deba, Pinky who stood by me at each stage of this work.

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CHAPTER - I

COLDWAR RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SUPERPOWERS.

## INTRODUCTION

We have reached an era where the question of "human survival" has become of utmost importance. The world is threatened by the mindless nuclear arms race that endangers the very survival of this planet. Human life has become the highest value to be considered. The overall international situation has deteriorated seriously over the last several years, notwithstanding the few years of detente that generated so much hope. Not much thought was given to the basic problems of human survival till very recently. The cause being the overwhelming importance given to the cold war situation which called for a ceaseless effort to pile up nuclear arms. Arms race, natural distrust and proxy war looked so natural during cold war period that Prof. Georgi Arbatov, described detente as an aberration from the grim normalcy of distrust, enmity and confrontation that prevailed in international relation.<sup>1</sup>

Before dealing with the cold war situation in detail

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1 Georgi Arbatov, Cold war or Detente ? The Soviet Viewpoint ( U.K. 1983) p. 1.

it would be interesting to note the present changing international scenario which, it can be said without exaggeration has been possible due to one man: Mikhail Gorbachev. A new opportunity for peace has emerged in many parts of the world. It seems as if peace is breaking out in major conflicting areas such as Asia, Africa and central America. The most important element shaping the new process of peace is indeed the changing Soviet American relations. And the contribution made by Mikhail Gorbachev in this regard is immense.

The world is witnessing a major change in the pattern of events. The historical processes are not static nor is the evolution of thought structures. It is therefore, not accidental that in the international relations new concepts and ideas have been thrown up, which are breaking the narrow shells and blowing the existing parameters of analysis.

The contribution made by Gorbachev in this area is the richest. He indeed has set in motion a universal movement for restructuring international relations on the basis of what he calls the "balance of interests" and

not on the basis of "balance of power".<sup>2</sup> His initiatives will be discussed in details in the subsequent chapters.

Now, coming back to the cold war situation, this dissertation is restricted only to the period known as the second cold war period. However it would be interesting to know a few things about the 1st cold war to have a comparison with the second. This period starts from 1979 to the mid 1980's. The explanation for the beginning of first cold war are many. The orthodox explanation of how the cold war began has been stated most succinctly by Arthur Schlesinger : it was " the brave and essential response of free men to communist aggression".<sup>3</sup> Orthodox scholars have differed in what they see as the cause of Soviet behaviour; assigning various weights to factors such as traditional Russian foreign policy goals, the dynamics of the Soviet system etc. The revisionist group who can be divided into hard revisionist and soft revisionist disagree among themselves. The 'hard' revisionists see a sharp break between the policies of

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2 V.D. Chopra, "Preface", in V.D. Chopra, ed., Mikhail Gorbachev's New Thinking, Asia-Pacific (New Delhi, 1988), page 10.

3 Maddox - Newleft and the Origin of the Cold war. (Princeton University, 1973).

FDR and Truman. To the soft revisionist the cold war came about because of failure of American statesmanship.<sup>4</sup>

According to Fred Halliday the first cold war lasted for 7 years beginning in 1946 and ending in 1953 as a result of the changes attendant upon the death of Stalin and the Stalemates in Korea and Indo China.<sup>5</sup> Setting aside the controversy regarding the beginning of second cold war one can observe a certain trend during this period. The second cold war was more dangerous though there was no bitter confrontation between the relations between the two super powers. The relations between the two governments were based on tensions, the mutual suspicious of deterrent. A kind of oscillation between good times and bad formed the basis of analysis of cold war detente.

But the comparison between Soviet - American relations in the 1980s and the earlier phases of the cold war lacked conviction as the decade proceeded. There were few points of contact and regular relations were punctured by mutual suspicion. " In previous examples

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4 Ibid., 105.

5 Fred Halliday, The Making of the Second Cold War (London, 1983), p. 234.

of great power conflict there had always been diplomacy and regular politics: indeed conflict had been measured through the diplomatic tensions.<sup>6</sup>

During the second cold war, however the regular relations continued, although no meeting between an American President or a Soviet leader occurred until Nov, 1985. That is why there is something very peculiar about the second cold war phase that cannot be explained by simple formula as cold war or detente. Uncertainty became the hall mark of the year 1980-85. Both the superpowers were highly critical of each other's policies. At times the rhetoric was harsh. "For his part President Reagan fulminated against the "evil Empire " of the Soviet Union in a speech given in Florida in March 1983. He also opposed Soviet Action in Afghanistan and their possible action in Poland.<sup>7</sup> Fred Halliday is of opinion that "despite Carter's initiation of the second cold war, Reagan's presidency marked a new level of confrontation with the USSR and of the subordination of US foreign policy as a whole to their objective."<sup>8</sup>

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6 Peter Savigear, Cold War or Detente in the 1980s. (G.B., 1987), p, 28.

7 Ibid., p. 30.

8 Halliday, no. 5, pp. 234-35.

The American arms buildup increased by leaps and bounds, in the prrtext of rebuilding America's strength after the years of Carter administration. Reagan launched an orchestrated campaign against the Soviet policies. His administration started giving aids to guerilla movements in different countries and encouraged sales of weapons abroad. "The favourite states of New Right - Israel, South Africa, Taiwan were at once given more favoured treatment." <sup>9</sup>

Reagan's foreign policy seems to be the logical corollary of his "doctrine" whose view of world is the manichean view. The world is seen divided between the forces of democracy and forces of Marxism-Lenin, symbolizing light and darkness respectfully. In this familiar cold war perspective there is a presumption that any action that supports the forces of freedom is moral. But in reality, the movements that the US supports are not so democratic and regimes it opposes so totalitarian or Soviet dominated as the administrations perspective assumes. It seems they have taken Marxist-Leninist

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9 Halliday, no.5., p. 235.

political level too much at face value. Robert H. Johnson in an article identifies a major flaw of US third world policy in the cold war. It is the inability of the Reagan Administration to differentiate not only between regimes but also between situations - its tendency to see every conflict in the global context of the US - Soviet competition and to fail to distinguish the degree of the threat and the extent of the US stakes in each particular situation.<sup>10</sup>

In cold war II, Reagan faced greater difficulties at home than anticipated, and the New Soviet leadership under Andropov took new initiatives in seeking agreements on arms control. But the fear of Nuclear war, the political impasse in Soviet-US relation. The division in the west the capitalist recession and the problems of Eastern Europe epitomized by Poland have continued to grow.<sup>11</sup> In 1983, the US used its troops in Grenada. But strongly enough the basis of established contacts had been laid during the years of detente was not destroyed despite the invasions of Afghanistan and Grenada

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10 Robert H. Johnson, "Misguided Morality : Ethics and Reagan Doctrine". Political Science Quarterly (New York) vol. 103, no.3, Fall, 1988, P. 525.

11 Halliday, no.5, PP 234-66.

as some writers like Peter Savigear has pointed out.<sup>12</sup> This applied particularly to the many meeting involving weapons and in the 1980s the focus was on Geneva talks.

Why is then this period considered to be one of the most dangerous periods ? It is precisely because of the massive nuclear weapons stored in both the sides coupled with mutual distrust and uncertainty. In a special meeting held in Brussels it was decided that the Cruise and Pershing II intermediate - range missiles were to be installed in American bases in Western Europe which arose a widerange public criticism.

By the time that President Reagan took over the administration in 1981, arms control had become "the barometer of the superpower relationship."<sup>13</sup> During this period the Soviet Union focused a attention on the issue of arms control and limitation. Brezhnev pronounced a unilateral Soviet moratorium on long range weapons in

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12 Peter Savigear, no.6.

13 Linda Miller, 'The Foreign Policy of Reagan II' American Foreign Policy, April, 1985, p.72.

1982. The US Congress refused to endorse the SALT-II. During this period among all US - Soviet contacts arms discussion achieved a prominence. In 1984 the focus on arms limitation and control moved to Stockholm and then to the follow up conference to be held in Vienna. Arms control talks dominated the relations between the two states. But the USSR was reluctant to abandon an initial advantage gained through the installation of SS 20s - the powerful Soviet intermediate range missiles. The US urged parity and hence a moratorium was rejected by the US government. The USSR insisted on including British and French weapons in the talks. But due to political difficulties this could not be accepted. Moreover the USSR left the Geneva talks due to disagreement over performance and verification of sites. Although the Soviet Union returned its delegation to Geneva, no agreement had been signed with the USA when the two leaders met in November, 1985.<sup>14</sup> For the Soviet Union the question of parity was very important. It ought to be remembered that the USA and the USSR did not begin their relationship on the basis of parity. The USA

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14 Savigear, no. 6, P. 38.

had nuclear monopoly till 1949. The impact of massive military power of the USA was so great that "parity" became one of the significant goals for the Soviet.

The Soviet Union took a distinct advantage in intermediate range nuclear weapons stationed in Europe in the 1970s and this enabled the Soviets to keep the principles of the USA. President Carter and later President Reagan opted for a double response, a "twin track approach in conjunction with European allies. Defence spending on both the sides became more resulted in further talks. But further talks had to be on the basis of parity and the Americans recognize it when President Reagan proposed "zero option" in 1981.<sup>15</sup> (later it was accepted by the Soviets, one of the boldest initiatives of Gorbachev discussed in the relevant chapter)

The Soviet Union thus in 1980s became truly formidable power that was enough to intensify the cold war situation.

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15 Nicola Gnesotto, "Conference On Disarmament in Europe Opens in Stockholm," NATO Review, 1983. no.6, p. 1.

Like the Americans the Russian leaders also needed "Cold war" as ideology that served as a bonding function. "The bonding, the self-identity of Soviet citizens comes from the notion that they are the heartland of the world's first socialist revolution, threatened by the other - western imperialism.<sup>16</sup> Obviously the bonding function of cold war ideology in the Soviet Union is disciplinary based on Marxism-Leninism. In fact the most conservative elements in the Soviet leadership were directly associated with bureaucratic-military-security complex itself needed cold war to survive. Thus cold war ideology - the threat of the other is the strongest card left in the hand of the Soviet rulers.<sup>17</sup>

Now with this back ground, when the two superpowers are regarded as almost equal in strength it would be interesting to analyse briefly the situation during 1979 to 1985. 1979 because some writers are of opinion that the second cold war started with the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December, 1979. Brezezinsky saw

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16 E.P. Thompson, Zero Option, (London, 1982) p. 173.

17 Ibid., p. 175.

Afghanistan as the final nail on the coffin of detente.

From the American point of view the Soviets were solely responsible for the cold war particularly in the third world one of the synthetic myths to which America desperately clings is the linkage between the Soviet's alleged "irresponsible behaviour and the size of their nuclear and conventional arsenals".

After 1979, detente definitely were torn thin and one reason why armament became the central issue in the second war presumably that a number of weapon technology which were under development reached a stage when they could be converted into deployable weapon. And hence the necessity for talks also.

During this period the other centres of power particularly China, Japan and Western European allies were very lukewarm and let the cold war to be pursued by the super powers as opposed to the heavy entanglement of allies in the 1st cold war.

This period saw a vigorous race in both nuclear

as well as sophisticated conventional weaponry. In March 1983 President Reagan announced most ambitious plan known as SDI now known as "Star War" programme that embittered the already strained relation.

Now, one question can be asked whether apart from arms race was there any real competition between the super power in other areas ?

The Americans never supported in real sense anti-racist or anti-colonial movement in order to counter Soviet influence (as they did in first cold war period for example Indonesia, Vietnam, Kampuchea, South Yemen, Cyprus) etc. Nor had they offered to transfer technology to industrialise the third world. Despite this, cold war situation posed a serious threat to the developing countries.<sup>18</sup>

This analysis of the new Cold war situation shows some important features. First, in the past the Cold war centred around the Atlantic and the Pacific. But during

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18 K. Subramanyam, ed., The Second Cold War (New Delhi, 1983), p. 20.

the last few years the Indian Ocean has been an important arena for the super power game. Both of them are trying to improve their military facilities in this area because of the strategic significance of this region. Diego Garcia is a case in point where the USA is all set to install ground based electro optical deep space surveillance system which can perform C<sup>3</sup> (Command, control and communication) function.<sup>19</sup>

Secondly, the nuclear race has taken a new turn since many third world countries have either already acquired nuclear capability or are on the threshold of it Israel, South Africa, Brazil, Pakistan are some examples. This adds to the tension ridden Cold War situation.

Thirdly the new centres of power such as Japan, West Germany etc are not siding with either of the super powers. Even the West European countries who very closely allied with the US in her policy of containment are not active any more though are not in opposition to US's Cold War policies.

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19 Rasiduddin Khan, Telegraph Colour Magazine (Calcutta) May, 1986.

Who are the real sufferers in the Cold War. Undoubtedly the developing countries.

Ever since the Helsinki Accord and SALT-I, the rivalry between the two superpowers has tended to focus on the non aligned developing area of the world. The American new look at the developments in the third world through the distorting prism of bipolarity. For example, in view of Reagan Administration Cuba shares with the its Soviet patron the blame for the Civil war in Salvador.<sup>2</sup>

The developing countries who have acquired the political and legal sovereignty over their natural over their natural resources within their territory have become easy targets of the superpower games because of their vulnerable position. The big powers also attach the strings while supplying technology for exploitation of national resources. Another accelerating development is the arm transfer to the Third World. The continuation of tension and war in the Middle East for example is the result of the refusal so far to challenge the assumption

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20 Seweryn Bialer, The Soviet Paradox (New York, 1986), pp. 317-19.

of the Cold War. Similarly the explosion of superpower rivalry have made other areas in the developing world the arena of the Second Cold War.

Thus the super imposition of the Cold War rivalry has aggravated the insecurity of developing nations. As a result of which according to K. Subramanyam the "Second Cold War tends to divide the non aligned nations into those leaning towards the US and other towards the USSR".<sup>21</sup> But now with the new centres of power coming up, it is impossible to predict that either of the superpowers will be the winner of the Cold War. At best they can create more turbulence in the third world. After all as the old African saying goes when the two elephants fight it is the grass which suffers.

Is there any way out ?

The above discussions would outwardly suggest a dark and bleak future. However, the subsequent developments in the international relations particularly after 1985 when a new leadership took over in the Soviet Union led the Super Powers to redefine their choices.

Some writers like Wayland Kennet predict four ways

to deal with the situation.

One is to have a hot war and get it over with once for all, in the belief that one side or the other can win without destroying humanity. This suggestion is ignorant and evil.

The other one he says is to have enough military capability to exert a general mastery of the world which is devoid of practical imagination.

The third way is to put moral pressure on the nuclear weapon states by the UN which would then some how miraculously achieve what it has not achieved till now. This proposition is the virtuous in the extreme.

The fourth way is to continue the effort for better behaviour of the nations in their dealings with each other which is not possible until all states are treated equally and no state has a right to greater security than any other.<sup>22</sup>

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22 Wayland Kennet, "On Ending the Coldwar" in Crockatt and Smith, ed., The Cold War Past and Present (London 1987) pp. 218-19.

Peace movements:

A ray of hope is provided by peace movements which have attacked the problem of nuclear arms proliferation. Now the question is why did the peace movements emerge when it did in 1980, and on such a widespread scale ?

In Autumn 1981 more than 2 million people took part in demonstrations against nuclear weapons in Europe. In June 1982 thousands of American took to streets of New York to protest their own governments' policies. In Europe the focus was on opposition to the Cruise and Pershing II and on support the European Nuclear Disarmament from Portugal to Poland.<sup>23</sup>

Fred Halliday indentifies three factors that are responsible for the emergence of these peace movements.

1) Proposed or actual introduction of new intermediate range missiles on land : the SS-20s by the USSR and the Cruise and Pershing II by NATO.

2) The increased level of east-west confrontation

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23. Halliday, no.5, p. 257.

that accompanied the later part of the 1970s from Angola to Afghanistan, Iranian and Central American crises.

3) There was the fact that the policy statement of both the Carter and Reagan regime laid more stress than had been the case since Kennedy period on the need to build up a military potential for possible confrontation.<sup>24</sup>

Peace movements in 1980 have succeeded in invoking a world wide attention to the most immediate problem that the very existence of mankind and civilization which is now threatened. "They have arisen in response not only to a military and strategic situation, but to a political situation also."<sup>25</sup> These movements speak with new accent and new voice. But the lack of governmental power and normal political channels that decides policies cripples the movements. And unless there is a major political change in the countries the peace movement are unlikely to bring about any drastic change in the situation apart

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24 Ibid., pp. 258-59.

25 Thompson, no. 16, p. 178.

from arousing awareness and mobilising protests and demonstrations.

The emergence of Gorbachev at this crucial juncture, as a leader of a superpower, who was also genuinely interested in peace and willing to discard traditional assumptions of confrontation added to the strength of peace movements. His sweeping initiatives in this particular field namely disarmament aroused unprecedented interest in alternative security programmes not only in the Europe but also in the other side of the Atlantic.

But then a rapid end of Cold War is unlikely for the roots are deep seated and varied. There is still a vocal constituency in the USA for expansion of the US nuclear arsenal and conventional forces, and Gorbachev has to contend with hardliners in the Soviet Union who have faith in nuclear realpolitik. The third world remains a play ground for the superpower games and chances of sudden eruption of clashes in there areas cannot be ruled out.

Those who wrote in the mid 80s prognosticated a bleak future for the world as there was no tendency at

work which could mitigate the cold war blister. At the end of the decade one can say, the situation is not so bleak as it seemed. Again we have in mind the "Gorbachev Factor". Apart from this peace movements have become "active" casting away the labels of 'pacifist' or 'neutralist' as they were called. Their voices signal that "the Cold War could be coming to an end".<sup>26</sup>

We are not describing some novel stage in the process known as detente. For detente signified the turning down of hostilities within the overall Cold War framework. It was super imposed by the superpowers and never arose from client states. But what we now can glimpse is something different : a mass based peace movement, which is beyond detente in that it poses a fundamental challenge to the paradigm of existing security policies. Although Gorbachev did not initiate the Peace thinking, of the Peace Movement, he has as a practicing statesman given a very clear meaning to the key concepts for developing alternatives. It is clear,

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26 Ibid., p. 181.



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for example, that the zero-zero agreement was catalysed by Gorbachev's new thinking, and overruled the security establishments which were entrenched in "extended deterrence" concepts.

CHAPTER- II

GORBACHEV AND THE BREAK WITH THE PAST

When Mikhail Gorbachev assumed power in Moscow in March 1985, many western observers assumed that Soviet foreign policy would show little innovation. At best he was expected to pursue old objectives more vigorously. A change in style not in substance was foreseen. But Gorbachev confounded these predictions with a wide range of policy initiatives, personnel changes and reformulation of old Soviet positions. The amazing range of peace initiatives coming from the Russian leader took everyone by surprise both at home and abroad.

Before getting into the discussion about the initiatives taken by Gorbachev let us go back for a while to the past which highlights the Soviet internal conditions during the period of Gorbachev's succession.

The Soviet Union underwent a period of political and economic difficulties at the beginning of 1980s. After Brezhnev's death there had been a quick succession of leaders so there was hardly any time for the ailing leaders to deal with the troubled scenario. Gorbachev

inherited a stagnant economy, poor supply of consumer goods, a corrupt bureaucracy and virtually crippled industries. To top it all there was also a gradual erosion of the ideological as well as moral values of Soviet people. On the whole the situation was not conducive for development. There was a total economic deadlock and stagnation.

Andropov after Brezhnev had shown interest in reforming Soviet society and economic structure. An ailing and aging Chernenko failed to maintain the momentum of short term economic upswing achieved under Andropov. "In 1984 the official GNP growth rate 2.6 per cent fell below the 1982 level. Agricultural output in 1982 was the same level as in 1983. Oil and coal production in 1984 were down in 1983. The same goes for steel production." <sup>27</sup>

As far Soviet foreign policy, it is true that was highly affected by the declining internal position. The Soviet's claim of general communist offensive against

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27 Boris Meissner, "Soviet Policy : From Chernenko to Gorbachev". Aussen Politik, vol. 36, no.4, p. 367

imperialism was running into rough weather. The much acclaimed "correlation of forces" was no longer favourable.

At that time the rest of the world particularly the west was on the move. After the oil shock of 1970's the western powers entered into a new phase of industrial revolution. The consequence was breakthrough in high technology that created new and unbridgable gap between the western and the communist countries.

In Ronald Reagan the USA appeared to have found a President capable of healing the "Vietnam syndrome" and of restoring the nation's political will.<sup>28</sup> Kremlin leaders were particularly worried about the technological momentum that might be triggered by the strategic defence initiative proposed by the American president widening the gap technology-gap still further.

In such a critical position it was inevitable that something akin to a longing for a young, vigorous leader

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28 Alain Besancon, "Gorbachev without illusion", Commentary, April, 1988. p. 47

became a widespread desire at all levels of society. This provided the political impetus to search for a young dynamic leader and Gorbachev was an obvious choice. This longing for a new dynamic leader was to change the deteriorating position of the Soviet Union. As a result which Gorbachev took over and the ideas of "change" began to take shape.

Now, an obvious question is raised why have institutionalised values been challenged on this scale in the Soviet Union? Is it due to the fact that the system itself could take it no more and the potential within the system for purging and reorganising became so obvious that the system became amenable for a change. Or is this due to the change in the leadership that gave a boost to the already felt urge to change. Seweryn Bialer, in an article writes "the simplest answer to the question therefore, is that these changes in the Soviet Union are taking place because a new leader took the reins of power and found them either desirable or necessary or both. If Leonid Brezhnev or Konstantin Chernenko had lived several years longer, the Soviet "reconstruction" would probably not now be taking place".<sup>29</sup>

29 Seweryn Bialer, "Gorbachev's Program of Change: Sources, Significance, Prospects", Political Science Quarterly, vol. 103, no.3, 1988, p. 404

However there are also other factors at work and not merely the change of leadership. There is in fact a combination of factors such as the domestic requirements particularly the economic sector which needed an immediate restructuring, technological revolution in capitalist societies the deteriorating international position of Soviet Union and above all want of an entirely new political generation to leadership. All these factors have been discussed briefly above.

Gorbachev might have a stroke of luck having some lucky breaks. But his succession cannot be explained only in terms of luck since he possesses obviously of a calm, confident intelligence, dynamic leadership qualities which are all reflected in his dealing with public. He has tremendous sense of timing, an uncanny knack to choose friends and foes and a sound instinct for grasping at the substance of real sources of power.

Behind Gorbachev the leader, there is Gorbachev the man who is hopeful and optimistic.

What men are capable of and the creative potentialities

of men know no bound and when it comes to a leader changing the course of history of international relations almost single handedly, it undoubtedly inspires awe and skepticism simultaneously.

Since he has been in power since last four years, we can speak with some confidence about the principal aspects of his personality and his style of leadership, and the extent of his commitment to change. The leadership quality of Gorbachev has been demonstrated in many occasions. He has the "capacity or fitness for drawing others, for guiding them, for giving a particular quality or character to a movement . This was not the case with the party general secretaries in the post Stalin era." 30

He is a complete negotiator. A good negotiator Miller says, should be realistic, flexible not by being without a firm position but by utilising both firm and flexible proposals. He should be flexible in his tactics by discriminating between occasions when it pays to adhere

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30 Ibid., p. 417.

to "rules of accomodation" and when it does not. He must be prepared to follow domestic opinion at home as well as to encourage a new consensus both in his government and in his country. He should be patient to live with conflict and uncertainty and above all must maintain a will to win.<sup>31</sup>

As a politician he is quite cautious but he can be very decisive in making policy decision. More importantly he is critical and skeptical. His strong will to implement his decisions is evident in almost all spheres where ever he have taken an initiative.

When one goes through the "Perestroika" : New thinking for our country and the world", one gets the impression that he is down to earth. He actually communicates with the people. He talks to the common man, house wives, school children, intelligentsia and gets the ideas from them. Since he has got a tremendous capability to learn

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31 Linda B. Miller, Dynamics of World Politics: Studies in the Resolution of Conflict. ed., (New Jersey, 1968), pp 41-43.

he can both plan ahead and improvise that makes him more confident though his previous experience was quite limited.

"He is a modern leader in the sense that he has began to conceive "modernity" not as a thing an object but premarily as a set of attitudes or approaches that is innovative and dynamic in all spheres of activity.<sup>32</sup>

Style of functioning:

Gorbachev's style of functioning is definitely within Marxist - Leninist fold. He himself says in "Perestroika" that the works of Lenin and his ideals of socialism remained for them an inexhaustible source of dialectical creative thought, theoretical wealth and political sagacity.<sup>33</sup> But he deviates from Lenin so far as the style of functioning is concerned. For example, for Lenin "class war" remains the basic idea of all socialist movements of modern time which according to him was a real, tangible thing. What to Marx was a means became for him an end. Lenin's

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32 Bialer, no. 29, p. 418

33 Mikhail Gorbachev, Perestroika : New Thinking for Our Country and the World.(London,1987) p. 78.

preoccupation as a theorist was always with the methods of waging political warfare. As Pipes observes all his thinking was militant. Pipes also observe Lenin admired Clausewitz's insistence that war and politics were not antithetical means but alternatives, chosen according to what the situation required.<sup>34</sup> However, many Indian scholars do not agree with the western scholars. Lenin's interpretation of Clausewitz was to making it radically to plead not for the continuation of war but its termination, and the pursuance of the principle of peaceful coexistence between the two social systems for advancing the cause of socialism at the global level.<sup>35</sup>

Debates notwithstanding, the Gorbachevian model is obviously a bypass model that seek to wage peace through negotiation and to establish socialism without resorting to class war. Class struggle will definitely be there as long as there are classes but it can be

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34 Richard Pipes, US-Soviet relation in the Era of Detente ( , 1958), p. 24.

35 Rakesh Gupta, " Soviet foreign and defence policies and the making of the Second Cold War", Man and Development, vol.8, no.2, June 1986, p.35

said that the Soviet Union under Gorbachev would regard non-violent means for pursuing class struggle for socialism. As a logical corollary to this, "peaceful coexistence" becomes the central axis around which the whole "Gorbachevism" revolves. For Lenin Soviet Coexistence with capitalist state was a temporary tactic which has become a strategy to becoming a goal itself in Gorbachev's agenda.

Gorbachev even in his speech on the occasion of 70th anniversary of October Revolution avoided a rhetorical genuflection in their direction and replaced it by contemplation on the need to build a new "international order in which enduring peace will reign despite the coexistence of fundamentally different socialist systems."<sup>36</sup>

What is important here to note is that for Lenin such permanent peace was not conceivable outside the framework of a socialist world. Under Gorbachev such

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36 Achin Vanik, "Continuity and Change in Soviet Foreign Policy under Gorbachev", Economic and Political Weekly, vol.23, no.11, 19 March, 1988 pp.547-52.

an enduring peace has not only become feasible and possible but the principal aim of the Soviet foreign policy. To top it all what Gorbachev has done is to displace the revolutionary struggle for world socialism altogether.

Naturally there have been changes in Lenin's concept of peaceful coexistence. Peaceful coexistence is acquiring a new quality today in the context of military parity and Gorbachev knows it well." He believes this urgently demands a thorough restructuring of existing state to state relation; it calls for a new political thinking for steps to bring military-strategic plans and military doctrines into line with reality." 37

Gorbachev understands the necessity of negotiation and has attached great importance to the fact that policy of peaceful coexistence requires fulfilment in good faith of obligation arising from universally recognized

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37 Prof. Shalva Sanokoev, "Peaceful Coexistence in the Context of Military - Strategic Parity", International Affairs, (Moscow) Feb, 1988, p. 77.

principles and norms of international law and from international treaties "Thus the fundamental principles of a comprehensive international security system are a practical expression of the policy of peaceful coexistence on a global level. They cover all aspect of present day international relation, military, political, economic, humanitarian and environmental."<sup>38</sup>

In the domestic sphere also Gorbachev's style of functioning is unique. His policy of "perestroika" that is restructuring is all comprehensive and is intended to bring about radical reform in the socio-political and economic structure of the Soviet Union. His predecessors never attempted anything of this sort. In a sense Khrushchev in his own way reflected the urges for reform. So did Kosygin, Andropov too, during the short period articulated some urge to reform. However none of them presented an integrated and integral for a thoroughgoing reconstruction of Soviet society".<sup>39</sup> Reform attempted in Soviet Union is truly remarkable under the leadership of Gorbachev. Here also one clearly finds a distinct

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38 Ibid., p. 85.

39 P.N. Haksar, " October Revolution, 70th Anniversary: Some Reflection", Mainstream , vol. 26, no.4, Nov. 7, 1987, p. 7.

departure with the past methods of reform.

Gorbachev was quick to recognise the USSR's relative international decline combined with its domestic crises which lead to an urgent reassessment of the strategic direction of Soviet security and foreign policy. Previously, the unimaginative Soviet leadership, tactically inflexible and strategically frozen in old concept and traditional policies, could not even begin to redress the situation. The obvious seriousness of the Soviet predicament provided a forceful situation for change.

However this is just one aspect of the powerful force that called for a drastic changes on the Soviet system in the 1980s. Others can be summed up as the crisis of system under Brezhnev and his successors until Gorbachev took over.

Gorbachev's policies are intended to rescue the Soviet system from growing and potentially explosive, destabilising social force through far reaching directed change.

So far it is clear from the style of functioning of Gorbachev that the new leadership is also beginning to understand that plans must take into account the new character of Soviet society which is far less malleable than it was in the past. The new society does not have to be crushed by the idea of "revolution from above" as chiefly during Stalin's era. What is needed and is perhaps recognized by the new leadership is the creation of condition that will promote the self interests of the various strata of moderization.

What is necessary is to create a synchronisation of interests between the modernising interest of the state and the society.<sup>40</sup>

Why should a country like Soviet Union be measured against the technological progress of the west? Quite amusingly the Soviet leadership had always measured their progress against that of the west. Seweryn Bialer has identified 3 major causes which are responsible for this tradition. Soviet ideological predilection, Soviet

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40 See Seweryn Bialer, no.20, pp. 329-43.

obsession with security and foreign policy stemming out of it and the psychological mindset of Soviet leadership.<sup>41</sup>

Gorbachev seemed to have confounded the western habits of assessing capability of Soviet system to change. Many authors including Milovan Djilas, A. Shakharov etc, believe that the Soviet is incapable of changing, Djilas's conviction that nothing short of a catastrophe will induce the apparatus to undertake reforms a shared by many dissenters as well as loyal but apprehensive communists in the Soviet Union.<sup>42</sup>

The intimate link between crises and reform to which Mr. Djilas refers is corroborated by the record of Russian history. It is such a vast, complex and so loosely held together and extremely conservative country that its leaders have always feared and rarely volunteered changes.

Gorbachev's initiatives for reforms both internal as well as external see thus truly remarkable in Soviet history.

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41 Bialer, "Gorbachev's Program of Change", Political Science Quarterly, vol.103 no.3, 1988, pp. 404-18

42 Richard Pipes, " Can the Soviet Union Reform.", Foreign Affairs, vol.64, no.3,'86 p.55.

CHAPTER - III

GLASNOST AND PERESTROIKA

## GLASNOST

Before going into the details of Perestroika i.e. "restructuring" which is the central theme of Gorbachev's agenda it would be interesting to discuss about 'glasnost' or 'openness' on which the revolutionary "Perestroika" is based.

Gorbachev realised that without glasnost, perestroika hardly has any meaning. "The policy of openness, naturally, means a greater role for 'Public opinion', on one hand and also demands simultaneously, awareness from the policy makers of the needs and aspiration of the common people." 43

The impact of glasnost is very wide ranging from openness in free discussion in mutual trust, cultural relation to openness in self critical self assessment and is directed against almost all evils such as undemocratic aspects of Soviet policy making, rigid bureaucracy unhealthy economic system etc.

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43 Rajiv Shah, New Horizons of Soviet Policies. (New Delhi , 1987), p. 43.

The new openness, which slowly but surely appears becoming a norm, has led to a wide variety of discussions on problems both past and present, in the Soviet media.<sup>44</sup> Thus the two current emphasis are on expansion and deepening of democracy and the promotion of self management in all social spheres. It is well understood that without glasnost, perestroika in these sphere is impossible.<sup>45</sup>

Openness is visible not only in the political and cultural sphere where people have started debating and discussing almost every issue and governmental policies but also in the economic sphere. "The new law passed by Soviet parliament in June 1987 expressly states to it workers or personnel. This is a radical effort to move towards the more classical Marxist view of property, which insists on harmonising the contents of the individual worker with the interest of the economy or a whole".<sup>46</sup> Openness is visible also in the stopping of excessive use

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44 Ibid., p. 47.

45 Poulos Mar Gregorios, " Restructuring and Openness in USSR : Significance for all Humanity", Mainstream (New Delhi), vol. 26, no.6, Nov 21, 1987, p. 12.

46 Ibid., p. 12.

of alcohol (which previously caused substantial loss of man-hours), the cutting down and official red-tape and formalism making more statistics and information available to the public for greater participation on debates and discussions creating congenial atmosphere of intellectuals - all these are part of a vast dynamic programme to mobilise people for creative socialist production.

Restructuring of an entire society can hardly be done in secrecy. Gorbachev himself writes, " we need glasnost as we need the air".<sup>47</sup>

Inevitably, glasnost depends to a large extent on the means of communication - the media. As Gorbachev asserts "people are the vanguards of the struggle, and perestroika develops through them"<sup>48</sup> the contribution of media in bringing about mass consciousness is all the more important.

Glasnost is inextricably interlinked with the

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47 Gorbachev, no. 33, p. 78.

48 Ibid., p. 76.

process of democratisation which helps "introducing substantial correction into the relationships between those who criticise and those who are criticised." 49

The current democratization process is reflected in the concerning participation of mass media which is increasingly preferring "dialogue to monologue" 50 for fostering a new atmosphere, unswaddle thinking and excite an interest in every aspect of perestroika. In Soviet Union the "winds of Perestroika are blowing strong through the open windows of glasnost in every comer." 51

How can the theoretical research for projecting the new vision of socialism, which calls for high intellectual effort, be incorporated into the concept of Perestroika is a question of intellectual debate. But Gorbachev understands that to spread the climate of intellectual quest and dynamism in all spheres of life to encourage collective thinking and to promote high

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49 Ibid., p. 78.

50 Ibid., p. 77.

51 Nikhil Chakraborti, (TOI New Delhi March 7-9 1988).

level of creative debate calls for openness or glasnost should one dig the past openly - the Stalinist past which according to some people\* should be guarded by the present and there should be no glasnost about history. In fact Gorbachev's idea of glasnost is to correct history that is precisely to correct errors.

"We must build and renew socialism in our society, using all the sap supplied by the roots which go deep back into our history, particularly socialist history, and lopping off all the negative elements from 1930s and 1940s and from the recent period of stagnation." 52 One aspect of glasnost is self creation and critical evaluation of the past.

Though it is almost impossible to judge the changes that are taking place in the USSR and to what extent Perestroika has gone down in the Russian psyche due to

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\* Volention Chikin the editor in chief of Sovetskay Rossia is one of them who are against digging the Stalinist past.

52 Gorbachev quoted in article by Dev Murarka; "Gorbachev fights Back", Times of India, May 1, 1988.

"openness" in the mass media, it is possible to comprehend the magnitude of restructuring of the social life in its almost every aspect. "wherever one goes, one cannot but be struck by the intensity of inquiry - there is questioning everywhere, and questioning of anything Mark's reputed injunction - "Doubt Everything" - seems to have come true in Moscow." 53

To bring about a revolution in any society the first and foremost prerequisite is to evoke a mass awareness that such a revolutionary change is needed and that such a change is possible.<sup>54</sup> People have to be told the truth, only this can imbue them with responsibility. There can, therefore, be no perestroika without glasnost "or as Gorbachev put it more democracy for more socialism" 55 And "there is no democracy, nor can there be, without glasnost" 56 Gorbachev has seen an organic correlation between socialism and democracy; democracy and glasnost.

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53 Nikhil Chakraborti, "Journey to Perestroika", Mainstream vol. 26, no.24, March 26, 1988, p. 39.

54 See Mohitsen, "Why Glasnost after October "? Mainstream vol. 26, no. 4, Nov 7, 1987, p. 38.

55 Ibid., p. 16.

56 Gorbachev, no.33, p. 79.

Glasnost has therefore come to stay and has become a norm in the Soviet way of life.

Perestroika:

"Perestroika" or restructuring is a carefully prepared programme the need for which was acutely felt by the decision makers even before Gorbachev came on the scene. To quote Abel Aganbegyan a noted economist in the set up "we should have halted the negative tendency and worked out acceleration much earlier, yet we continued in our set ways, mechanically applying old methods without regard for the new condition that had already began to emerge." 57

Perestroika was given a proper shape in a concrete systematized programme, and plan of action at the April, 1985 plenary meeting. Gorbachev establishes a new course in history which is in the line of theoretically predictable stages of socialism as propounded by Marx and Lenin. He says " we have to actually go through this stage for the classics teach us the approach not the techniques." 58

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57 Chakraborti, no.53, p. 40

58 Gorbachev, no.33, p. 45.

Perestroika is the technique whose momentum has gripped the whole Soviet life from history to science, from theatre to economic management - , no areas has been left untouched. Everywhere the target is bureaucracy.

Gorbachev was quick to understand the nature of bureaucracy which is cause of time slowly but steadily crawled into the system "taking complete control over the situation and candidly legalised itself in it most damaging capacity that of money grabbing paracitism".<sup>59</sup> In their attempt to take out bureaucratic measure Brezhnev and Kosygin had failed, for reform were left to the bureaucracy itself and "it specified the reforms so as to minimise damage to its power and restore it in full as soon as possible."<sup>60</sup>

The essence of Perestroika goes beyond correcting bureaucracy. Perestroika that began with the restructuring the economy really spread to other branches of Soviet life. To wake up people, to cultivate them to make the impossible possible. "Perestroika is to provide a

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59 Yevgeny Nosov, Mainstream , vol 25, no.43, Aug 6, 1988. p. 32.

60 Dr. Solton Dsarasov quoted by Nikhil Chakraborti, "Journey to Perestroika", Mainstream vol. 26 no.24 March 26, 1988. p. 39.

"melting pot" for society and above all the individual himself." 61

Economic Sphere:

It would be interesting to analyse the revolutionary impact of Perestroika in the economic sphere. The CPSU central Committee adopted "Fundamentals of Radical Restructuring of Economic Management" at the June 1987 plenary meeting. To quote Gorbachev "Perhaps there is the most important radical programme for economic reform the country had had since Lenin introduced his NEP in 1921." 62 The "three waves" of economic restructuring is as Aganbegyan points out are experimentation, self financing and independence in the running of enterprises. 63

Ofcourse the most important factor about Perestroika is the adoption of fundamental principles for a radical change in economic management. For Gorbachev it means much more than restructuring. It means overcoming the stagnation process. It mean mass initiative. Perestroika

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61 See Gorbachev no.33, p. 29.

62 Ibid., p. 33.

63 Aganbegyan quoted in Nikhil Chakraborti's article no. 53, pp. 41-42.

also means a resolute shift to scientific methods, an ability to provide solid scientific basis for every new initiative. The most important aspect perestroika is the "human-factor " giving priority to the development of the socio sphere providing people with a better standard of living. Perestroika also means the elimination from society of the distortions of socialist ethic, the consistent implementation of the principles of social justice.<sup>64</sup>

Some of the concrete steps that have been taken in the economic sphere is one, instead of the old heavy industries, mining and agriculture. The emphasis now is on science based and other high technology industries. In this the key sector is engineering and machine tools. "The state enterprise law which was adopted in June 1987 by the Supreme Soviet was a major milestone in the grand design of Perestroika."<sup>65</sup> This gives a concrete picture of

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64 See Gorbachev, no.33 pp. 27-59.  
See also the article of Yegon Ligackey, Mainstream vol 26. no.4, Nov 7, 1987 pp. 9-15.  
where he analyses revolutionary aspect of Perestroika.

65 R.G. Gidadhubli and Abhijct Bhattacharya, " Perestroika of Soviet Enterprise Management " - M.L. Sondhi ed., Beyond Perestroika (New Delhi, 1988) p. 31.

economic plan. SEL promises greater autonomy for enterprise with emphasis on self financing and self management.<sup>66</sup>

In his drive for far reaching plan for economic reform one comes yet another key term. "Uskorenie" or "acceleration" which means the revival of the lost dynamism in economic growth and social progress.<sup>67</sup>

One also gets an impression that the present system of pricing is going to be radically overhauled. The present strategy demands that the prices of goods and services must correctly reflect their cost of production and consumer valuation. Ofcourse skepticism cannot be ruled out in this sector. Radoslav Selucky writes " price reform is not likely to be introduced before 1990." <sup>68</sup>

However, the most innovative measure has been the

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66 Ibid., p. 43.

67 Radoslav Selucky, " Gorbachev's Economic Restructuring and Acceleration" Ibid., p. 46.

68 Ibid., p. 69.

'law of the individual labour activity' which came into force in May 1987. This lays down the areas and rights and obligations of individuals engaged in service sector such as laundries hairdressers, repair shops etc. This sector generates as much as 15 billion roubles of unaccounted annual income. This law was made to recognize such forces as private enterprise as being in conformity with the present concept of socialism in the Soviet Union.<sup>69</sup>

Jurisprudence:

A very important restructuring has taken place in the legal sphere. "One notices in the Soviet Union today the contours of rule of law which were so long discussed, particularly since Stalin, as burgeoise luxury. There is now legal provision for compensation of any damage suffered by illegal detention and also under other illegal action of officials or state agencies."<sup>70</sup>

Political Sphere:

In its political dimension Perestroika seeks to

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69 Nikhil Chakraborti no. 53, pp. 39-43.

70 Ibid., p. 40.

reform state structure, governmental functioning and administrative procedures, introduce revised electoral system based on plurality of choice.

In this sphere one of the concrete decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress, followed by 19th All Union CPSU Conference was to undertake a comprehensive democratisation of all aspects of life.

"From the cult of personality" phase to passive and stagnant authoritarian phase, the entire function of the political system in the Soviet Union over the years, handed over powers and function to the ever expanding bureaucratic structures that shifted public action and initiative and weakened the role of vigilant socialist activists." <sup>71</sup> This is the reason why Gorbachev gives importance to the reform of political system for bringing about a procedural as well as relational changes in the party, Soviets and the people. That would accelerate the process of socialism with an added flavour of democracy and human factor.

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71 Rasheeduddin Khan, 'Perestroika : An Overview'. World Focus. Vol. 9, Number 10-11-12, Oct-Nov-Dec. 1988, p.4.

In the process of restructuring, Soviet society under the leadership Gorbachev has come up with new political concepts. Congress and People's Deputies of USSR which was elected in March in the highest body of state authority and will meet not only the interests of the country's population as a whole (750 territorial constituencies), its republics, autonomous regions and areas (750 seats) but also the interest of all union public organisation (750 seats).

Representation of public organisation in the Bodies of State Authority : this concept reflects the emergence of a new Soviet state legal institution. The representation of public organisations in the highest bodies of state authority, of the Soviet Union and of the republics, became first guaranteed by law in late 1988 when amendments to 1977 constitution were adopted.

Constitutional Compliance Committee:

This is a completely new body of authority. The main task is to see to it that the new bills, constitutions and laws of constituent republics, the legislative acts of Soviet at all levels and of other state bodies and

public organisation are in conformity with the constitution the laws of the USSR adopted by the Congress of People's Deputies.<sup>72</sup>

### Religion:

There is one area in which Gorbachev made significant pronouncement, on the attitude towards religion. He referred to the celebration that were held to a thousand years of cristianity in the Soviet Union and said, "we do not conceal our attitude to religious outwork as being non matualostic and unscientific. But this is no reason for a disrespectful attitude to a spiritual mindedness of the believer, still less for applying an administrative pressure to assert materialistic views.....All believers irrespective of the religion. They prefers, are full fledged citizens of the USSR." <sup>73</sup>

### Ethic issue:

Gorbachev in the same conference recognised and made a significant pronouncement on the demands of ethnic group. In the same conference he declared.....the

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72 See World Focus, vol. 9, no. 10-11-12- Oct. Nov.- Dec 1988. pp. 99-100

73 Ravindra Verma, " Perestroika and 19th Conference of CPSU", Gandhi Marg, no.115, Oct. 1988. pp. 30-33.

socialist ideal is not a deadly unification, but a full blooded and dynamic unity set in national diversity." <sup>74</sup>

In recent years the USSR saw a number of subnational uprisings of Armenians, the Crimean Tatars, Georgians who have been frequently holding demonstrations, demanding sometimes, separate homeland. "To tackle with these problems Gorbachev prepared the creation of a special commission to settle the question of division of power between the central government and the 15 Soviet republics. In other words, he wanted differences to be settled through discussion and negotiation." <sup>75</sup> One is convinced that 'glasnost' has definitely brought a gust of fresh air permitting free expression without fear which is the most reliable guarantee of success in Gorbachev's endeavour for restructuring such a sensitive issue like ethnic relation. Gorbachev undoubtedly, treading on a very difficult path in his effort to achieve the impossible but his confidence in himself and in his countrymen gives him the necessary strength that is needed to fulfill this uphill task.

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74 Ibid., pp. 34

75 Sumit Chakraborti, "The Ethnic Strifes", World Focus, vol. 9 no. 10-11-12, Oct-Nov-Dec (1988), pp. 34-38.

CHAPTER - IV

GORBACHEV'S NEW THINKING

The genesis and evolution of "new thinking" is generally accepted as an integral part of Perestroika in Gorbachev's agenda. In fact the sweeping initiatives taken by Gorbachev can only be explained in terms of new thinking which has a global impact. The new leadership has understood the importance of "new thinking" or "novaya myshelnie" which now has created a whole new tone for Soviet politics.

Today's world is threatened by the existence of nuclear weapons and its staggering stockpiles. The life on the planet is also equally threatened by environmental pollution, population explosion, poverty, underdeveloped and other social problems in one form or the other. No one can really be immune to these dangers irrespective of its size and power and unless there is an orchestrated effort to solve these problem the mankind has no future.

This in short is the essence of new thinking. What exactly is the "new " in "new thinking " ? It is not just the realisation of the danger but the "effort" to minimise the threat that is so menacing. As Gorbachev says "security is indivisible."<sup>76</sup> To realise this on

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76 Gorbachev, no.33, p. 142.

entirely new framework of thinking is necessary, for the military and political relation of the present day problem cannot be met with by Pre-nuclear political thinking. Indispensability of cooperation and interdependence of nations forces one to question the wisdom of clinging to the Clausewitzian view that "war is a continuation of politics by other means." Previous methods based on force are no longer of any use. The reality of nuclear age requires a reappraisal of such concepts of force, supremacy and military victory. Albert Einstein once warned that with the appearance of nuclear weapons people found themselves in a totally new situation, and that from now on their thinking must be adapted likewise. "A new way of human thinking is necessary," declared the great scientist, "for mankind to survive and go on developing"<sup>77</sup>.

It is worth repeating that what precisely is "new" about new political thinking is perhaps not only to see this world with an open mind but to "act" and Gorbachev is an activist and not merely a preacher. That he heralded a new era in Soviet politics has been proved in more than one occasion.

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77 See International Affairs (Moscow), no.5, 1986, p.18

"Politics based on reality"<sup>78</sup> recognizes not only the existence of other political system besides socialist countries but also sees the possibility of cooperation among the countries.

Alexander Bovin, a prominent Soviet publicist thinks that like fascism today's 'common enemy' - the threat of mutual annihilation - is no less real. "There is only one way of getting rid of it - cooperation, contrary to the natures of capitalism (and of socialism, as a matter of fact)"<sup>79</sup>

Every staunch Marxist believes only a collapse of the capital (or the system based on capital, that is, capitalism) could lead to an end of the war and the threat of war. This is perfectly in the line of Marxist thought. But today arms race and militarism are intrinsic to capitalism and are unlikely to be destroyed unless the system itself collapses. So do we have to live in an era of perpetual threat of war ?

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78 Gorbachev, no. 33, pp. 9-13.

79 Rajiv Shah, New Horizon of Soviet of Soviet Politics (New Delhi, 1987), p. 9.

Gorbachev makes us believe that capitalism should not be seen in such black and white terms. Though the task of coexisting with an entirely different system looks onerous, he in the 27th CPSU Congress, (Feb 25 to March 5, 1986) in his political report, laid down the task in more or less clear cut terms, thus heralding what is now called a new mode of thinking in the field of international relations.

While analysing the concept of new thinking one understands that it has strongly influenced the character of military doctrine giving it a new shape as the "doctrines of defence" which Gorbachev describes " as non-aggressive defence" <sup>80</sup> He at the sametime recognizes the sovereign right of a nation to choose its own path of social development. According to him "ideological difference should not be transferred to the sphere of interstate relations, nor should foreign policy be subordinate to them, for ideologies may be poles apart, whereas the interest of survival and prevention of war stand universal and supreme." <sup>81</sup> For this he sees a

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80 Gorbachev, no. 33, p. 142.

81 Ibid., 143.

direct link between disarmament and development.

Curbing or reducing the possibility of a nuclear confrontation became obsolete for the new Soviet leadership. Gorbachev desired to replace reduction of nuclear arms by their complete elimination. In fact the corner-stone of his new thinking is the elimination of all nuclear weapons by the end of this century.

Coming to the mantle of CPSU General Secretaryship in March, 1985, Gorbachev introduced a moratorium on the deployment of medium range missiles, and suspended the implementation of other counter measures in Europe in April 1985.<sup>82</sup> This was followed by another concrete step when Gorbachev announced a unilateral moratorium on all nuclear test beginning on August 6, 1985. During this period the USA continued its tests vigorously. Yet Gorbachev persisted on his line in an unprovoked manner. On 18 August, 1986 in a televised address he extended Soviet unilateral moratorium upto 1 January, 1987 as a token of Soviet respect to the UN declared year of peace.<sup>83</sup> Again he extended the moratorium unilaterally for he was convinced that "a nuclear test ban is a measure that would

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82 Source booklet published by Novosti Press Agency, Publishing House, 1986.

83 Gorbachev, Peace has no alternative, Speeches, articles and interviews. Patriot Publishers (New Delhi 1986) pp 511-12.

immediately introduce a new encouraging element in Soviet-American relations and the international situation as a whole." 84

The most important unilateral measure by the Soviet Union came when Gorbachev announced a fifteen year programme providing for the stage-by-stage elimination of nuclear weapons by the end of 20th century. 85

A central tenet of Gorbachev's new thinking has also been the idea of "comprehensive international society," as opposed to the past Soviet obsession with Soviet American arms control. For him peace is indivisible. He reiterates the political declaration of NAM Summit at Algeria 1973.

It stated:

It should not mean simply shifting confrontation from one area to another, nor should it mean reconciling ourselves to the existence of tensions in some areas, while striving to remove them from others. Peace will remain precarious unless the interests of other countries are taken into consideration. 86

Gorbachev substantiated the concept of an all embracing

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85 Gorbachev, For a nuclear free world: Speeches and statements Novosti Press Agency (Moscow, 1987), pp. 9-22. (Details given in the enclosed chart). See also Gorbachev, no. 33, pp. 229-32.

86 C. Raja Mohan, "Waging Peace in Third World", Mainstream, Oct 8, 1988, p. 145.

system of international security as a genuine concern about peace on Earth, at the 27th Congress of the CPSU. At the Congress he propounded some fundamental principles<sup>87</sup> of the all-embracing international security system in the military, political, economic and humanitarian spheres.

As seen in the previous chapter, Gorbachev's domestic compulsions are enormous. To combat the immediate economic problems at home he saw the only way out was to cut down the staggering defence budget and he was convinced that substantial reduction on defence budget is not possible until there is an international disarmament. "Cut backs in military budget indeed demand a more pacific foreign policy."<sup>88</sup> The fact is that the "general tendency of Soviet foreign policy is dynamic, assertive and ambitious in the long run, its tactics in short run oscillate between expansion and retrenchment."<sup>89</sup> But then, expansionism is no solution to the internal

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87 See Gorbachev, no. 33, p. 231.

88 Richard Pipes, "Can the Soviet Union Reform"? Foreign Affairs, vol. 64, no. 3, 1986, p. 60

89 Seweryn Bialer, n. 20, p. 330

problems but ~~ris~~ an added burden. Afghanistan is a case in point. Therefore, what is needed is a change of foreign policy that demanded a revision of the superpower equation as "Gorbachev understood from the beginning that the ceaseless accumulation of nuclear power was leading to an ~~compasse~~",<sup>90</sup> and a nuclear arms race or a war with the USA for that matter, can never be won.

For a normalisation of relation with the USA, Gorbachev faced an impediment on the form of SDI, so vigorously pursued by the Reagan administration in the USA. In his speech on 23 March 1983, Reagan presented of a secure future capable to defend against any potential nuclear attack. He made it clear that the US commitment to SDI was firm and that SDI was not a bargain chip. Very firmly he declared "we will research it. We will develop it. And when it is ready we will deploy it. SDI is America's insurance policy.....SDI is America's security guarantee..... SDI is the key to a world without nuclear weapon."<sup>91</sup>

As against this, Gorbachev's policy was based on

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90 Alain Besancon, "Gorbachev without illusions", Commentary, April 1988, p. 52.

91 Ronald Reagan, In Search of peace with freedom: Selected Presidential Speeches on Peace, Security and US-Soviet Relations 1981-87. (USIS Publication, 1987), p. 62.

patience. Consistently he insisted that Reagan should eschew his SDI programme but at the same time he accommodated the condition of the USA for a disarmament negotiation. What he needed was a breakthrough which came in the shape of INF agreement in Washington. In the background of Washington Summit, Reykjavik Summit might look like a failure but for Gorbachev it marked a "turning point in world history which tangibly demonstrated that the world situation could be improved."<sup>92</sup> This Summit boosted the confidence of both the countries and made this world believe that a tangible result is possible in terms of an accord between Soviet Union and the USA. It is to the credit of Gorbachev who was able to persuade President Reagan to join him in the declaration that a nuclear war cannot be won and must not be fought.

Accommodation of "double zero" option came from a position of moral strength rather than weakness. This showed the confidence Gorbachev has in his own policies. This brings us to the discussion of the INF Treaty itself.

While the treaty is Soviet-American in form it is

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92. Gorbachev, no. 33, p. 240

truly international in character. What is important to note that it is "the first such agreement to abolish a whole category of nuclear weapon, heralding a beginning in arms control based on the concept of "elimination" rather than limitation." <sup>93</sup> That was a real step towards disarmament and a safer world. This treaty on the elimination of intermediate and shorter range missiles (IRM & SRM) is the result of a breakthrough in thinking, of the removal of a seemingly insurmountable psychological barrier between the two nuclear powers. It marks an advance to a qualitatively different level of cooperation solving major international problems.

Gorbachev made the US administration realise that "security can no longer be provided either by military superiority or by a notorious 'balance of fear' at an increasingly high and unstable level." <sup>94</sup> As a result of which in last two years, the world came to see a sea-change in US-USSR relation. The USA also realized that fresh thinking based on concrete realities is the only way out for survival of the mankind. Security here

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93 Lord James Callaghan, "The Strategic panorama of the 1990s", International Affairs, no. 8, 1988, p. 61.

94 Radomir Bogdanov, "From the Balance of Forces to a Balance of Interest", International Affairs, no.4, April 1988, p. 84.

means not the security of the big powers but the security of all countries irrespective of their size or power.

"This is how the balance of interest of different states big and small, developed or underdeveloped socialist and capitalist was concerned." 95

The historical experience of the coexistence of capitalism and socialism has shown that the balance of strength between them has been changing within fairly broad limits. So the 'balance of strength' is not the only factor for establishing a new international system but also the factor of 'balance of interest'.<sup>96</sup>

Precisely because of this Gorbachev stresses on the factor of de-ideologising of international relation which need not set aside the national interests of a particular country but at the same time should be prepared to accomodate other countries' interests for a peaceful coexistence based on balance of interests.

The Moscow Summit held in May 1988 which is infact

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95 V.D. Chopra, ed., no.2, p.9.

96 Bogdanov, no.93, pp. 81-87.

the part of a continued process which was begun in Geneva 1985 saw the signing of a number of agreements and witnessed a substantive dialogue on a wide range of problems albeit it failed to achieve its goal of signing a treaty of 50 per cent reduction of strategic nuclear arms.<sup>97</sup>

In other words, the series of talks taking place between US and the USSR at the initiative of Mikhail Gorbachev, have been woven into the fabric of Soviet - American relations that make them truly durable.

Another striking achievement of Gorbachev's disarmament diplomacy is the signing of Delhi Declaration on the Principles for a Nuclear-weapon-Free and Non-violent world. "It was a document enabling new initiatives based on giving importance to common human values and the need to pool efforts to build a world that would be free from nuclear weapons, violence, hatred, suspicion and fear."<sup>98</sup>

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97 Radomir Bogdanov, "Moscow Summit", International Affairs, no.8, April 1988, pp 3-6.

98 M.L. Sondhi and Shrikant Paranjpe, "On the Gorbachev Agenda", M.L. Sondhi, ed., Beyond Perestroika: Challenges and Choices facing Gorbachev (New Delhi, 1989), p. 12.

Ten principles have been propounded in the Delhi Declaration which introduced humanistic - values to international relation. They are: 99

- i) Peaceful coexistence must become the universal norm of international relations.
- ii) Human life must be recognized as supreme.
- iii) Non-violence should be the basis of community life.
- iv) Understanding and trust must replace fear and suspicion.
- v) the right of every state to political and economic independence must be recognized and respected.
- vi) Resources being spent on armaments must be channelled towards social and economic development.
- vii) Condition must be guaranteed for the individual, harmonious development.
- viii) Mankind's material and intellectual potential must be used to solve global problems.
- ix) the 'balance of terror' must give way to comprehensive international society.
- x) A nuclear-weapon free and non-violent world requires specific and immediate action for disarmament.

Gorbachev has realized that to have a lasting peace on this planet and to make this world really non-violent it is essential to find solution to the regional conflicts; thus as a logical corollary to his 'new thinking' Gorbachev deliberately pushed for a comprehensive settlement of regional conflicts. Having been successful in mitigating the Soviet image of 'evil empire'<sup>100</sup> by a wide ranging initiatives he has compelled the US strategic establishment to see the developments in third world as part of new revolutionary grand design of Kremlin that calls for a shift from confrontation to concert in bringing about solution in the third world.<sup>101</sup>

The regional issues which concern the superpowers are Afghanistan, the Middle East, Iran-Iraq war, South Africa, Central America, Kampuchea and Korea.

In all these areas Gorbachev's contribution for settlement of conflict is remarkable. The quest for peace has set a trend, the pivotal line that can lead to the

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100 See H.S. Chabra, "The Challenge of Regional Conflict". World Focus, vol. 9 no. 106-8, Oct-Dec 1988, p. 81.

101 C. Raja Mohan, "Waging Peace in the Third World" Mainstream, Annual 1988, pp. 145-53.

elimination of trouble spots for a better future. "Such a trend is dialogue, national reconciliation, settlement of disputed issues by peaceful, political means" <sup>102</sup> which is gaining ground and growing stronger.

This trend manifested itself markedly in Afghanistan. The 'Soviet troops pullout from Afghanistan' <sup>103</sup> is the real step towards defusing tension in the third world. Thanks to Gorbachev's ceaseless effort on this front.

The trend for dialogue is winning recognition in the Middle East and the Soviet approach to such problem is very flexible. <sup>104</sup> Gorbachev's contribution to solve Iran-Iraq embroglio was equally important.

The Soviet leadership takes into account the regional peculiarities of these tension-ridden areas and not just imposing its will on them. "The Soviet Union's firm

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102 "A real step towards a safe world", International Affairs, no. 2, Feb, 1988, p. 10.

103 'For details of Geneva Accord see 'Afghanistan Today! Text of Geneva Accord (Nvyug Publishers, Delhi), 1988).

104 "A real step towards a safe world", n. 102, pp.3-12.

resistance to early manifestation of diktat in international relations and its invariable solidarity with the peoples fighting for the right to shape their destin as they see it are a fundamental reality of Soviet-US relation today." 105

So far as Gorbachev's new thinking for the third world is concerned, it is based on a new policy of the shift to the 'right' that is the future initiatives were likely to be directed towards strengthening ties with geographically important third world states even if they are capitalistically oriented, rather than backing self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist regimes." 106

This shift in cultivating ties with important third world countries and deemphasizing implicitly support for Marxist-ruled states received official mention in the 27th CPSU Congress.<sup>107</sup> By the same token from Gorbachev's policy towards Eastern European countries is pragmatic. Within the Soviet block he has given top

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105 Ibid., p. 10.

106 Francis Fukuyama, Pattern of Soviet Third World Policy. Problems of Communism, vol.36, no.5, Sept-Oct 1981. p. 1.

107 M.L. Sondhi and Shrikant Paranjpe, n.9, p. 8.

priority to re-establish a greater sense of cohesion and unity basing the whole policy on 'freedom of choice' 108 without forcing them to follow the Soviet model of Perestroika.

Some of Gorbachev's more interesting policy departure concerning regional issues in the Middle East has been the attempts to woo Arab States such as Jordan and the US. In September 1985 Moscow established diplomatic relation with staunchly pro-western Oman. Moscow also supports wholeheartedly the Palestine cause and there has been an important shift in Soviet attitude towards Israel. 109

#### The Asian Equation:

The Asian diplomatic initiative has been articulated by Gorbachev in two major speeches at Vladivostok (July 1986) and at Krasnoyarsk (Sep. 1988). Substantive attention has been devoted to Asian issues within weeks of taking over as the General Secretary and he began to explore new possibility in Asian diplomacy. 110 Later he sounded

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108 A.K. Damodaran, "Positive Response in International Affairs," World Focus, vol. 9, no. 106-8, Oct-Dec, 1988, p.21.

109 F. Stephen Larrabee and Allen Lynch. "Gorbachev: The road to Ralkjavik". Foreign Policy (65); Winter 86-87, p. 18. Also see Gorbachev no. 1933, pp 174-75. And Jonathan R. Andelman, "Potential New Directives in Gorbachev foreign policy" M.L. Sondhi, ed. , Beyond Perestroika, p. 87.

110 C. Rajamohan, " Gorbachev and Asian Society." V.D.Chopra, ed., Mikhail Gorbachev's New Thinking: Asia/Pacific (New Delhi, 1988), pp. 181-92.

out his ideas on Asian Security during the visit of Indian Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, to Moscow in May 1985.<sup>111</sup>

In July 1986 in his now celebrated speech at Vladivostok, he outlined in greater details his objectives in Asia. Emphasizing the importance of developing Soviet Far East aspect of Perestroika, he called for the reduction of political and military tension in Asia and evolving a larger cooperative framework for economic development in Asia Pacific.<sup>112</sup>

The greater tactical flexibility in Soviet policy towards this region is seen in four major areas. They are China, Japan, South Pacific Islands and North Korea.

Before going into the details of his initiative in these areas it would be interesting to analyse the three basic objectives.<sup>113</sup> that mark his Asian policy.

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111 C. Rajamohan. Rediscovery of Asia Pacific. World Focus, vol. 9, nos. 10-11-12, October-December 1988, p. 55.

112 C. Rajamohan, n. 110, p. 182.

113 C. Rajamohan, n. 112, p. 55.

First, the rapid economic development of the Soviet-Asian region as part of his domestic economic restructuring. The Soviet Union badly needs Japanese economic aid in Siberia and joint ventures in western Russia.<sup>114</sup>

The USSR also seeks the development of its resource-rich far East by attempting to link it with the spectacular economic boom in the Asia Pacific region.<sup>115</sup> Second, to seek a variety of arms reduction and confidence building measure to de-escalate the military confrontation in Asia. It needs to tame a growing Japanese military presence in the Pacific and the US presence in Pacific as well as Indian ocean. Third, determination to break out of the Soviet political isolation in Asia.

Soviet Union wants to bring about a parity in the living standard of the European part and the Asian part of the nation. Since they never had a concept of Asia Pacific Region (APR) policy, thus political initiative

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114 Jonathan R. Adelman, "Potential new direction in Gorbachev's foreign policy," M.L. Sondhi, (ed.), Beyond Perestroika, Challenges and Choices facing Gorbachev (New Delhi, 1988), p. 89.

115 C. Rajamohan, no. 111, p. 55.

remained hamstrung by their very weak economic standing.<sup>116</sup>  
Gorbachev wants to strike a balance between the two.

### China

Now, coming back to the areas of Gorbachev's interest, one can take up China first. Gorbachev knows that without active participation of China in the process, the grand design might not just take off.

His initiatives opened up new vistas of Sino-Soviet relation. As he pointed out at Krasnoyarsk : "points of contact between the USSR and China are multiplying as the powerful processes of renewal get on in the two great socialist states." <sup>117</sup>

The new Soviet initiatives has substantially addressed the 'three obstacles' - Afghanistan, Kampuchea and the Soviet troops reduction on the Chinese border - referred to by the Chinese.<sup>118</sup> Now that the hurdles are removed

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116 "Discussion: "The Vladivostok Initiatives: Two Years on" International Affairs no.8, Aug. 1988. pp.

117 Gorbachev on Soviet Foreign Policy. Excerpts of his Speech given at Krasnoyarsk on 17th Sept 1988. For details see Mainstream, vol. 25, no.50, Sept 24, 1988, pp. 30-33.

118 C. Rajamohan, no. 111, p. 56.

normalisation of Sino-Soviet relation can be expected. In the last three years a variety of cultural and economic agreements have been signed giving importance to people to people contact. In his Vladivostok speech, he offered concession on the long standing dispute over the Sino-Soviet border along the Amur River.<sup>119</sup>

At Krasnoyarsk "among the major points of interest in his address - which is more than a recitation of the Vladivostok speech of July 1986 are the willingness to do away with the Soviet Union's base at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam provided the USA dismantles the Subic Bay and other military facilities in the Philippines,<sup>120</sup> thereby removing a major complaint of China.

### Japan

Gorbachev has also shown a new interest in Japan. Political and economic exchanges between the two countries have intensified. For the first time the Soviets are now ready to listen to Japanese argument about the Southern Kuril Islands which were occupied by the Soviets at the

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119 Larrabee and Lynch. "Gorbachev: The Road to Reykjavik," Foreign Policy, (65) (Winter 1986-87), pp. 3-28.

120 The Hindu (Madras), 21 Sep, 1988.

end of W.W.II. <sup>121</sup>

The Soviet Union has recently been admitted as an observer to the hitherto pro-western grouping— Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference (PECC) and the Asian Development Bank. <sup>122</sup> Gorbachev, as evident from his Krasnoyarsk speech, " has been making special effort to woo Japanese and South Korean capital to join in the process of Perestroika." <sup>123</sup>

#### South Pacific

AS part of its new Asia Policy, Moscow has also begun to pay greater attention to South Pacific" <sup>124</sup> It has entered into trade relations with Thailand, Kiribati and Vanuatu" <sup>125</sup> as a process of normalisation of relations.

#### Korea

A greater flexibility of approach to the Korean

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121 Larrabee and Lynch, n. 119, pp. 3-28.

122 C. Rajamohan, n. 110, p. 188.

123 Ibid., pp. 187-91.

124 Larrabee and Lynch n. 119, p.21.

125 Rakesh Gupta. " Gorbachev's Initiatives in Asia Pacific: An Interpretation" in V.D. Chopra, ed., Mikhail Gorbachev's New Thinking: Asia Pacific. (New Delhi, 1988), p. 197.

Peninsula is noted in recent years. While continuing to support North Korea's proposals on peace in the Peninsula, Gorbachev has clearly made up his mind that South Korea as an emerging economic power can no longer be treated as a pariah in the international system. Moscow's decision to participate in the Seoul Olympic and Granting Air Line stopover facility are indicative of the new mood in Moscow.<sup>126</sup>

#### Peace and Security in Asia Pacific

The international meeting on "The Asian Pacific Region: Dialogue, Peace and Cooperation" held from 1 to 3 October, 1988 at Vladivostok has turned out to be a major event in the geopolity of Asia Pacific region.<sup>127</sup> This was a part of the process initiated in his Vladivostok speech which he further elaborated in an interview to Indonesian Daily 'Merdeka': "This meeting is an attempt to integrate the whole region into a new model of 'Asia Helsinki'.<sup>128</sup> A positive result is seen in the signing of "Roratonga Treaty" Protocol in December 1986 for the

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126 C. Rajamohan no. 111, p. 58.

127 V.D. Chopra. Vladivostok. Meet and Geopolity of Asia and the Pacific." V.D. Chopra, ed., Mikhail Gorbachev's New Thinking: Asia/Pacific. (New Delhi, 1988), p. 133.

128 Ibid., p. 141.

creation of nuclear free zone in South Pacific.<sup>129</sup>

In this regard, his Krasnoyarsk speech is very important which outlined seven proposals for all Asian security. One set of proposal relates to arm race and nuclear weapon.<sup>130</sup> In the speech Gorbachev declared a unilateral freeze on the Soviet nuclear deployment in the region, and called upon the other nuclear powers to exercise similar restraint.<sup>131</sup>

The situation on the Asia Pacific region is an integral component of the overall global strategic problems. If the major powers will come together de-emphasizing the military factor and breaking the Cold War mould, peace and security will be secured in the region in no time.

#### India:

India has always been given a special place in Soviet Union's foreign policy. Having two different social

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129 Zafar Imam, "Soviet policy in Asia Pacific", V.D. Chopra, ed., Mikhail Gorbachev's New thinking: Asia/Pacific. (New Delhi, 1988), p. 176.

130 Krasnoyarsk speech, published in Mainstream, vol. 25, no. 50, Sept. 29, 1988, p. 32.

131 C. Rajamohan, no. 111, p. 57.

systems, Gorbachev writes, "does not prevent the kind of cooperation between us that spiritually enriches both sides and leads to a broad concurrence of views on the fundamental question of the day."<sup>132</sup>

Europe:

In his book 'Perestroika : New Thinking for Our Country and the World, Gorbachev outlines the concept of 'common Europe Home' which suggests a degree of integrity and delineates the objective circumstances which create the need for a Pan-European policy.<sup>133</sup>

It combines "necessity with opportunity." <sup>134</sup>

The UN:

In attempting to create a new cooperative global framework, it is logical that Gorbachev should gravitate towards the UN. He has transformed the old Soviet hostility towards the UN to comprehensive support to the world body.

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132 Gorbachev, no.48, p. 185

133 Ibid., pp. 190-209.

134 Ibid., p. 195.

He describes the UN as a 'unique international centre in the service of peace and security.'<sup>135</sup> In the UN also he took every one by surprise when he announced unilateral troop cuts and also laid the ground work for reaching political initiative in many directions.

The above discussion provides us with enough evidence of Gorbachev's sincerity of purpose and deeds. He has set a trend for a systemic change based on normative structure favouring peaceful coexistence, mutual accommodation and trust.

In sum, Gorbachev provides a formula of peace that is applicable to the whole world which is now so famous as "New Thinking".

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135 Speech in the UN, Times of India (New Delhi) 8 Dec, 1988.

CHAPTER - V

C O N C L U S I O N

Will Gorbachev succeed in his cherished mission ? Will Perestroika spread all over or will that lead to anarchy ? Can a 'closed' society be transformed into an 'open' without convulsion ? Can a totalitarian society be converted into a participating democracy without major upheaval ? Will Gorbachev resort to the old method of regression to deal with dissents ?

There are many such questions and apprehensions that are openly asked and debated. And this is but natural. No great upheaval in human history has come about without a sharp debate - or intense jostling of minds, a clash of ideas and perspective.

Yegor Yakovlev, Editor-in-Chief of 'Moscow News' is very optimistic. He says : " A legislature can be abolished. A decision can be reversed by people in authority. But public opinion once awakened, cannot be gagged. What happened in 1937 nobdoy will tolerate today.<sup>136</sup> As we have seen in our discussion in the Chapters, Gorbachev's

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136 Nikhil Chakraborty, ' Journey to Perestroika', Mainstream, vol. 26, no.24, March 26, 1988. p. 48.

initiatives are not only important for his own country but also for the whole world as peace has really no alternative. As George F. Kennan puts it "what is needed here is only the will - the courage, the boldness, the affirmation of life - to break the evil spell that the severed atom has cast upon us all to declare our independence of the nightmares of nuclear danger, to turn our minds and hearts to better things." 137

Gorbachev has understood that unless the USA participates in the process of peace building it would be naive to expect to have a lasting peace on this planet. Hence the necessity of having a superpower normalisation of relation albeit this is just a part of a long drawn out process, yet this only can ensure peace. It will be a long drawn out process because ideological barriers cannot be broken so soon. The whole cold war superpower relation was based on this. But at this stage mankind cannot afford to be so possessive about their ideologies. The age of ideological crusades, with their high level of emotionalism and self righteousness, is over, at least for

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137 George F. Kennan, "The State of US - Soviet Relations: Breaking the Spell. Gwyn Prins, ed., The Choice: Nuclear Weapon Versus Security (London, 1981), p. 137

the great powers. "In the nuclear era it is necessary to break the connection between ideological predisposition and actual foreign policies. If there was ever a time in the history of mankind to have the most powerful states conduct a real politik, that time is now." 138

What is important in the present day superpower relation is mutual trust based on flow of political and intellectual discourse, and on people to people contact.

Building a world free from nuclear arms and the use of force requires a revolutionary change in human psychology and that can be done only when people are educated in the spirit of peace. Propaganda of war, hatred and violence should be banned and the stereotypes "the enemy" with regard to other countries and people should be rejected.

Infact, no problem in the world today is more important than the prevention of a nuclear catastrophe. But Gorbachev at this critical juncture provides for mankind a ray of hope.

Let us have a quick glance at a few of the initiative put forward recently by the Soviet Union under the leadership of Gorbachev. "Programme for the total and universal elimination of nuclear weapons, the proposal to sign an agreement on a comprehensive test ban. Synchronising idea and its implementation. Moscow has prolonged its unilateral moratorium five times; the concept of creating on all embracing system of international security; the programme for reducing armed forces and conventional weapons in Europe." <sup>138</sup> Mankind can afford to be optimistic now.

The future does not look grim as the mankind<sup>2</sup> has in its disposal considerable forces enabling it to avert catastrophe and pave the way to a civilization without nuclear weapons.

The growing strength of the peace coalitions, which unites the efforts of the non-aligned movement, the Group of Six, all peace loving countries, political parties and the advent of leaders like Gorbachev, provides grounds for hope and optimism. What is required is to act immediately and decisively. As E.P., Thompson, has remarked.

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139 Leonid Abalkin, ed., USSR : Reorganisation and Renewal. (Moscow, 1988), p. 303

"Humankind must at last grow up. We must recognise that the other is ourselves."<sup>140</sup>

Gorbachev's contribution in making people conscious is immense. But the path he is treading on is full of obstacles. The major obstacle at home is not the people who are against his initiatives but those who are indifferent to it. In fact one of the crucial problems is the passivity of people which in essence constitutes opposition. "In principle the people support his ideas. In practice they are doing very little to help realise them.....it is of critical importance for his success that a transition from mass passivity to activity should take place and take place pretty soon."<sup>141</sup>

The obstacles he is facing from outside is an old one i.e. 'distrust' including the western belief that the Soviets reserved the right to "lie and cheat" as Reagan put it eight years back, if it serves their interests.<sup>142</sup> Gorbachev reversed the policy by agreeing

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140 E.P. Thompson, Zero Option (London, 1982)p. 186

141 Dev Murarka, 'Gorbachev's uphill task.'  
Mainstream, vol. 26, no.24, March 26, 1988 p.38

142 Walter Isaacson, " The Gorbachev Challenge",  
Time (New York), vol. 132, no.25, 19 Dec, 1988  
pp. 10-15.

to on site inspection of military installation, attempted in his UN Speech to remove a major issue of compliance with the ABM Treaty : the Krasnoyarsk radar station and also announced that Moscow would make public its plans for converting a few military plants to civilian production. If it does so, that will be a complement to his arms contract proposals which are based on the newly defined doctrine of "reasonable sufficiency". 143

This would hopefully reduce the expansionist threat that Moscow poses to the West and should this happen, then indeed the fundamental reason for the great global struggle between East and West - and the rationale for the containment policy that has shaped American policy to the world for forty years would evaporate.

It is fact that the west has not yet been able to shape its policy to match the Soviet initiatives. Gorbachev's glasnost and perestroika has aroused skepticism in the west raising the spectre of another Russian world "peredyshka"<sup>144</sup> or the old Leninists' model of seeking a "breathing space" by making temporary accomodation only to strengthen its own position.

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143 Ibid., p. 12.

144 Ibid., p. 14.

It may be difficult to assert that perestroika and glasnost will definitely succeed. But if they do, for the people of Soviet Union they will mean the return of freedom and initiative of human rights and human dignity.

For the people of Eastern Europe they will mean freedom from hegemony.

To the third world it will mean a respite from Cold War.

For the USA, there will be more room for friendship and less energy will be diverted to contain Soviet expansionism, more investment in the East.

And for the whole mankind this will mean peace and freedom that would finally make this planet a better place to live in.

Will this happen ? One never knows. Much depends on the stamina and tenacity of the Russian leader to hold on to what he is saying consistently. Internal problems and compulsions which are euphemistically described as 'national interest' tend generally to compell a leader to

deviate from the line on which he is treading.

Gorbachev it seems is not free from this dilemma and pressure, as we see it from the Chinese experience. The recent Chinese students' uprising against their government demanding democracy, freedom of press and elimination of corruption from their society was brutally crushed by the authority by killing them in thousands in the Tiananmen Square. Surprisingly no official condemnation came from the Soviet Union. After a long period of silence an official spokesman expressed 'dismay'\* over Beijing's crackdown on pro-democracy demonstration, in the mildest possible way.

It may be recalled here that for the Chinese student Gorbachev was a symbol of democracy and that they suspended their agitation during his visit to China singing "Internationale". Gorbachev himself is inexplicably silent on this issue. One understands the predicament of the Russian leader and the necessity of Sino-Soviet rapprochement which has been established afresh after his recent visit to China. But this does not preclude one to condemn a happening that is not conducive to the development of

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\* Indian Express (New Delhi), 10 June, 1989.

democracy - a factor so vital to glasnost and perestroika. His action in this regard surprises the student of International Politics to a great extent for, everything cannot be explained in a straight - jacket thinking of "national interest".

Skepticism of course is probably warranted and certainly prudent but at the same time inability to grasp the reality and to catch up with it is dangerous. The sooner the west, particularly the USA understand this, the better.

Questioning the sincerity of Gorbachev's initiatives is no longer relevant, for the west is now convinced that action follow his words and he is not just a preacher but an activist. Far more relevant is the question whether he can succeed.

The best of the minds agree and disagree and there are quite a few clash of opinion regarding this. On a number of question the solution seems either impossible or remote. Yet, the very fact that the problems are being faced boldly by him and there is a ceaseless endeavour to search on the past-present-future linkage shows that realism is the main characteristic of this new era.

The main lines of our argument can now be summarised in the following seven points:

Gorbachev's role as a credible peacemaker

Although other Soviet leaders before him have placed arms control and disarmament on the top of their agendas, Gorbachev alone has avoided irritating lapses in his role as a credible peace-maker. Our critical examination of his political dialogues shows that he has successfully avoided entanglement in brinkmanship and has bypassed many contentious issues.

Soon after he was able to convince the world and the Soviet people that a reassessment of Soviet strategy was in order, Gorbachev distanced himself from the manipulateness of the "New Cold War" by taking stock of the opportunities to develop a common agenda to reduce the fear of war. In the late 1970s according to public opinion surveys, there was high expectation of the outbreak of war in the next decade. With Gorbachev's advent peaceful future oriented scenarios became more prominent following his declarations in favour of abolishing first-strike weapons. He also removed an important barrier to

understanding by his willingness to accept rigorous methods of verification which had been actively resisted before him. Another crucial difference between him and his predecessors was the focus he placed on the positive features of the United Nations in peacekeeping and mediation. U.N. actions had on many occasions evoked widespread protest by the Soviet leaders and the ambiguity of attitudes displayed by Molotov, Vysinsky or Gromyko at the world body had hardly strengthened the "peace image" of the Soviet Union. With Gorbachev it was not only the articulation of the concepts of world organisation that suggested that he had an idealistic perception of the U.N.; his approach as translated into peacekeeping actions in the Gulf and his positive orientation on international cooperation on issues dealing with environment, international trade, food and natural resources, demonstrated early in his stewardship that the Soviet Union shared a common core of thinking for a significant and permanent restructuring of international relations through the world body. Since then he has further shown by his behaviour that he regards it as anachronistic in the present day world to undermine credibility by reneging on agreement; he has acquired a reputation for political cooperation through stable

agreements. His credibility as a peacemaker is securely founded on his architectural design for peace to which he has committed Soviet policy. Even in situations where the Soviet Union retains its image as implacable adversary, Gorbachev's theoretical and political perspectives and his persistent endeavours have eradicated suspicions that he will jeopardise peace. Prior to the actual signing of the INF Treaty, there were varying assessments of Gorbachev's mental attitude on the question of verification of arms control agreements. His priorities as a decision-maker became visibly clear in both the military and political dimensions after the breakthrough in Geneva. It is easy to surmise that his line of thought would not easily coverage with the conventional thinking of the military bureaucracy of the Soviet Union, as is evident from the structure and deployment of the Warsaw Pact's forces. In order to get movement towards "new thinking" in military and political affairs, the practical approach which Gorbachev adopted was to remove the Cold War as a motivating force for Soviet security policies. He could not have done this without first enhancing "trust" in his peace-building role. We have shown that there is a wide range of evidence to suggest that his capacity for finding the

middle ground and downplaying confrontationalist tendencies is uniquely impressive. His broader proposals have found considerable acceptance because his peacemaking role is generally considered authentic.

The Normative structure and the Issue of Ideological reconciliation.

The de-ideologisation of international relations has ushered in dramatic changes which would have been difficult for most analysts of Soviet foreign policy to foresee. The goal of the "class struggle" in international relations made it inconceivable for Soviet foreign policy to operate beyond the prevalent structures of power. Through his concept of "de-ideologisation" Gorbachev found it possible to respond to challenges which had been evaded by Brezhnev and others before him. He could also exploit opportunities which were provided by the developing world situation. Of course at times his contentions appeared not to have a stable relationship to official Soviet policy. For example Joe Clark, the Canadian Minister for External Affairs complained that : " Mr. Gorbachev's words do not reflect the actions of his government." 145

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145 Joe Clark : Statement 87/72, 9 December 1987.  
Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa.1987.

Yet it is now difficult to deny that Gorbachev has become the agent of systemic change by arriving at essential solutions based on a normative structure favouring mutual accomodation.

Bridge-building and the Eradication of the Cold War Legacy

The Cold War legacy permeated all spheres of relations between East and West and reduced the potential for settling issues regional and local levels throughout the world. The renewed period of tension between the two Super powers from 1978 to 1986 which has been described as the "New Cold War" resulted not only in unprecedented level of armaments but was also marked by a failure to plan steer international change in directions which would create a stable world environment. Gorbachev's bridge-building efforts developed out of his perception of both the higher potentials of conflict and of the unilateral, bilateral and multilateral opportunities for using negotiating procedures to strengthen mutually reassuring and cooperative behaviour. Gorbachev's way of building bridges has gained in sophistication and has varied according to the dynamics of the American, European or Chinese situations. The eradication of the Cold War legacy is clearly visible in

Gorbachev's active efforts to shape a new European order - a unified European community for the 21st Century, the "new spirit" in the Warsaw Pact with the promise of independent solution of national problems and the hopes for unilateral action by Moscow to reduce its lead in conventional weapons and in short range nuclear systems.

Adjusting to new realities : Gorbachev's strategic concept and U.S - Soviet political settlements and power-sharing.

To many analysts in the realist tradition it sounds politically naive to suggest that the cold war syndrome has been finally eliminated. Thus it could be argued that when Gorbachev talks of adjusting to new realities he is not referring to any key elements in the peace structures which must develop in all the regional divisions of the world. Rivalry and conflicts could even intensify in the Gorbachevian Paradigm, such critics would argue and they can point to the intensification of conflict in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of Soviet forces. Even though in a limited context such arguments may be perfectly convincing, there is enough evidence to indicate that both the Soviets and the Americans are increasingly reluctant to launch counter-offensives against each other. Even where it comes to proxy warfare their interest in a stable international

environment compels them to urge their proxies to specific courses of adjustment and to suspend direct hostilities. The traditional U.S. concept of containment is not of much help to American policy makers in dealing with Gorbachev's political values. Gorbachev's strategic concept tends to lead the other political actors, including the U.S. to adopt a more positive view of "political solutions" and "power sharing" in regional structural developments.

#### Gorbachev and Soviet Security in the Future

Are Gorbachev's peace formulas realistic as far as the future of Soviet security is concerned? There are many who would call into question the future perspective unfolded by conceptualisations of Gorbachev both for international arrangements conducive to Soviet external security and for the maintenance of a viable political system in the USSR. By burying the constraints of the Brezhnev doctrine, and by his willingness to let democratic change in Poland and Hungary take its course, Gorbachev has created both opportunities and dilemmas, and the outcome of balancing diverse interests and groups must remain highly uncertain. Similarly it is almost an

impossible task to assess the prospects of stability of cooperative relations with the post-Tiananmen China. It is a matter of conjecture whether Gorbachev will be able to work with the Deng-Li Peng regime with the existing policy agenda. That the relationship is not yet stabilised was clear from the remarks of Gorbachev to the Paris intellectuals in July 1989: "We would like to see China moving in a new direction, peaceful and integrated into the world economy and international life." As pointed out earlier, confronted with the dynamics of the Chinese situation, Gorbachev deviated somewhat from his "new thinking" profile. To promote a conducive international environment, Gorbachev cannot afford to accentuate antagonism with any Chinese government. At the same time the keynote of Gorbachev's pragmatic diplomacy is the product of "perestroika and "glasnost" which are quite opposite to the logic of the use of force by the P.L.A. against the Chinese students movement for democracy and elimination of corruption. There is no denying that the comprehensive normalisation effort between China and Soviet Union since 1979 has been grounded on the assumption that Chinese domestic politics is relatively stabilised. There is no doubt that Gorbachev has been taken by considerable surprise.

by the Chinese developments like other national decision-makers.

Having achieved a large degree of congruity in the values of perestroika and glasnost and the non-hegemonial and democratic values which are represented by current international tendencies, Gorbachev can only push ahead to a less militarised security order. He is due to hold the Human Rights Conference in Moscow in 1991. The success of this Conference will be in consonance with the redefinition of choices which Gorbachev initiated when he said that Universal human values would have priority in our age. Having once accepted the logic of "security partnership", Gorbachev cannot opt out of it.

Gorbachev's understanding of the etiology of the Cold War : the problems and dilemmas of increasing heterogeneity of international relations

In a perceptive essay "The Historical Unreality of the Cold War" John Nef wrote:

"whatever validity there may be in the prevalent notion that, in the twentieth century, war has contributed more than peace to scientific as well as to technological progress, this was certainly not the case during the first three hundred years and more of rising industrialism, before the era of world wars. And those three hundred years were decisive in setting the world on the course of material progress followed since. The coldwar is unreal because it is founded on an inadequate

and essentially false view of the history that led mankind into this unique world". 146

Gorbachev has shown a willingness to accept the logic-of-peace and his interest in the etiology of the Cold War has led him to raise the right questions about the power-ideological struggle between the two Super Powers. The destructive beliefs which dominated in the Cold War (and the new Cold War) have imposed the penalties of imperialism on both the Soviet and the American peoples and are currently providing diminishing return to their governments. Will Gorbachev's understanding of the etiology of the Cold War help him, or his country or the world in the future ? The intensification of tensions and conflicts that will accompany the increasing heterogeneity of international relations requires a level of consensus and leadership which the world has not known in recent years. The Gorbachev strategy has many facets and components which can be credited with the current relaxed and peaceful scenario in Super power relations. We should, however, remember that the detente after the Cold war did not last

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146     Stuart Mudd, ed., Conflict Resolution and World Education, Indiana University Press, (Bloomington, 1967, ).

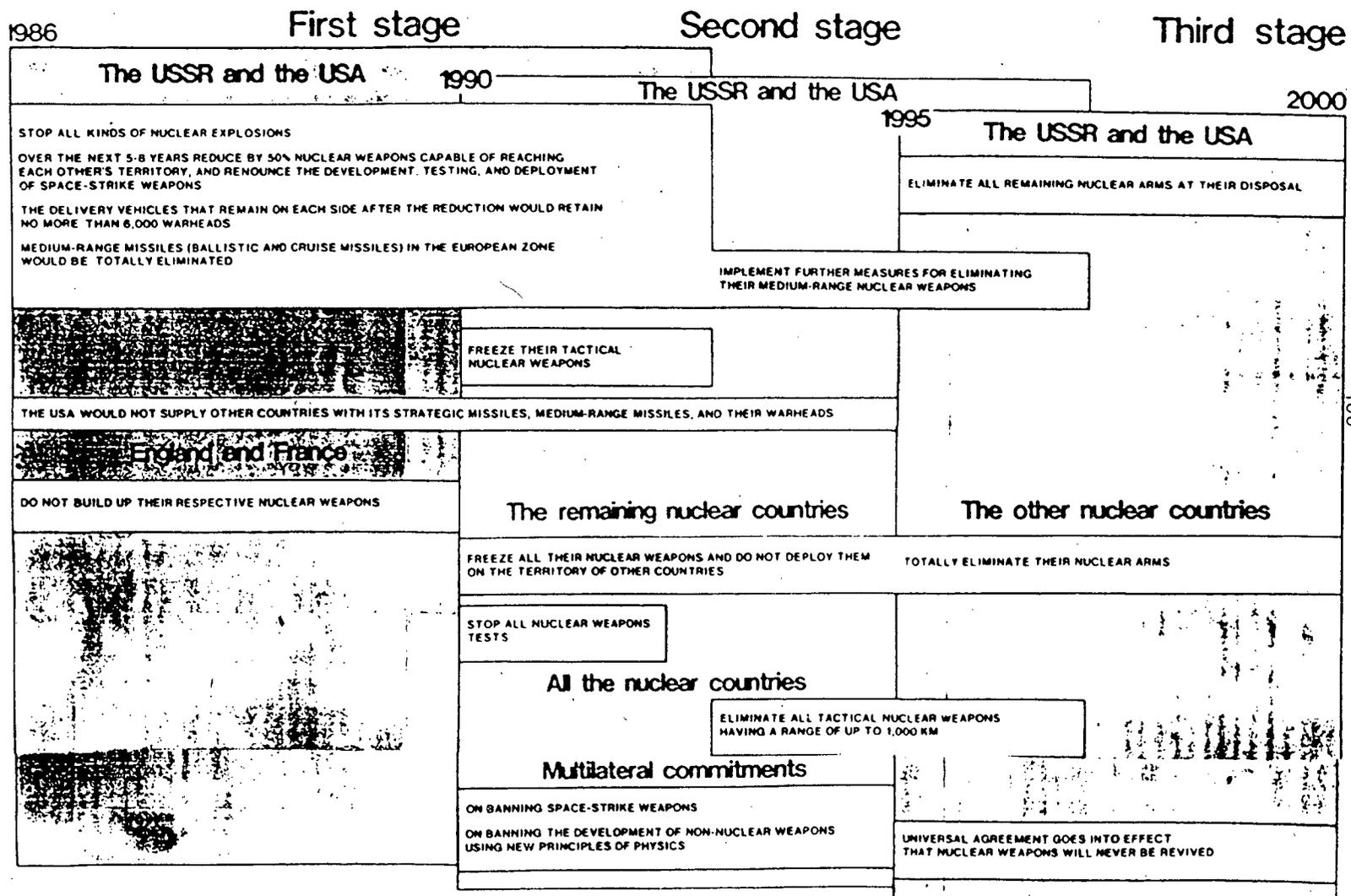
long and the "New Cold War" erupted with greater virulence. D.L. Fleming had raised the question : " Can we dismantle the thought control apparatus left over from the Cold War"? 147

He referred to the insanity of the McCarthy period and hoped that there would be a return to sanity. In the visible future as the world moves to the 21st Century there are compelling reasons for the wholehearted acceptance of multilateral and pluralistic tendencies through out the world. Although Gorbachev represents a striking deviation from the earlier Soviet rejection of multilateralism and pluralism, it is far from clear whether his relative successes so far can be consolidated to avoid abysmal tragedies which will follow if the fearful pressures of the Cold War resurface in new forms.

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147 D.L. Fleming: The Cold War and Its Origins 1917-60 (London, 1961) p. 1092.

# The Soviet proposal for a programme for a total worldwide elimination of nuclear weapons by the year 2000



SOURCE : NOVOSTI PRESS AGENCY, (MOSCOW)

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