



GORBACHEV'S RUSSIA ^{AND} AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

Edited by
Seweryn Bialer
and **Michael Mandelbaum**



AN EAST-WEST FORUM PUBLICATION

Gorbachev's Russia and American Foreign Policy

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and Michael Mandelbaum

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An East-West Forum Publication

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Preface

The East-West Forum is a New York-based research and policy analysis organization sponsored by the Samuel Bronfman Foundation. Its goal is to bring together experts and policy leaders from differing perspectives and generations to discuss changing patterns of East-West relations. It attempts to formulate long-term analyses and recommendations.

In preparing the chapters of this book, the authors drew upon the work of a series of workshops initiated by the Forum. Aside from the authors, workshop participants included Jeremy Azrael, Donna Bahry, Joseph Berliner, Archie Brown, Fritz Ermarth, Gregory Grossman, Mark von Hagen, Arthur Hartman, Peter Hauslohner, Grey Hodnett, Stanley Hoffmann, Robert Hormats, Alex Inkeles, Gail Lapidus, I. Mac Destler, Mary McAuley, Alex Motyl, Robert Osgood, William Schneider, Jutta Scherrer, Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Fritz Stern, William Taubman, and Ted Warner.

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David E. Morey
Executive Director,
East-West Forum

Introduction

Winds of change are sweeping the Soviet Union. The General Secretary of the Communist Party writes a book that gains international circulation and is serialized in American newspapers. It tells of his efforts to restructure the Soviet system, and Americans learn a new Russian word—*perestroika*. What does all this mean? What does it *really* mean?

Even before this dramatic development emerged to challenge and redefine U.S.-Soviet relations, a number of scholars and leaders and I established the East-West Forum in the belief that effective management of the total process of superpower relations can flow only from a sophisticated understanding of the Soviet society and the Kremlin's own policy considerations. The East-West Forum aims, without jeopardizing scholarship, to strengthen the bonds between studying Soviet-related policies and formulating them.

When I became President of the World Jewish Congress (WJC) in 1980, I was determined to give highest priority to the issue of human rights for Jews living in the Soviet Union. All four of my grandparents emigrated from Russia to Canada. No wonder then that the fate of more than two million Soviet Jews who weren't so lucky as to have had ancestors who sought a fresh start in the New World should be a natural concern to me. To be sure, the WJC's three goals for Soviet Jewry are not in themselves very complicated: the release of all prisoners of Zion, free emigration for those who want to leave and live in Israel, and cultural and religious freedom for those who want to remain Soviet citizens.

Still, it was clear that achieving these goals would require thorough charting of a great many other paths in the maze of the East-West relationship. One cannot study and develop strategies for managing that relationship in a Jewish-oriented vacuum. A deep appreciation of its dynamics is vital to any effort toward improving it and in turn bettering the condition of Jews in the Soviet Union.

In personal terms, the East-West Forum has enabled me to study with some of the best minds in the field. I shall continue to study

the myriad factors that go into any international relationship and the especially fascinating composition of the East-West relationship.

This book, which has grown out of the Forum's deliberations, is intended to examine in depth the question of the changing Soviet Union and U.S. foreign policy. The chapters that follow testify to the scholarship and expertise the East-West Forum is applying to the issues that are implicit in and emanate from the changing superpower relations. They begin with an examination of the meaning of change itself. They note that change in the Soviet Union isn't what it used to be and explore the reasons why. Ensuing chapters expand upon the basic premise that if our policy makers are to understand where we are and where we're going, they had best understand with total clarity how we got here.

The Soviet post-Stalin period is examined in its economic, political, and foreign policy dimensions, stressing the factors that provided the gestation environment for Gorbachev's reforms. There follows an analysis of the nature, sources, and plausible outcomes of Gorbachev's "revolution" and the strategies he is applying to it. A separate part of the book examines the changing goals of past U.S. policies toward the Soviet Union and their effectiveness in influencing Soviet behavior. The final part puts forth suggestions and prescriptions for a U.S. approach to the changes in Soviet economic, security, and foreign policies.

I have said often that the best way to begin a difficult negotiation is for both sides to agree upon that on which they are basically in agreement. This clears the air for discussion of those matters on which, on the surface at least, they don't agree. We have seen that happen. The United States and the USSR are beginning to agree that since there can be no winner in the arms race, the resources of both sides can be put to much better use. Furthermore, both sides see the inherent dangers of escalation. At the December 1987 Summit they agreed on the elimination of short- and intermediate-range missiles. They must next agree on consecutive radical cuts in strategic weapons. Such cuts have to be accompanied by agreements on balanced restructuring and redeployment of the conventional forces in Europe. And while they're at it, it is imperative that both sides recognize that regional instability is dangerous and that, conversely, stability is a crucial goal.

As this is written, there are tortuous discussions going on over the desirability of an international conference on the Middle East. Also some eastern European countries have begun the early stages of renewing relations with Israel, which were broken off in the aftermath of the Six-Day War of 1967. Moscow is anxious to find a solution to

its Afghanistan problem, as is Washington with respect to political stability in Central America.

It will of course take time, but there are signs that both sides will learn how to manage the process for non-confrontational, and perhaps in some respects even cooperative, existence. General Secretary Gorbachev is determined that the Soviet Union be a first-class economic power as well as a military superpower. Of all the insults hurled by President Reagan during his incumbency, the one that hurt most was his labeling the USSR "a third world country with a first-class army." When asked whether preventing a widening of the technological gap with the West by the year 2000 would be considered a success of the "*perestroika*," a highly placed Russian answered, "Anything more would be a miracle." Thus in order to modernize Russia, Mr. Gorbachev is trying to change profoundly an entire society.

Reading his programmatic speech on economic reform to the Central Committee of the Communist Party on June 24, 1987, one is struck by two things: the sweeping changes he is already advocating in the face of determined resistance from the *apparatus* and the lack of specifics as to how the nation will accomplish what the General Secretary insists is necessary.

Clearly, he will need Western help in his quest for an economic renaissance and technological advance. On several occasions I have listened to Soviet officials brag that every time we refuse to transfer some form of technology we are doing them a favor because we force them to develop it themselves (and, they claimed, better). One doesn't hear that any more.

The leadership is aware that the heart of the new revolution is communication. The USSR is slowly, perhaps reluctantly, entering the computer age. This means, among many other things, that information will be more freely available. This must come as a shock to the old-line conservatives who are much more comfortable in a closed, thoroughly controlled society. But it is inevitable if the Soviet Union is not to fall even farther behind in the technology race.

Thus trade with the West, particularly the United States, becomes a matter that affects, and will become even more important in, U.S.-USSR relations. While the Soviets publicly deny that trade can be linked with human rights, privately they acknowledge that the two are related because the United States insists on it. Both the Jackson-Vanik amendment, denying Most Favored Nation status unless a satisfactory number of Jews are allowed to emigrate, and the Stevenson amendment, more damaging yet by denying credits under the same conditions, are cumbersome clouds hanging over the trade issue.

The human rights issue is a legitimate U.S. concern. While successive administrations have not been totally consistent in their attitudes worldwide, the American people have a deep, almost evangelical, feeling about this issue. Human rights go beyond the number of Jews allowed to leave, but somehow this aspect of the issue has become the litmus test of Soviet behavior. U.S.-USSR trade is insignificant, especially if you remove grain sales from the calculation. There is almost nothing the Soviets can manufacture currently that could find a market here. For any quantum leap in this field, the Soviets will have to entice U.S. business to form joint ventures with Soviet producers. So far this has been very difficult. I serve on the board of directors and on the executive committee of the U.S.-USSR Trade and Economic Council, which was set up in the *detente* period by Donald Kendall, the Chairman of Pepsico (and a good friend to former President Richard Nixon), and his colleagues in the business world anxious to open the Soviet market to U.S. goods. I have watched with curiosity as both sides seem to be talking to themselves.

It becomes obvious that as great technological advances shrink the world, they increase its complexity. It is no accident that the stock markets in differing time zones are computer linked, not to mention computer driven. The world economy is also mutually linked. Thus, sound and comprehensive management of the process of East-West relations becomes more critical. It is not too difficult to forecast a world increasingly troubled and in need of a system of global management that can be secured only in a condition of cooperation between the superpowers.

The Soviet Union is an exciting country to watch. What is happening there will influence the fate of its own 280 million multinational citizens. It will, moreover, shape international relations well into the twenty-first century—whether Mr. Gorbachev succeeds or fails. His determination to modernize Russia is not in question. Yet the bureaucratic resistance to his efforts and the historically indifferent attitudes of the working strata make the implementation of his reforms terribly difficult. Will democratization, *perestroika*, and *glasnost* survive? Can and should America help the new Soviet leader in his program of change?

These and other questions are addressed in the pages that follow. I hope the reader will profit from them.

Edgar M. Bronfman
President,
East-West Forum

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PART ONE

Patterns of Change

