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The Crisis in the Baltics and the Kremlin's Drift Toward Autocracy

By Bruce D. Slawter

Mikhail Gorbachev is endeavoring to hold on to his newly acquired presidential powers as the pendulum of domestic politics swings back in favor of the traditional sources of Soviet authority. Struggling to overcome the centrifugal forces threatening to rip the USSR apart, such as the crisis in the Baltics, the Soviet President is now emphasizing the maintenance of stability over continued reform, and has begun to rely increasingly on the CPSU, the security services, and the military High Command for policy inputs.

Unfortunately, key "new thinkers" in the Soviet foreign policy establishment – such as Eduard Shevardnadze – have passed from the scene as a result of this domestic maelstrom. U.S. policymakers, therefore, should consider the near-term possibility of having to do business with a regime in the USSR holding a set of international objectives differing considerably from those pursued over the past six years.

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Converging Factors

From 1985–1990, in moves calculated to expand and preserve his own political base, Gorbachev attempted to shift power from the *apparatchiks* in the CPSU to the Presidency and Supreme Soviet. During this period, Gorbachev began distancing himself from failed Soviet principles of the past, such as single-party politics and centralized planning. The stated goal of his economic and political reform programs was not to abandon socialism, but rather, to improve it. In implementing *glasnost* and *perestroika,* however, he managed to disrupt the *nomenklatura* network which kept the leadership of the separatist-minded republics in check and the command economy functioning.

During this period, Gorbachev seemed incapable of making the tough decisions required to avert a collapse of the economy. After much internal debate, in the fall of 1990, he rejected economist Shatalin's bold 500-day timetable for de-nationalizing industry and, instead, adopted a series of ineffective half-measures. By year's end, the ruble was in free-fall as the government continued to print excess paper money to subsidize inefficient enterprises. The USSR Supreme Soviet's solution to the nation's economic woes was to grant Gorbachev the authority to institute economic reforms by decree.

Unfortunately for the average Soviet citizen, the first major step Gorbachev took in countering the inflationary side of the problem was to attack "ruble overhang" by removing in rather draconian fashion all 50- and 100-ruble notes from circulation. The goal of the measure was to curb the evils of black marketing. Appar-

ently, the decree served mainly to hurt elderly pensioners and other citizens on small, fixed incomes by threatening to wipe out their life's savings which they kept in the ruble denominations that were recalled. Compounding the growing economic crisis was the much-publicized food and fuel shortage. As 1990 came to a close, the nation's broken-down distribution systems forced a number of cities, Leningrad and Moscow included, to implement some form of food rationing.

In late 1990, Gorbachev's domestic problems were exacerbated by the increasing demands of a resurgent defense establishment. Previously, from 1985 through the summer of 1990, Gorbachev seemed to keep the High Command fairly well off-balanced. Gorbachev waged this one-way power struggle with the military to accomplish the following objectives: seize control of the defense agenda; reduce the strain of military priorities on the economy; and deprive the West of an enemy, thereby encouraging trade, economic aid and technology transfer.

He attempted to accomplish these goals by first, carefully purging the High Command; second, declaring the new military doctrine, "Reasonable Sufficiency," as defensive in nature, and then challenging the High Command to "flesh-out" the military-technical implications; and lastly, pursuing arms control policies developed under the lead of Shevardnadze and his increasingly influential defense policy experts in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, by 1990, with the Soviets facing force reductions that would include officer cuts exceeding 100,000 billets, the prestige of serving in the military had sunk to an all-time low. Between 190,000 and 280,000 officers and their families were living in communal apartments. Therefore, the critical lack of adequate housing became the chief bread and butter issue for company grade and field grade officers.

By 1990, Gorbachev's national security initiatives began to have a dramatic impact on the general officer corps as well, as the the new mandatory age limit of 55 began forcing a number of the senior military into retirement. Total flag officer billets – which under Gorbachev rose to nearly 4,000 – were reduced to approximately 1,900. Additionally, the Soviet military continued to be faced with the following epidemic of personnel problems associated with the draft: desertions; deaths due to hazing and inter-ethnic strife; and draft-dodging, which, in several of the non-Slavic republics, reached a rate of three out of every four eligible conscripts. As a result of these trends, the Soviet military, traditionally loyal to the CPSU – but faced with a combination of waning influence and internal difficulties – had emerged, by the close of 1990, as the "wild card" in the various transition scenarios now coming into view.

By the fall of 1990, Gorbachev's political agenda had shifted from advancing *glasnost* and *perestroika* to ensuring his own political survival, preserving the union, creating a new federal system of republics, and maintaining a strong central government that would retain sovereignty over all-Union affairs. To achieve these objectives (and to reclaim the domestic political agenda), Gorbachev, in November 1990, proposed the adoption of a revised constitution featuring a new Treaty of the Union (TOU). The constitutional debate – which is manifested in the current Baltic crisis – is centered on whether or not to adopt Gorbachev's proposal.

Emerging Scenarios

Political forecasting is always a perilous journey. There are, however, some patterns which lend themselves to the creation of a theoretical model to serve as a road map. The paradigm about to be presented here, which considers over a dozen transition scenarios, is centered on the constitutional debate initiated by Gorbachev in November 1990 when he tabled his draft for the new TOU. Before picking up the analysis of the overall power struggle, it is important to pause briefly and consider several of the more probable scenarios.

Gorbachev's basic TOU proposal provides for each of the republics to join a federated union, with the central government retaining sovereignty over defense, foreign policy, macro-economic policy, key natural resources, inter-republic transportation, and communications. Designed to hold the former Soviet empire together, Gorbachev's plan includes a proposal to create a presidential cabinet system of government – not unlike that in the United States – and to make that cabinet notionally responsive to a Federation Council consisting of the heads of each of the 15 Union republics. Although the republics are several months away from ratifying a TOU in any form, the docu-

ment has been approved by the USSR Supreme Soviet; based upon this interim authority, the Federation Council is now functioning – under Soviet law – as the chief advisory organ to the Soviet presidency.

If a TOU is adopted in one form or another, then the "Russian Revolution" of 1991 will be characterized as a relatively peaceful transformation of the former Soviet multi-ethnic empire into a federation or confederation with a Slavic core (defined here as Russia, Byelorussia, the eastern Ukraine, and northern Kazakhstan). The final boundaries of the core would have to be determined by plebiscite. Any final settlement between the Slavic core and a seceding Lithuania would probably provide for the core's continued access to the Kaliningrad Oblast via a corridor. If Karelia were to separate and/or unite with Finland, the core would probably insist upon retaining a portion of land for access to the Kola Peninsula.

Gorbachev's TOU meets his objectives of preserving the union and retaining power at the center. Equally important, the basic TOU is supportable by the senior military leadership. The proposal, however, continues to be opposed by the leadership of several of the republics, notably by Boris Yeltsin, the Chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) Supreme Soviet. Yeltsin objects to Gorbachev's plan, including the notion of granting a Federation Council certain vaguely defined powers over all-Union affairs, because he does not believe it offers the republics any more autonomy than they have under the current system. Rather, Yeltsin and his colleagues from a number of the other republics, in November of 1990, seemed to be pushing for what appeared to be a confederation of sovereign states bound together by a common cultural heritage (i.e., a Slavic core) and a union of economic interests.

The arrangement under this confederation scenario might also include some formal relationship, for mutual defense or trade, between the Slavic core and several of the periphery states – such as the Baltics – as either independents or special status members of the confederation's commonwealth. If taken to an extreme, the TOU modified under this scenario might also feature a collective or rotational presidency along the Yugoslavian model.

The notion of confederation, however, ignores a number of troubling issues, such as national defense, energy, transportation, and the reality of economic interdependence. No doubt, the Soviets would increase their chances of resolving the current constitutional crisis – without the military intervening – by adopting a modified TOU which preserves a strong central government; i.e., a federation. Under this modified federation scenario, a strong center would be formed around a Slavic core and, as in the confederation scenario, permit republics such as Georgia, Armenia, and the Baltic states to choose either independence or special commonwealth status.

"Reversibility" Scenarios

In analyzing the "Russian Revolution" of 1991, the following central issue emerges: How can Gorbachev and the leadership of the Slavic core come to an agreement on a new TOU without provoking the military or a military-backed civilian oligarchy? For if Gorbachev and the leadership of the union republics cannot produce a TOU that is acceptable to the conservative forces in the USSR, then the situation stands to become extremely volatile, and there will be an increased probability that the military might intervene in a coup or civil war.

Dictatorship

Given this central question, clearly the most intriguing transition scenario to emerge at the close of 1990 envisioned Gorbachev gradually taking on greater and greater presidential powers. This scenario holds that under certain circumstances (i.e., conflict between the republics and the center, food riots, inter-ethnic warfare, nuclear accident, or natural disaster), Gorbachev's rather benign presidency might evolve into an authoritarian dictatorship. Later on, this analysis will argue that this Gorbachev autocracy scenario is no longer purely hypothetical.

Under the conditions set forth above, Gorbachev might be compelled by conservative forces to take on increasingly absolute powers, such as the authority to declare martial law and/or to implement direct presidential rule in the republics. Gorbachev's movement toward autocracy would be sanctioned by the USSR Supreme Soviet – through either formal legislation or acquiescence. The scenario also holds that Gor-

bachev, once successful in restoring economic and political order as a "benign dictator," might eventually take up the cause of *perestroika* once again. The USSR might still be transformed into a federation with a Slavic core – but the entire process would take considerably longer than in the TOU-adopted scenarios. However, the scenario also holds that Gorbachev's failure to use his dictatorial powers decisively would increase the likelihood of his impeachment by the Supreme Soviet or his forcible removal.

A Civilian Oligarchy

The next scenario envisions a civilian oligarchy – backed by the High Command – taking over in the wake of Gorbachev's failure to prevent a collapse of the economy and the disintegration of the center's control over the republics. Representing orthodox CPSU interests, this ruling oligarchy would probably take an even more conservative view toward economic reform in the USSR than Gorbachev would, if granted complete dictatorial powers by the Supreme Soviet. One should note that the difference between a coup and Gorbachev's removal by means of some vague Soviet constitutional procedure may be hard to discern from the Western viewpoint. Still, in terms of internal politics, there would be a moderate chance that this oligarchy scenario might result in regionally or politically based civil war or a subsequent coup by the High Command. Much of this, of course, would depend upon the methods used to seize power or the reaction by the military or the republics to the policies of the new regime. It is also important to note that, as has often been the case in Russia's historical past, any oligarchy emerging in the USSR could evolve fairly rapidly into a one-man dictatorship.

Military Coup d'Etat

The last of the principal scenarios considered here envisions a senior member of the Soviet military, or group of officers, in "man on a horse" fashion, assuming absolute authority over the Soviet state. As this analysis has already shown, the rapid pace of change in the USSR produced an apparent state of paralysis in the officer corps from 1985 through the summer of 1990. Clearly, at the present, the High Command prefers to play the role of arbiter and executor. Still, the Soviet military has a high degree of "social consciousness" and "knows its duty." Given sufficient political support or popular outcry, the High Command might be persuaded or otherwise compelled to take some sort of action in order to restore order.

The threshold point for the military taking decisive action, however, is quite high and would have to include situations such as the acquiescence of Gorbachev in face of the republics forming and arming their own armies, a complete break-down of the transportation system, or nuclear weapons falling under the control of break-away republics or terrorist organizations. An outright military coup would most likely have to be engineered by members of the General Staff. It is possible – although less likely – that a coup could be pulled off by formations cooperating below the General Staff level.

The Soviet military, however, has little experience in running the consumer side of the economy and might even make a greater mess of the internal situation if it were to take over. Therefore – as is the case with the civilian oligarchy scenario – a military autocracy installed by force could lead to regionally or politically based civil warfare or to a subsequent coup. If it survives, though, the military dictatorship could conceivably evolve along the lines of the South American Peronista model. After stabilizing the internal situation, this relatively benign dictatorship, over an unspecified period of time, might implement those market-oriented reforms that the Soviet economy now requires. This scenario holds also that the military autocracy coming to power in the USSR might eventually turn the reins of power over to a civilian-controlled federal government.

Soviet Reality: The Drift Toward Autocracy

Frustrated over the republics' intransigence over TOU ratification and motivated by demands from conservatives, Gorbachev appears to have moved toward the Supreme Soviet-sanctioned autocracy scenario in the above model. Clearly, the beleaguered Soviet President is now relying almost exclusively on the CPSU, the KGB, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD), and the military High Command for policy guidance. Responding to the

conservative agenda, he is attempting to hold the USSR together by emphasizing the maintenance of stability over continued reform.

The domestic political pendulum began its swing back in favor of the traditional sources of power sometime in the summer of 1990 and was completed by the time of Shevardnadze's resignation speech before the Congress of People's Deputies in December. This shift can be attributed to several factors: the continued deterioration of living standards – with no end in sight; the increased factionalism among pro-reform political entities, and their seeming inability to coalesce into a "loyal opposition"; and the "unholy alliance" evidently struck during late 1990 between CPSU conservatives, the security services, the military High Command, and, apparently, Gorbachev himself.

Previously, Gorbachev's poor performance before a group of military legislators in November had demonstrated the degree to which he was out of touch with both the deteriorating domestic situation and the concerns of the defense establishment. The High Command also feared that there might be an attempt to retable the 500-day plan, which included the massive conversion and de-statization of defense industry holdings. Subsequently, conservative deputies in the Supreme Soviet, such as Soyuz demagogue Colonel Viktor Alksnis, began stepping up the anti-reform rhetoric. Soyuz and other conservative groups increased their calls for Shevardnadze's resignation and began demanding that Gorbachev stabilize the domestic situation. After weeks of relentless public attacks and back-room lobbying, the conservative coalition finally won out.

Conservative Appointments

Gorbachev's drift to the right was initially signaled by the appointment of Viktor Pugo, the former head of the KGB in Latvia, to the post of Minister of Internal Affairs. At the same time, General-Colonel Boris Gromov, the Kievan Military District Commander and Afghanistan war hero, was named his deputy. In retrospect, Pugo and Gromov were ideal choices for coordinating the joint efforts of the MVD, the KGB and the armed forces, as plans were made for the crackdown in the Baltics.

Shortly after the appointments of Pugo and Gromov, the conservative alliance significantly advanced its cause in foreign policy formulation when Shevardnadze announced his resignation from the post of Foreign Minister before the December session of the Congress of People's Deputies. Shevardnadze was evidently present at the Kremlin meeting during which the plan and timing for the Baltic crackdown were approved. Speculation is that he argued against the use of force in the Baltic republics – but lost.

Shevardnadze announced that his resignation was intended to alert the Congress of "the real threat of dictatorship." He later stated in an interview that his concern was that the Soviet government's drift toward authoritarianism might lead to bloodshed (such as that which occurred last year in his native republic of Georgia and was about to take place the following month in the Baltics). Consequently, the USSR's standing in international affairs would suffer greatly; according to Shevardnadze, this would make it very difficult for the USSR to continue with its present foreign policy.

A strong proponent of Gorbachev's "New Thinking" in international affairs, Shevardnadze was also the chief architect of the Soviets' pro-arms control policy over the past six years. Unfortunately, his departure from the post of Foreign Minister tends to open up the path for the senior military leadership's return to its former pre-eminent position in national security policymaking.

To emphasize the Kremlin's interest in maintaining good relations with the United States, however, Gorbachev named Alexander Bessmertnykh, the Soviet Ambassador to the U.S., as Shevardnadze's replacement. A career foreign service professional, Bessmertnykh shares Shevardnadze's enlightened vision for the conduct of Soviet foreign policy. Unfortunately, Bessmertnykh is not, as his predecessor was, a member of Gorbachev's inner circle of former CPSU apparatchiks. He will therefore probably have less influence over foreign policy formulation.

The CPSU-KGB-MVD-High Command coalition topped off its end-of-year political victory by securing the appointments of two rather lackluster CPSU conservatives, Gennadiy Yanayev and Valentin Pavlov, to the government positions of Vice-President and Prime Minister, respectively. It's interesting to note that the Congress of People's Deputies initially voted down Gorbachev's nomination of Yanayev for the newly created post of Vice-President. The

next day, however, after "reading Gorbachev's lips," Yanayev was voted in.

Crackdown in the Baltics

Clearly, Gorbachev does not want to preside over the dissolution of the USSR. Evidently, he already has the power to impose presidential rule in the republics, and is threatening to use that authority to settle the crisis in the Baltics. Nevertheless, to elicit the Baltics' compliance with the Kremlin's current will, he continues publicly to support the notion of secession, in principle – provided the republics adhere to the legal processes outlined by the central government. Specifically, Gorbachev's constitutional "Catch-22" is that before a republic can initiate the process of secession, it must, first, recognize the new TOU as authoritative and, second, repeal local laws that challenge legislation passed by the USSR Supreme Soviet.

The Baltics, however, are understandably reluctant to participate in the process of TOU ratification because they fear that doing so would tend to legitimize their entry into the USSR by force in 1940. In their view, the illegality of Stalin's annexation of the Baltic states remains their best political argument for independence.

Apparently, in December 1990, the new conservative coalition completed its initial planning for neutralizing the Baltic governments. In an attempt to minimize foreign policy "damage control," the timing of the crackdown was chosen to coincide with the U.N.'s January 15 deadline for Iraqi forces to withdraw from Kuwait.

Citing Defense Minister Dmitriy Yazov's November 27, 1990, decree authorizing the use of force to ensure compliance with all-Union draft laws, on January 7, 1991, the Soviet Ministry of Defense announced that military units were being sent to the Baltic republics, Georgia, Armenia, Moldova, and parts of the Ukraine. On January 11, after demands were made by all sides, including an ultimatum by Gorbachev to the Lithuanian authorities demanding they ". . . immediately restore the validity of the Soviet Constitution or face the consequences," Soviet troops stormed the Lithuanian Defense Ministry headquarters.

On January 12, Gorbachev's new Federation Council declared that the confrontation ". . . must be settled by political methods," as it dispatched two of its members to Lithuania to investigate. Gorbachev, in turn, claimed that he had ordered a halt to the use of force.

Shortly after midnight, however, Soviet forces stormed Lithuania's main TV tower and broadcast center, killing 13 and wounding over 140. One Soviet soldier was also killed. Following this, an obscure group of pro-Moscow Lithuanian communists, calling themselves the National Salvation Committee – backed by Soviet forces – proclaimed that they had taken control of the republic.

The next day, Gorbachev announced that he had had no foreknowledge of the Sunday morning assault. Surprisingly, he expressed no apology for the actions of Soviet troops, but blamed the Lithuanian leadership for the bloodshed. Moreover, Gorbachev cited a number of appeals by pro-Moscow groups inside Lithuania to take some sort of action to protect non-Lithuanians.

On January 14, Soviet security forces began turning their attention toward Latvia by seizing a police academy. The next day, a Soviet MVD "Black Beret" Special Mission Police Squad killed a Latvian truck driver. On January 20, Black Berets stormed the Latvian MVD headquarters in Riga, killing at least four persons and wounding nearly a dozen. The next evening, in an unusual press briefing at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Gorbachev restated his position that the leadership of the republics were ultimately responsible for the recent deaths during the clashes in the Baltics and reiterated his demand that secessionist parliaments abrogate all legislation contradictory to the laws of the USSR. He did, however, also condemn attempts by groups to seize power from democratically elected parliaments.

Prelude to Further Repression?

As January 1991 came to a close, Estonians began fortifying government buildings as they braced themselves for what they felt certain was their turn to be attacked by Soviet security forces. Moreover, Russian politicians from Boris Yeltsin to Leningrad Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak were scurrying around trying to ensure that National Salvation Committees backed by the armed forces were not contemplating moves against their political domiciles.

Unfortunately, on December 29, MVD chief Pugo and Defense Minister Yazov had co-signed joint Order No. 493/513, which authorized the army and MVD security forces the right to jointly patrol Soviet cities effective February 1, 1991. The order was released to the public along with a similar decree issued by Gorbachev on January 26 granting the MVD and the KGB the right to conduct searches of Soviet and foreign businesses without warrants in their efforts to counter "economic crime." In addition, Gorbachev has repeatedly called for more limits on open press reporting and has re-imposed total censorship over television news by effecting personnel changes.

On March 17, Gorbachev held what is turning out to be an inconclusive all-Union referendum on whether or not to preserve the USSR in its present federal form. The question on the ballot was worded ambiguously. Nevertheless, Gorbachev claimed victory and will continue to press the republics for Union Treaty ratification as a result. Unfortunately for him, six of the republics (Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, and the Baltics) refused to hold the referendum. Lithuania, in an affront to Gorbachev, held its own republic-wide "poll" on February 9. The results of the vote, which Gorbachev "invalidated" several days before it took place, showed that approximately 90 percent of the Lithuanian electorate support independence from Moscow. On March 3, Estonians and Latvians also voted to separate. The most important result of the all-Union referendum, however, may have been the passage of a measure on the Russian republic's ballot which called for the direct public election of candidates to the republic's new office of president. The adoption of the measure paves the way for Boris Yeltsin to become the first popularly elected chief executive of the USSR's largest republic. The date now set for the election is June 12.

As the campaign to discredit the parliaments of the Baltic states continues, Gorbachev and his conservative supporters must decide how to deal with the republics in the Caucasus, starting with Georgia. Whereas the repression of the Baltics has, to date, resulted in relatively little bloodshed, any attempt to subjugate the Georgian parliament would most likely be countered by armed rebellion.

As this point in time, the Kremlin's crackdown in the Baltics has slowed as a result of initial threats by a number of European states to cut off billions of dollars in aid and calls to invoke the Human Dimension Mechanism under the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) to review Soviet actions. In addition, President Bush postponed the February summit in Moscow – officially because of the Gulf War and delays in finalizing the START Treaty – and announced that the United States would be sending medical aid directly to the Baltic states. In response, Soviet Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh gave President Bush assurances that Moscow would withdraw forces from the Baltics and enter into negotiations to reduce tensions. For the moment, Gorbachev and his conservative backers are, no doubt, weighing the high price they may have to pay in terms of foreign policy of a continued move toward autocracy – versus the costs of allowing the Soviet empire to dissolve.

Gorbachev's Domestic Dilemma

Clearly, the Soviet leadership needs to take decisive action to complete a Union Treaty that the republics can live by – if it desires to avert a reversal of the foreign policy gains of the past six years and, at the same time, preserve a USSR with a strong Slavic core. In the case of separatist republics, such as the Baltics, the solution lies in the Kremlin's abandonment of its current policy of Union Treaty ratification by intimidation. Instead, negotiations should be pursued which would lead to bilateral agreements providing for a transition to independence. In return, the Baltic states should agree to permit the Soviets continued access to republic highways, airspace and ports in order to defend the Slavic core against legitimate external security threats. Such access agreements, however, should be for finite periods of time and must provide for the phased dismantling of Soviet Baltic Military District garrisons.

Unfortunately, the reform movement in the USSR seems to have run its course for now. The chief sources of Gorbachev's power have shifted from the moderates and liberals, who never coalesced into a loyal opposition, to a new conservative coalition – whose agenda Gorbachev must now espouse if he desires to stay in office. This new alliance evidently views the continued subjugation of the Baltic states to be a vital interest of the USSR and, therefore, may refuse

to accept the notion of Baltic autonomy in any form. Recent demands by Soyuz deputies for direct presidential rule in the republics have done little to encourage the peaceful resolution of the problem.

International Implications

Despite its preoccupation with the aftermath of the Gulf War, the United States should not lose its focus on internal developments in the USSR and their implications for Soviet foreign policy – which may have a more fundamental effect on the international system than the anti-Iraq coalition's recent victory over Saddam Hussein. Marxism-Leninism itself may no longer be a threat to the West. An inward-looking Soviet regime, however, which takes on a "siege mentality" as it drifts backward toward autocracy, can be detrimental to the West's long-term interests.

Continued Soviet non-cooperation in clearing up discrepancies in their data declarations for the yet-to-be-ratified Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe and backsliding on START provisions previously agreed to by Shevardnadze may be early signs of the Kremlin's retreat from Gorbachev's "New Thinking." Another indication of the Soviets' reversion to a traditional authoritarian view of world affairs may be their criticism of the allied bombing campaign against Saddam Hussein. Repeated Soviet statements that the bombing exceeded the intent of the U.N. resolution authorizing the use of force to expel Iraq from Kuwait – and eleventh-hour peace efforts prior to the ground offensive – were clearly designed to improve the Soviets' standing in the Arab world at the expense of the United States.

In the final analysis, the West has a continued interest in fostering the long-term integration of the USSR into the international politico-economy. Any international partnership, however, such as that which began to take shape between the USSR and the West from 1985–1990, should be based upon common values intrinsic to national political-cultures. The Soviets, therefore, should not be surprised if the United States and its Western allies react to events in the USSR by taking such measures as canceling economic aid packages, slowing the ratification of arms control accords, or re-imposing barriers to technology transfer and/or trade.

As has been the case during much of the past 45 years, the United States and its allies can do very little besides taking realistic steps to ensure the security of their own domestic values and international interests. Ultimately, the West has to wait patiently for internal Soviet politics to change course once again.

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