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PREMISES AND PRACTICES
OF SOVIET POLICY

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SUMMARY

Postwar Soviet policy in East Europe, including Southeastern Europe, has involved the pursuit of physical, political and economic security. This has led the USSR to enforce behavioral parameters for alliance members designed to insure the dominance of the communist party, minimum participation in the Warsaw Pact, and the maintenance of civil peace. Various threats have arisen to Soviet goals within the alliance—though not in Southeastern Europe—but threats from the Yugoslav "model" or Albanian defection have been minimal.

Soviet new thinking suggests Moscow's willingness to allow alliance members to pursue their own policies more broadly, but this seems contradictory to Soviet desires for better economic performance in the region through national and CMEA perestroika. In addition, Soviet bilateral statements are more ambiguous about the responsibilities of fraternal parties.

Among alliance members in Southeastern Europe, at present the main Soviet goals are not threatened, except for the possibility that Romanian-Hungarian enmity may damage the integrity of the alliance. Among extra-alliance threats the most serious is the danger of continued deterioration of the situation and potential for military action within Yugoslavia.
Premises of Soviet Policy in East Europe

Since World War II Soviet policy in East Europe has been based on the pursuit of three aims. These apply to Southeast Europe as part of the East European region, but, as will be seen, the variegated nature of the Balkans creates special nuances in Soviet policy for that region. Briefly, these goals are:

1) Physical Security. The USSR has invested an immense amount of political, economic, and military resources in keeping its western border free from potential attack by hostile conventional, and to a lesser extent nuclear, forces. This goal has little to do with the communist nature of the Soviet government nor, in fact, with the existence of any actual current threat. For the Soviet Union, the brutal lessons of the past have had an indelible impact and, given the scope of the destruction and suffering of the country in World War II, the maintenance of an adequate buffer in the West took on a life of its own as a foreign policy given.

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The threat emanating from Southeast—as opposed to Central—Europe, however, has clearly been perceived to be much less, a view which accurately reflects at least twentieth century European history. Soviet troop-stationing patterns show a much greater emphasis on central and northern East Europe than southern. Among Warsaw Pact members, there have not been any troops stationed in Bulgaria, and troops were withdrawn from Romania in 1958. Outside the alliance, neither Albania nor Yugoslavia have accepted Soviet troops.

2) Political Security—a goal dating from the time of the Revolution and the interwar period during which the USSR was the only socialist state. The operative premise is that it is vital for the Soviet Union to have in this region friendly states which in their domestic and international policies will be cognizant of and responsive to Soviet interests. This was certainly not the case during the interwar period when large and small powers alike either ignored Soviet desires or were hostile to them. Political security since then has been guaranteed in East Europe by the dominance of Soviet supported communist parties in these states.

At a maximum—such as during Stalin's time—the CPSU sought the duplication of its own forms and policies in each of the East European states. Such an approach both provoked and was reinforced by the split with Yugoslavia of 1948. Since Stalin's death the policy of the Soviet leadership has been to press for general adherence to, if not chapter-and-verse mimicking of, Soviet domestic and international initiatives. At a minimum, political
security in this region has meant resisting the influence of countries seen to be the key Soviet adversaries, primarily the United States but also during the sixties and early seventies, China. The latter was for a time especially relevant in Southeastern Europe where Chinese diplomacy was very active during the 1970s; Beijing succeeded in attracting a vocal if small ally in Albania and in maintaining full and supportive ties with Romania.

While since 1948 Soviet fears and threats to its political security have been greater in central Europe, the challenge in Southeastern Europe has been more complicated, because of the more varied environment, including Yugoslav independence, Albanian hostility and Romanian pursuit of a quite distinctive foreign policy.

3) Economic Security. East Europe has clearly been seen by the Soviet Union as a region whose resources are available to be used to satisfy Soviet needs. For the first fifteen or so years after World War II this meant the extraction by various measures (reparations, joint stock companies, unequal trade relations) of immense material resources to build and rebuild the Soviet economy. During the next twenty years, however, the relationship shifted to one in which the Soviet Union provided the raw materials and fuel and received in exchange more complex manufactured goods. Owing to declining terms of trade and increased involvement of several East European countries with the West, this relationship turned increasingly unfavorable for the USSR. The USSR, as Marrese and Vanous have shown, subsidized the East
European economies, including those of Southeast Europe, in order to keep the alliance politically cohesive and, to the extent possible, to support the ability of some of the regimes to buy peace at home with better economic performance.

More recently, the Soviets have recognized the need to change this relationship, to "restructure" the trade relationship more to their advantage and in a way which serves their greatest need: better quality machines, equipment, technology and technological knowhow to help the Soviet economy perform better.

The Soviet search for economic security has provoked greater conflict in Southeastern Europe than in other regions. Postwar attempts to force Yugoslavia to develop its economy along lines dictated in Moscow contributed to the 1948 break. Later, Khrushchev's move to "perfect" CMEA in a way which would have increased the specialization and thus the advantage of the more industrially developed northern tier countries, drove Romania to search for other economic partners and to accompany this search with a foreign policy reassessment. Bulgaria, on the other hand, has consistently demonstrated its willingness to accommodate itself to the dominant premise of Soviet-East European economic relations and has generally prospered through its extremely close ties with the USSR.

Practices of Soviet Policy

The Soviet approach to the region since Stalin's death has been to enforce certain behavioral parameters which apply to the
domestic and international behavior of the East European states. These have not been rigidly applied over time nor have they been applied uniformly throughout the region. Nor, of course, are they explicitly delineated, though some indicators are derived from authoritative pronouncements such as that of September 1968 defining what became known in the West as the Brezhnev doctrine. In general, however, it is by forceful intervention of all types that Moscow has indicated that the following are the boundaries of acceptable behavior:

1) **Communist Party Dominance of the Political and Economic System.** This has meant in part Soviet, and usually local regime, hostility to and suppression of challenges to the structure which ensures that the monopoly of political power stays in the hands of the communist party. Whether threats to this monopoly have come from outside the political elite, as in the case of Solidarity in Poland, or from within the party itself, as in Czechoslovakia during 1968, the Soviet reaction has been, sooner or later, to brand such movements as "anti-Soviet" or "antisocialist" and to link them to "counter-revolutionary" support from the West. They have been seen as a threat to the goal of political and in some instances physical security, and they have been either directly or indirectly suppressed.

2) **Minimum Participation in the Warsaw Pact.** This has been enforced differentially, as might be expected given the greater Soviet emphasis on northern and central Europe. For example, Soviet fears about Czechoslovakia or Poland breaching the alliance
have been more pronounced, even exaggerated, than those over Romania's deviance, despite the fact that Bucharest's participation in the WTO has been the least supportive over the last two decades. The USSR has tolerated a low and sometimes declining level of defense expenditure by Romania and by Bulgaria, consistent Romanian non-participation in maneuvers and often some distance from Pact foreign policy pronouncements and initiatives. However, Romania has remained a member of the Pact, has renewed its bi- and multi-national treaties, and proclaimed its loyalty to the alliance and the necessity of keeping it in force.

3) Maintenance of Civil Peace. Critical to the Soviet view of events in Hungary in 1956 and Poland during 1980-81 was the perception that the party was losing not just its "leading role" but the political initiative and the ability to maintain the order upon which the post-war system—and their regimes—were built. The party was losing control of events in the streets. Especially since the original "revolutions" occurred in times of chaos and upheaval, the increasingly conservative Soviet leadership has been sensitive to the appearance of situations which might allow popular disaffection and disruption to threaten either of the other two parameters.

In this regard the pace of change has been an important factor, since a more moderate pace allows the local regime to appear to be in charge; to avoid the uncontrolled growth of "antisocialist" forces and to execute tactical crackdowns against certain opposition groups; and to demonstrate the continued
leading role of the party and to try to reassure those who might be nervous in Moscow.

Establishing and enforcing these parameters has not meant Soviet insistence on the imposition of uniform practices throughout the region. It is simply not correct to state that the Kremlin has insisted on blind mimicking of its policies, especially in the domestic sphere, in either Southeastern Europe or Eastern Europe as a whole. The Soviet Union since Stalin has tolerated a range of diverse social and economic phenomena of both a more capitalist nature, e.g., private agriculture in Poland, and a more retrograde character, such as Stalinism in Romania. Externally, states such as Poland and Romania pursued extensive contacts with Western countries in advance of Moscow and other members of the alliance while Romania continued to maintain good relations with China as well as a number of countries with whom the USSR held either little or hostile ties. For Warsaw Pact members, as long as the basic three parameters were respected, the Soviet approach has been not to insist on duplication of the Soviet system and to tolerate a good deal of diversity in domestic economic and social structure and on international issues.

The two non-WTO members in Southeastern Europe have been the furthest, literally and figuratively, from Soviet pressure and, despite Soviet intervention within the Pact, not subject to threats of intervention, at least since 1948. Moscow has not seen domestic developments in these two countries as directly affecting their physical or political security, but has reacted with
hostility to increased presence or influence of its adversaries in these states, in particular of China in Albania, and the United States and the West in Yugoslavia.

Old Threats

For the Soviet Union in East Europe as a whole the greatest threats have been from the danger posed to the dominance of the political system by the communist party. Such threats were present in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland and carried dangerous implications for other Soviet goals in the region. The possibility of full-scale overthrow, or even radical reform of the political system, would have allowed a more fluid, less predictable domestic political situation and, in the Soviet view, raised the possibility of anti-socialist and anti-Soviet forces taking power. In addition, in Hungary and Poland, the threats of civil disorder were very real and growing. Beyond that, it was not inconceivable that foreign policy adjustments or even major changes might have ensued which would have eroded the Soviet power base in the region.

As is evident, these threats have occurred most often in the northern tier. Indeed, in Bulgaria and Romania, except for a coup attempt in the former in 1965, communist party dominance and domestic tranquility have never really been in question. In ideological terms, Ceausescu's rule in Romania has undermined the role of party, in that it has been replaced by an individual, a return to the days of cult of personality. And various aspects of
Romanian behavior, e.g., its relations with China, clearly provoked displeasure in Moscow. But neither its domestic deformat-
tions nor its various acts breaking ranks internationally, such as unilaterally and loudly announcing a cut in defense expenditures, have been perceived as actionable threats against the three main Soviet goals. For its part, Romania has been careful not to challenge Soviet security interests directly either in the region or globally.\(^5\)

Yugoslavia’s creation and continual reforming of its system of self-management has represented a threat to Soviet-style socialism only in the abstract, as a possible model for others in the region to duplicate. The Yugoslavs themselves have eschewed any such role and since after 1956 no alliance member appeared to move in a “Yugoslav” direction, this potential “threat” has not materialized. Internationally, Yugoslavia has endeavored to follow a form of nonalignment which has been highly considerate of Soviet foreign policy concerns and has often aligned itself with Soviet views. On the Middle East, for example, Yugoslav policy has been closer to Moscow’s than has that of Romania. There has been no suggestion of joining the opposing alliance or allowing a larger U.S. military presence in the country nor any express desire to redraw Balkan boundaries at the expense of Soviet ally Bulgaria. Albania’s close alliance with China during the 1960s and early 1970s did raise the possibility of further defections, but after 1968 and owing to Romanian prudence, this possibility also faded.
Soviet "New Thinking" and the Region

Soviet "new thinking" on East and Southeast Europe has to be viewed in the context of overall Soviet foreign policy changes. The Gorbachev era has seen demonstrable and significant revisions in Soviet foreign policy conceptions about the world, and more importantly, about actions toward that world. Clearly the Gorbachev leadership team has been striving to reduce Soviet exposure abroad, to cut the costs and consequences of an overextended foreign policy. This has involved several overtures toward China, which appear to be bearing fruit, and less successful moves toward Japan. The Soviets' own withdrawal from Afghanistan and pressure on Vietnam to do the same from Cambodia have served both the immediate Soviet goal of reducing the costs of those involvements and warming the environment for improving relations with China and the United States. Toward the latter, the continuous concessions on medium-range missiles followed by the INF treaty has been both preceded and followed by pressure for renewed and more vigorous strategic arms control measures—both marked switches from the late Brezhnev-Andropov-Chernenko period. Soviet feelers for improved relations with Israel as well as a number of Arab states with whom the Soviets did not previously have relations, and support for an agreement in Southwest Africa have been complemented by a rapid expansion of interest and opportunity for expanding economic relations with the West. This policy has been directed at private capital, e.g., through joint ventures, at
increasing bilateral trade, and toward capitalist global institutions, such as the IMF and GATT.

These moves and numerous others should not be interpreted as some kind of Soviet desire to "behave" according to standards determined in the West, or as some analysts have crudely put it, "to join the civilized world." Nor should they be seen as primarily coming in response to aggressive Western pressure. The source and aim of these policies is the Soviet leadership's perception of the needs of the country itself, its economy, its society and its socialist system. The Gorbachev team, centrally and explicitly, recognizes that the Soviet economy is in desperate straits, that it not only cannot compete internationally with the advanced West and is falling behind even the newly developing countries of the Pacific rim, but cannot even effectively provide what the country needs in order to function properly. Not in manufactured goods, communication and information technology or computers; not in food production, processing or distribution; not in housing, health care or most areas of social welfare. It is recognized in Soviet discussions of these problems that the question may not be one of production; sometimes it is a problem of application of technology, distribution, utilization. These problems are seen to be related to questions of investment, prices, and more broadly to the social/cultural issues of initiative, incentive, and labor productivity. Finally, Gorbachev himself more than any of the current leaders insists that without
reform of the political system very little of what is needed will be accomplished.

On the international plane, Gorbachev has also made clear the link between domestic perestroika and new thinking in foreign policy. He and those supporting him recognize the need to ease the pressure on the Soviet economy—and in some cases on the political system—which stems from global involvement and conflicts. This would allow both attention and resources to be devoted to the compelling domestic tasks.

With respect to East and Southeastern Europe, new thinking has an immediacy directly related to both the Soviet Union's international role and its domestic needs. First, there is the question of whether or not the Soviet Union should and will seek to maintain this increasingly costly sphere of influence, by following the policies noted above.

Soviet public statements by Gorbachev and others have gone out of their way to reject "old thinking" on this score. Moscow has rejected the notion that they arrogate to themselves a monopoly on truth or that they want to implement duplicate Soviet systems in the region. Such statements have been cast as rejections of the "Brezhnev doctrine," while at the same time not acknowledging its existence. Long time heretics such as Yugoslavia, have been assured that the Soviet Union accepts the idea of many and independent paths of socialist development.

As elsewhere in the world, various Soviet actions in East Europe have indeed indicated a desire for reducing Soviet politi-
cal and economic exposure. The troop cuts and withdrawals announced by Gorbachev in 1988 include significant reductions in forces in central Europe and have been followed by troop cuts made by several of the states themselves. Furthermore, while making it clear that perestroika is the wave of the future, Moscow has not been exerting any real pressure on the more recalcitrant of its allies (the GDR, Czechoslovakia, Romania) to get in line. There is a Soviet policy of "differentiation" in its policy toward its allies--a warmer relationship exists with Poland and Hungary, for example, than with Romania and East Germany, but there is little evidence of, for example, an economic squeezing of Romania to force it to apply the principles of perestroika. Soviet new thinking toward the region also involves a rethinking of the role and function of CMEA. This has several components. It is clear from Soviet writings that there is substantial displeasure over what is seen as an unfavorable economic relationship in which the Soviets supply raw material and fuel at great opportunity costs and sometimes lower than world prices, in return for more expensive but often poor quality manufactured goods. Aside from the price and cost factor, the benefits of such trade--including the ability to improve and diversify the national economy and trade profile--are seen as disproportionately accruing to the East European countries, especially the more advanced ones.6

Second, Moscow wants the organization itself to function better, to begin to act more as a genuine economic union, with more effective mechanisms for price formation, currency exchange
and specialization of production. In general there is an evident impatience with CMEA which has been heightened in recent years by the looming counter-example of the European Community. Finally, Soviet pressure to change CMEA has been driven by the Soviet drive for perestroika. This has taken the form of pressure for the member states to restructure their own economies in a way which will allow more direct production ties between Soviet and East European enterprises, thus facilitating a faster and more effective spread of advanced science and technology throughout the region.

What does this add up to? First, the whole, i.e., Soviet policy toward the region, does not equal the sum of its parts. There is clearly a contradiction between Soviet pronouncements and actions which indicate a willingness to let each state go its own way and its clear desire to get the region to improve its economic performance and change its relationship with the USSR. If in fact each of the states pursues what it sees as in its own best economic interest, this is very likely to mean a continued desire to rely on cheap Soviet raw materials and fuel, payable with goods, not hard currency. The CMEA junior partners' incentives to accommodate the USSR on the issue of restructuring the trade relationship, while not absent, will be overcome by the evident advantage of continuing the present system, by their desire not to worsen an already difficult domestic economic situation, and by their own desire to trade their more complex goods to the West.
For the Soviet Union, the problem will be how to get the CMEA states to satisfy its economic needs without relying on "old thinking," i.e., hegemonic interference from Moscow, and without pressing these states economically so much that their domestic situation becomes even more difficult and the regimes more vulnerable to political challenge.

More broadly, there is the question of whether or not "new thinking" really applies to East Europe, including the Southeastern European alliance states of Romania and Bulgaria. While Soviet declarations seem to reject the notion of intervention, there have been such declarations before and interventions have occurred nevertheless. Moreover, statements by Soviet leaders made in East Europe have always been hedged by admonitions that the leadership of these parties have responsibilities not only to their own nations but to the "common interests of socialism." This is somewhat different than the formulations which have appeared or been directed at broader global fora, such as Gorbachev's speech to the United Nations. In Soviet writings there has not been an explicit rejection of the basic premise of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Instead, Moscow has essentially accepted the assessment of that period made by the regime in Prague; i.e., acknowledging mistakes but continuing to point to "anti-socialist forces," and extensive Western influence. Even more significantly, similar points are made about the current situation in Czechoslovakia and occasionally Poland.
It would be foolish to assume that the Soviet Union, new thinking or not, will rapidly or ever abandon the desire for physical and political security in a region it sees as vital. Even if the fundamental nature of Soviet communism were to change—as it is already doing—and even if the Soviet Union were to become a non-communist country, its great power imperatives would continue to operate in this region. A new leadership in Moscow would still work to protect its national security, very broadly defined. Moscow would still fret about and work against any military presence or threat in the area, and moreover could be expected to react negatively toward political developments in the region which made that threat more likely or which threatened the political security of the USSR.

*New Threats*

The major new development in Eastern Europe as a whole, though not in Southeastern Europe, is the erosion of the political monopoly of the communist party. This has already been formalized in Hungary and Poland and can be seen happening in the Soviet Union itself. Thus one of the key Soviet goals in Eastern Europe—maintenance of party control—is being lost, and in states which are central to Soviet thinking about the region. While in Poland and Hungary such changes are accompanied by assurances that the system of socialism is not in question nor are international alliances subject to change, new political forces, especially should they become ruling parties, can change this equation.
Indirectly, then, the possibility arises that a second value, that of minimum participation in the Warsaw pact, could come under threat. Indeed in the case of Hungary the idea of some kind of neutrality has already been publicly broached.

In Southeastern Europe, neither of these developments seems likely. But there is the renewed threat of a more dramatic and potentially more dangerous development in Yugoslavia. The increasingly desperate economic situation there, coupled with the renewed force of nationalist hostility exemplified by Kosovo, raises the possibility of internal military action in that country (martial law, coup d'état, civil war). While this in itself is not likely to be seen as threatening the USSR, a situation of military struggle in the Balkans with the inherent possibility of external involvement cannot be welcomed by Moscow. Indeed, Soviet statements on Kosovo have been fully and firmly supportive of the Belgrade government. 9

Moscow has been more circumspect with regard to the other national conflict in the region, between Hungary and Romania. There has been no official intervention in the ongoing dispute over the roots of and rights in Transylvania, nor has the Soviet leadership been assertive on Hungarian claims of Romanian mistreatment of their conationals inside Romania. On the former question, it is very unlikely that the USSR would support a redrawing of national boundaries in this region. It has already opposed such action within the Soviet Union, with regard to Nagorno-Karabakh, and would be loathe to see such a precedent
established in Southeastern Europe. But, on Budapest television Soviet historian Roy Medvedev did indirectly criticize Ceausescu's destruction of small villages, a policy which among other things will wipe out many Hungarian communities, and in November, 1988, in Moscow, a nonsanctioned group, Democratic Perestroika, protested Romanian policies.

How then might Soviet policy toward the region evolve? Under what conditions would Soviet concern or even intervention be more or less likely? This can be considered by looking at some possible scenarios and factors which will affect Soviet actions in the region.

Scenarios in East Europe: Factor and Actors

Scenario 1: "Don't Call the Question." Here we can envisage a situation of continued change in the region, even significant change, including an increasing role for opposition political forces and erosion of the system of state socialism. In this scenario the Soviet Union would accommodate itself to the loss of the party's monopoly of power. This presumes that the situation will evolve rather gradually, that civil peace and order hold, and that there will exist opposition political forces willing and able to effect an agreement to share power and responsibility in running the country, as in Poland and Hungary. This scenario also demands that in the absence of an all-European transformation, assurances are given by the new governments that the system of international alliances will be maintained. The regimes,
whether communist or some kind of coalition or social-democratic form, would have to be careful to restrain overtly anti-Soviet groups and give obeisance to Soviet security needs, broadly conceived.

If this were to happen, and especially if economic performance in the region were to improve, allowing for the development of domestic regime support and improved supply of Soviet needs, then the question of whether old or new thinking applies in the region might never have to be faced. In this scenario the pace of change, if not its ultimate effects, would be moderate; the political and social environment would remain relatively secure.

In addition, given Soviet sensitivity to Western involvement, the visibility of the United States, as an adversary involved in and committed to changing the existing situation in the region, would have to remain very modest. Public support could and should be forthcoming but provocative actions which might stimulate a severe Soviet reaction would have to be avoided.

Scenario 2: Heightened Soviet Concern. In this scenario the significant economic and political developments noted in scenario 1 are accompanied by overt and provocative Western involvement, especially that of the United States. In this instance, Soviet concern over "delinking" of the region from its security area, that is, a rapid destruction of virtually all of its post-war aims there, would be greatly heightened. With Soviet concern already present, in this scenario, alarm would be stimulated by statements or actions--particularly by the United
States—which seek to somehow demonstrate our "right" and "stake" in determining the future of this region. Such actions would very likely produce a strong Soviet counter-reaction and results directly opposite from those which Washington—and certainly the people of the region—would want, but which the U.S. would in reality be unable to block.

Scenario 3: Soviet Intervention. In this situation the changes in East Europe begin to multiply and conform to the worst Soviet fears of a disappearing buffer. This might include a rapid dissolution of the communist party or its marginalization and replacement by forces less inclined to appease Soviet sensitivities about its security. Given the history of this region there could be anti-Soviet or, less likely, anti-socialist forces which might gain legalization or act forcefully even without official sanction. The appearance of such groups and/or their approaches to real power are not likely to be viewed with equanimity in Moscow.

Especially if such changes were accompanied by civil disorder, anti-Soviet demonstrations, prosecution of ousted communist leaders by noncommunists, or declarations hostile to Soviet foreign policy goals in the region, Soviet pressure would increase and intervention could not be ruled out. A similar reaction can be expected should the issues between Hungary and Romania cause relations to deteriorate to the point where the integrity of the alliance is threatened or the possibility of military action becomes heightened.
There should be no illusion that Soviet desire for perestroika and renovation of its system equals abandonment of either socialist aims or the perceived needs of a great power for a peaceful and controllable "neighborhood". Nor should anyone doubt the willingness and ability of the Gorbachev regime to act forcefully when it sees vital political or national interests in danger. Gorbachev's "coup" of October, 1988, the use of new laws against demonstrators during 1988 and 1989, and especially the response to "the national question" in the Soviet Union are illustrations of the forcefulness of this regime. A region like Eastern and Southeastern Europe, long seen as vital to Soviet international security, will not be let go if developments there are perceived as dangerous by Mikhail Gorbachev or any other Soviet regime.

Scenario 4: Nonalliance Difficulties. As noted, the Soviet government strongly supports the central Yugoslav government and in particular the Serbian government's approach to the difficulties in Kosovo, an approach not unlike its own in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. It can be expected that Moscow will continue to see no gain for itself in a civil war or break-up of Yugoslavia, especially one in which its own hand or that of its ally Bulgaria would be discerned or alleged. At the very least, Moscow will not want to see a disappearance of continued good economic relations which provide consumer and some manufactured goods and for which the USSR does not have to pay hard currency.
Moscow will likely continue to be supportive of Belgrade on the national question, and the country's overall situation also serves as a boost to its own firm policies on this score. It does so by acting as a negative example; i.e., of what can happen if separate nationalities get too much power or autonomy and thus damage the effective functioning of the country and threaten its peace and even its existence.

As for Albania, Moscow has made it clear that with the change in leadership there it would like very much to normalize relations. But despite the change and notwithstanding Albania's evident willingness to improve and establish relations with many other states, the USSR is still not among its preferred partners. It can be expected that under Gorbachev the Soviet Union will continue to try to renew the relationship. Even more significantly, Moscow will be sure to react very negatively to any developments which might change Albania's current status outside the alliance system, say, to one which brought it closer to Soviet adversaries in the West. While this is, to say the least, very unlikely, given the strategic location of the country, any movement to warm up to the West, to the extent that it allows military advantage to NATO, would bring a very negative reaction from Moscow.

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A critical factor in all scenarios is the domestic political situation in the USSR. The above scenarios--except for number 3--presume the continued viability of the Gorbachev leadership team.
In order for that to happen, Gorbachev must begin to show some success for his efforts. Internationally his actions have borne fruit: the INF Treaty, the withdrawal from Afghanistan, the very high international standing he enjoys. Domestically, however, the fruits of perestroika are scarce and expensive. Domestic economic restructuring is, after all, just beginning and many of the policies, e.g., taxes for independent enterprises, are being made up as they go along. The situation for consumers is worse than it has been for a long time. While there is general support for the aims of the top leadership there is also resentment at the growing cooperative sector and a growing popular weariness from trying to make ends meet. Whatever face one puts on the March 1989 elections to the Congress of People's Deputies, the party cannot interpret away the overwhelmingly negative popular reaction to the current situation which the results represented. There is also the residual opposition at the top, possibly personified by Ligachev and Chebrikov, and the more deleterious widespread opposition throughout the apparatus and state bureaucracy. Here are a huge number of people who can clearly perceive that their role in perestroika is to move aside and their gain may be unemployment. Hence, their incentive to make the new system work is minimal, and many suggest that they are undermining reform in order to build support for junking perestroika. Into this mix are added the extremely volatile nationalities issues, about which the regime seems to know what to do only in extremis.
Should a combination of these factors coalesce to either remove Gorbachev or weaken his commitment or ability to continue to pursue perestroika or its external component, new thinking, we can expect a return to business as usual in East Europe. This will likely take place preemptively as elites there move to get back in line with what they perceive to be new—or in this case old—realities in Moscow.

It is also possible that the dynamic could work the other way. That is, that a situation of upheaval in East Europe, say, scenario 3 above, would provoke a harsh reaction from Moscow and then the removal or weakening of Gorbachev and the petering out of perestroika at home. However it operates, the dynamics of Soviet interest in and involvement with this region will continue to demonstrate its significance for intra-European relations and overall East-West relations.
NOTES


6. See the remarks by Soviet Premier Nikolai Ryzhkov, at the 44th CMEA council session; "Osnova Sotsialisticheskoj ekonomicheskoi integratsii" ["The basis for socialist economic integration"], Izvestia, 7 July 1988, p. 4. See also Iu. C. Shirayev, "Mekhanizm sotrudinchestva: novye kriterii" ["Mechanism of collaboration: new criteria"], Ekonomicheskaia gazeta, No. 30 (July), 1986, p. 20.

7. See for example the statement by Gorbachev in Prague, Soviet TV, 10 April 1987 (Summary of World Broadcasts, April 13, 1987, p. EE/8541/C10). Gorbachev voiced a similar sentiment to Karoly Grosz when the Hungarian leader visited Moscow in

8. Aleksandr Kondrashov, "Ob antichekoslovatskoi kampanii na Zapade," ["About the anti-Czechoslovak campaign in the West"] Izvestiia, 22 August 1988, p. 3; TASS, 19 August 1988 [FBIS, 22 August 1988, p. 41]

9. See, e.g., E. Fadeev, "Edinstvennyi put'" ["The only path"] Pravda, 10 April 1989, p. 6.


11. Medvedev's comments were reported in Ibid. The Moscow demonstration was reported by Budapest Domestic Service, 16 November 1988 [FBIS, 21 November 1988, p. 35].

12. I am indebted to Paul Shoup for adding this last qualifier.