TITLE: Soviet Foreign Policy and the Two German States

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes a forthcoming book presenting a comparative study of Soviet and East German policies towards West Germany. The study begins in late 1963, with Nikita Khrushchev's effort to bring about a summit meeting with Ludwig Erhard, and concludes in the first half of 1989 with Mikhail Gorbachev's scheduled trip to Bonn.

The study seeks to specify the variables that best explain the main decisions taken by the Soviet Union and East Germany in their dealings with Bonn in this period. These variables are: (1) Soviet influence on the GDR and East German influence on the Soviet Union, as appropriate; (2) the nature of the decision-making regime in Moscow and East Berlin; (3) elite perceptions of the Federal Republic and its role in East-West relations; and (4) Soviet and East German attitudes towards East-West trade. In the case of East Germany, an additional variable is also operative, viz., pressures stemming from segments of the East German population in favor of improved ties with West Germany.

The main conclusions of the study are the following:

I. The chief constant in Soviet policy towards the FRG in this period has been Moscow's determination to "close" the German question by refusing to permit the reunification of Germany on western terms; to obtain Bonn's formal acceptance of the postwar territorial status quo (at the very least on a de facto basis); to secure the political and economic viability of the GDR, above all by obtaining Bonn's formal recognition of East Germany; to keep West Berlin juridically separate from the Federal Republic; and to limit the development of West Germany's military power, above all by blocking its access to nuclear weapons. These fundamental aims not only have not varied during the 1963-89 period; they have been the foundation stones of Soviet policy towards West Germany since the late Stalin era. East Germany, moreover, has shared these fundamental Soviet objectives.

II. Another constant in Soviet policy in the years examined in this study is that the Soviets have never had a viable policy designed to achieve a complete rupture between the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany. On the contrary, Soviet leaders from Khrushchev to Gorbachev have consistently acted on the premise that West Germany will continue to maintain its strong
political, economic and military attachments to the United States and to its West European partners. The chief objective of Soviet policy, therefore, has been to weaken the ties binding West Germany to its main alliance partners, not to break them completely. While the prospect of the neutralization of West Germany may be eminently desirable from the Soviet point of view, it is not regarded by Soviet foreign policy elites as a realistic possibility for anything resembling the predictable future. Soviet policies have tended to reflect this assumption.

III. Besides these elements of continuity, Soviet (as well as East German) policy towards the FRG has displayed a number of important shifts and variations. These shifts can best be explained in terms of the variables indicated above.

The first variable emphasizes the interdependence of Soviet and East German policies as they apply to West Germany. To be sure, the GDR's room for foreign policy maneuver is decisively limited by the Kremlin; in no way can East Germany be considered an independent actor in world affairs, not even with respect to issues directly affecting its own destiny, such as those connected with the "German question". Moreover, Moscow and East Berlin have shared a number of fundamental interests vis-à-vis West Germany throughout this period. Not the least of these is the commitment of both allies to the preservation of the GDR as a duly recognized state in the international system, and to the stability of communist party rule within the GDR. Nevertheless, Moscow and East Berlin have not always seen eye to eye in their attitudes towards Bonn. The GDR has its own interests in matters affecting West Germany, and at times it has had a major impact on the substance and timing of Soviet policy.

The second variable centers on the nature of the decision-making regime in Moscow and East Berlin. My hypothesis is that some of the variations in Soviet and East German policy towards West Germany in these years can be traced to the organization and political direction of power at the highest leadership levels in the two states. Four different decision-making regimes may be identified. Each one exhibits particular tendencies with respect to the coherence of its foreign policy (i.e., the extent to which the political, economic and military components of foreign policy are woven together to achieve the state's articulated goals); responsiveness to changes in the international environment, including new opportunities and mounting failures; willingness to compromise
with foreign governments, whether adversaries or allies; and openness to public
discussion and debate on foreign policy issues. The four decision-making
regimes (discussed more fully in the body of this report) are:

Directive regime. In this regime, power is concentrated in the hands of a
single individual who dominates the Politburo and Secretariat. The
substance and direction of foreign (as well as domestic) policy reflects
the leader's wishes. This type of regime is exemplified by Walter
Ulbricht's period of leadership in the GDR.

Reformist coalition. In this decision-making regime, power is shared
among a number of key personages, some of whom may represent distinct
bureaucratic interests. The defining characteristic of this type of
regime is the commitment of its leader and his principal supporters to
making significant changes over past policies. The Khrushchev and
Gorbachev regimes serve as examples of the reformist coalition.

Conservative coalition. This type of decision-making regime is distin-
guished by the leadership's commitment to the status quo in domestic
policy, and to the enhancement of Soviet power in international affairs.
The Brezhnev coalition constitutes a prime example of a conservative
decision-making regime.

Centrist coalition. This type of regime places itself in between the two
previous decision-making coalitions. It consists of individuals favoring
moderate doses of reform, or at least a measure of flexibility, in dealing
with domestic problems, together with more conservative elements. The
Honecker regime in the GDR is a good example of a centrist decision-making
regime.

This study demonstrates that these various decision-making regimes,
together with their propensities to high or low levels of foreign policy
coherence, responsiveness, willingness to compromise and openness to debate, go
a long way towards explaining key variations in Soviet and GDR policy towards
West Germany over the 1963-1989 period.

The third main variable focuses on elite perceptions of the FRG and its
role in East-West relations. Here the central task of the analysis is to look
at how Soviet and East German leaders (who constitute what I call the primary
foreign policy elite), together with lower level bureaucrats, academicians and
journalists (who together comprise the secondary foreign policy elite) perceive
West Germany and, more broadly, the prevailing trends in U.S.-West European
relations. My ultimate purpose in this part of the study is to relate these
elite perceptions to the policies taken by the decision-makers themselves.
Throughout the period under investigation, Soviet and East German primary and secondary elites have at various times put forward two contending sets of images of the West German government and its foreign policy orientations. One set views the FRG in a positive light, and conveys a favorable attitude towards cooperation with the FRG in various specified areas. The other is fundamentally negative in its portrayal of West Germany, and suggests a greater reluctance to engage Bonn in a fruitful dialogue or to reach cooperative agreements with the West Germans. At times, one or the other of these sets of images has tended to dominate public discussion of the FRG either in the Soviet Union or in the GDR. But at certain periods the two alternative images have been presented by various members of the Soviet or East German elites at the same time, especially at critical turning points in Soviet-West German relations when major decisions have had to be made by the Soviet and East German leaderships. The simultaneous presence of these contrasting positive and negative views have thus been indicative of serious contention, or at the very least ambivalence, in the foreign policy elites of the two countries over policy towards Bonn.

In addition to the debates over policy towards West Germany signaled by these images of the FRG, a broader set of discussions has taken place in our period on the question of relations between the United States and Western Europe. Is Western Europe growing increasingly independent of the United States, or is the Atlantic alliance still characterized by the fundamental unity of its participants, including those on opposite sides of the ocean? These larger questions often relate directly to the FRG, as members of the Soviet and East German foreign policy elites have sought to explain how Bonn fits into these broader trends.

These debates can be shown to have identifiable implications for practical policy choices and options facing the Soviet and East German governments. The political orientations they suggest can be categorized into four distinct policy positions, as detailed in the body of the report.

Maximalist orientation. This viewpoint stresses the enduring unity of the capitalist world, and above all the unbroken solidity of the "Bonn-Washington axis."

Europeanist orientation. This view argues that there exists a long-term trend in the direction of greater West European independence from the United States, and that West European governments are more interested in
cooperation with the Soviet bloc than is the U.S. Some advocates of this view argue that West Germany is increasingly moving with this Europeanist tide.

**Americanist perspective.** Unlike the Europeanist view, which stresses the "contradictions" allegedly unraveling U.S.-West European relations, this view highlights the enduring bonds of partnership which hold the Atlantic alliance together under U.S. aegis. Advocates of this view tend to regard West Germany as completely committed to its alliance with Washington.

**Atlanticist tendency.** Analytically, this viewpoint tends to place equal emphasis on both conflict and partnership as simultaneously operating tendencies in U.S.-West European relations. With respect to West Germany's ties with the U.S., it would take note of "contradictions" in some areas (e.g., economic relations) while at the same time drawing attention to enduring elements of cooperation (e.g., in the military domain).

While evidence of all four of these orientations may be found in the writings of Soviet and East German scholars and journalists, by and large the Soviet leadership throughout the 1963-1989 period has adopted the Atlanticist approach to U.S.-West European (and U.S.-West German) relations. This approach has allowed Soviet leaders the maximum amount of flexibility in their policies towards Washington, Bonn and other NATO capitals. The East Germans have tended to confine their public discussions of these issues to matters relating more directly to West Germany. However, Atlanticist and Europeanist views have gained prominence in recent years, providing rationales for East German efforts to cooperate with Bonn. The maximalist line was represented par excellence by Walter Ulbricht.

The last of the variables affecting Soviet and East German policy towards the FRG to be considered here centers on elite attitudes towards East-West trade. Although both East Germany and the Soviet Union have had trade and other economic relations with the FRG throughout the period under investigation, there has been a variety of viewpoints manifest in both the USSR and the GDR over the question of whether this economic partnership with West Germany should be significantly expanded. Both the primary and the secondary foreign policy elites of the two countries have participated in this discussion. Among the diverse viewpoints that have surfaced, Walter Ulbricht vehemently opposed a major upsurge in the socialist states' economic attachments to West Germany; Leonid Brezhnev changed his mind on the issue, switching from a reserved attitude to one more enthusiastically supportive of expanded economic relations; Erich Honecker has also favored economic ties with Bonn; and Mikhail
Gorbachev, more than any of the others, has indicated a desire to remove domestic bureaucratic obstacles to joint ventures and other forms of cooperation with the West, for the declared purpose of promoting domestic economic growth and perestroika.

IV. The final conclusion this study reaches relates to the question of how we study Soviet foreign policy. The evidence presented here shows that there is a very close connection between policies and perceptions. Even before the remarkable outpourings of candor precipitated by Gorbachev's demand for glasnost, both Soviet and East German sources provided sufficient information about perceptions and policy discussions to permit us to understand Soviet (and East German) policy towards the FRG on their own terms, using their own open sources. In addition, this study sensitizes us to the importance of domestic variables in the analysis of Soviet foreign policy. While the nature and relative importance of these variables may differ in each case, they are always likely to include the orientations of the decision-making regimes (as defined above) and the perceptions of the primary and secondary elites on the issues being analyzed.
CHAPTER ONE

ANALYZING SOVIET-GERMAN RELATIONS
What are the driving forces of Soviet foreign policy? In recent years, the controversy over how this question should be addressed has been just as spirited as the decades-old debate about what Soviet objectives themselves actually are. Differences among professional observers of the Soviet scene over the substance of Kremlin policy often reflect differences in methods of inquiry; as in all fields of scholarly endeavor, what we find depends in large measure upon where we choose to look. While there has generally been a wide diversity of opinion among Soviet watchers on matters of both approach and conclusions, many specialists on Moscow's role in world politics can be grouped without too much oversimplification into two broad categories. One stresses the external dimensions of Soviet foreign policy, the other stresses its internal components.

Those who focus on the external aspects of the Soviet Union's international activity often adopt -- however implicitly -- one variant or another of what international relations scholars call the "rational actor" model of foreign policy analysis. In this approach, the state is treated as a more or less unified whole, and the ruling elite is characterized as acting upon a commonly shared set of interests, goals, and perceptions of the world. On the basis of these broadly accepted convictions, the leadership accordingly formulates its international initiatives and its responses to the actions of others on the world scene in a carefully calculated fashion, with the express purpose of reflecting and advancing the state's fundamental objectives. Invariably, this method of analyzing foreign policy concentrates on the observable behavior of states as they interact with one another in the international system. It is less interested in the internal factors that may influence what a particular government decides to do when conducting its foreign relations.

As applied to the Soviet Union, the rational actor approach is therefore primarily concerned with the outward behavior of the Soviet government in the international arena rather than with the internal formulation of Moscow's policies. The end product of the Kremlin's foreign policy decision-making process receives greater attention than the process itself. More often than not, the Soviet leadership is assumed to be
essentially united on the USSR's fundamental aims in international affairs; the motivations guiding Soviet actions in this or that instance are frequently imputed to the Soviet government on the basis of certain broad guidelines that are regarded as part and parcel of every Soviet leader's basic world outlook. These would include such things as the historic traditions of great Russian nationalism, the ideological predispositions of Marxism-Leninism, or the "operational code" of Soviet behavior as developed under Lenin and Stalin. As a consequence, a number of scholars who take the rational actor approach tend to accentuate the continuities prevailing in the Soviet Union's international orientation. Such themes as the tenacity of Moscow's hostility to the West, its periodic need for cooperation, its gnawing sense of vulnerability and its aggressive impulse toward expansionism, frequently emerge from analyses of this kind as the enduring hallmarks of Soviet policy. Some scholars, moreover, equate Soviet behavior with the foreign policy proclivities of traditional great powers; others have likened it to the behavior of revolutionary states bent on overturning the international status quo.

While virtually all of the specialists who concentrate on the Kremlin's external activities would readily agree that differences have of course been manifest in the foreign policies of such diverse figures as Lenin and Stalin, or Brezhnev and Gorbachev, many would tend to attribute these variations to tactical shifts necessitated by changing international realities, or to ideosyncratic factors rooted in an individual leader's personal style. On the whole, however, these dissimilarities are regarded as less important than the underlying consistencies in Soviet strategy and behavior that serve to link one generation of Soviet leaders with another when it comes to defining the Soviet Union's posture in the international arena.

Moreover, the central focus of the rational actor approach is on the actual behavior of the leading foreign policy decision-makers rather than on their articulated perceptions of the world; actions, in this view, tend to speak louder than words. To the extent that words matter at all, the rational actor method is primarily concerned with official pronouncements that have an immediate bearing on specific policy issues. Considerably less attention is accorded to the viewpoints of lower level political officials, academicians,
journalists, or other Soviet foreign policy specialists who are not immediately involved in the day-to-day conduct of foreign affairs. More generally, domestic influences on foreign policy tend to be given short shrift. The linkages between Moscow’s international undertakings and such factors as the internal economic situation may be highlighted in passing by scholars adapting the rational actor approach to the USSR, but they are rarely explored in depth.

In short, this is a highly leadership-centered analytical orientation, one which plays down the variety of policy options available to Soviet decision-makers in favor of pursuing the continuous thread of immediately observable behavior, and which minimizes the impact of domestic influences in favor of concentrating directly on the Soviet Union's activities on the global stage.

The second group of analysts is composed of those who emphasize the internal factors that go into the making of Soviet foreign policy decisions. Here the predominant emphasis falls on the pulls and tugs of the political process that, in the Soviet Union as in any other state, is often characterized by conflict, bargaining, coalition-building and prolonged indecisiveness on the part of the regime's decision-making elite. Not surprisingly, analyses of this type frequently stress the diversity of attitudes and policy preferences to be observed among Soviet leaders, as well as among other influential members of the foreign policy establishment. While recognizing the limits to policy differentiation in the Soviet Union imposed by historical and ideological factors, not to mention the censorship system, these scholars nevertheless believe that there is greater room for disagreement and debate over substantive policy issues within the Soviet hierarchy than is likely to be uncovered by the broad-brush treatment of the rational actor approach.

On the assumption that Soviet leaders, like their counterparts in other political systems, are able to choose from a panoply of policy options in pursuit of generally agreed upon national and ideological interests, these scholars employ a variety of analytical methods designed to spotlight discernible divergences among key members of the Soviet elite. Some focus
exclusively on differences among the top leaders, using time-honored Kremlinological techniques. Others use formal decision-making models to examine such things as the connection between the views of various decision-makers and their respective bureaucratic functions, or the propensity of Soviet leaders to take foreign policy risks. Others extend the sweep of the analysis still further by examining the publications of prominent Soviet international relations scholars or journalists. And a number of scholars have made explicit efforts to elucidate additional domestic influences on Soviet foreign policy in a comprehensive fashion.²

In these investigations, the scholars in question invariably recognize that the Soviets whose viewpoints they are analyzing are staunch defenders of the Soviet system, and have risen to prominence largely by virtue of their public commitment to certain prevailing tenets of Soviet foreign and domestic policy. However, they regard open signs of disagreement among these key representatives of the elite as more than merely incidental. They are assumed to be indicative of genuine alternatives in the elaboration and conduct of Soviet foreign policy. When, for example, some Soviets appear to be lining up in favor of a particular accord with the West while others seem to be opposed; when some strike a militant stance with respect to Third World conflicts or the utility of force in world affairs, while others point out the disadvantages of such positions -- these and other evidences of divided counsels within the Soviet elite may be interpreted as signaling the possibility of real change, whether imminent or potential, in the direction of Moscow's foreign policy. To many scholars who track these differentiated points of view, the prospective changes in Soviet policy that these debates imply are serious enough to warrant careful consideration by other governments, irrespective of whether or not these policy shifts may be labeled as essentially "tactical."

As a consequence, many specialists associated with this second analytical approach attach considerable importance to the perceptions of international politics articulated in public forums by Soviet leaders and other relevant members of the elite. What the Soviets say about the world, how they characterize the main problems of international life and analyze its
dominant trends, are just as significant as what they do on an official level in providing a guide to the Kremlin's future behavior.

While this second category of studies often features finely detailed analyses of decision-making cases or elite perceptions, at times it is nevertheless subject to certain limitations that arise from the division of scholarly labor. Studies of Soviet decision-making, for example, inevitably concentrate on the top leaders; only rarely do they take into account the views of academicians and other experts who may be at some remove from the corridors of power in the Kremlin, but who generally offer more elaborate rationales for Soviet policy in their publications than may usually be found in the utterances of the leading decision-makers themselves. Case studies of Soviet decision-making are also frequently focused on a narrow frame of time, usually centering on a specific crisis confronting the Soviet leadership. Conversely, many studies of elite perceptions confine themselves to elucidating the writings of Soviet scholars or journalists, but do not seek to relate the various viewpoints that arise from these sources to the perceptions and actual policy decisions of the Kremlin leadership. Lacking this policy-specific focus, they generally do not utilize the perceptions being analyzed to explain a particular sequence of events.³

In other words, we have studies of policies that do not look at perceptions, and studies of perceptions that do not look at specific policies. This study is an attempt to unite these two approaches. Focusing on Moscow's relations with the two German states, it seeks to expand the range of comprehensiveness in our analysis of Soviet foreign policy by examining both the external evolution of these relationships as well as their principal domestic inputs over a period of more than twenty-five years. In the process, it tries above all to relate policy behavior to elite perceptions, and to clarify what has been constant in Soviet policy and what has been subject to change.

In essence, this book aspires to do three things. First, it aims to provide a fairly comprehensive account of Moscow's relations with the Federal Republic of Germany over a protracted stretch of time. Although the FRG is arguably Moscow's most important adversary after the United States and China,
there is no single-volume treatment of the Moscow-Bonn relationship that covers the entire period extending from the last stages of the Khrushchev era to the first years of Gorbachev's leadership. To be sure, not every detail of these complicated interactions can be included within these pages. Nor need they be: what matters most in this study is an examination of how the Soviets have perceived and dealt with the main events in their relations with Bonn during the period under investigation. What follows is an analysis of general trends and tendencies, not an exhaustive compilation of facts and figures. Moreover, most readers, if not most writers, can readily agree that "l'art d'ennuyer -- c'est de dire tout."

The principal preoccupation of the ensuing analysis is therefore limited to those issues that relate directly to Moscow's relationship with the Federal Republic, especially as they affect Bonn's role in NATO and its undertakings with the GDR. Issues of a peripheral nature, such as the Soviet view of West Germany's engagements in the Third World, will therefore be accorded less attention. By the same token, the limits imposed on this study by time and space preclude a comprehensive analysis of West German policy. Considerable information about the FRG's side of the story must of course be presented for the sake of clarity, but this is essentially a book about Moscow's foreign policy, not Bonn's.

The second aim of the study at hand is to examine the linkages between perceptions and decisions in the Soviet Union. Here my purpose is to demonstrate how the Soviets have conceptualized their policies towards West Germany, and to ascertain various options the Soviet foreign policy establishment may have considered in the past -- and indeed may continue to consider in the future -- when discussing and formulating the Kremlin's policy positions. Words will speak as loudly as deeds. Precisely how I propose to go about this task will be explained farther on in this chapter. For now, it suffices to note that one of the guiding purposes of this part of the study will be to clarify as sharply as possible the relationship prevailing between the expressed perceptions and discrete policy decisions of the leading foreign policy decision-makers, on the one hand, and the views propounded by lower level bureaucrats, academicians and journalists on the other.
To expedite this discussion, I shall designate the top decision-makers as the "primary" foreign policy elite, and the lower level officials, academicians and journalists as the "secondary" foreign policy elite. Occasionally I may group the two together by referring to them as the "foreign policy establishment" or simply the "foreign policy elites." For all practical purposes, the primary foreign policy elite consists of the leading members of the Politburo and the Secretariat who have a special interest in foreign policy. The Foreign Minister and the Defense Minister are also included in this group, even if they do not happen to serve on these powerful party organs. "Lower level bureaucrats" would include such people as the Foreign Trade Minister, senior military officials below the rank of Defense Minister, and the like. Most of the academicians whose writings will be analyzed are connected with major international affairs research institutes in Moscow and East Berlin, such as the Soviet Union's Institute on the World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), and the Institute on International Relations in the GDR. The main journalists of interest are foreign affairs specialists who write for the leading daily and weekly newspapers.

The connection between the primary and secondary elements of the Soviet foreign policy establishment has long been a subject of lively interest to analysts of Soviet foreign policy, but it has rarely been probed systematically.4 Does the specialized literature produced by Soviet international affairs scholars and seasoned correspondants have any relevance at all when it comes to explaining what Soviet leaders actually do when conducting foreign policy? Under what circumstances are foreign policy debates in the open press likely to flourish, and under what circumstances are they more likely to be circumscribed or channeled into officially desired directions? Questions such as these require us to be as specific as possible in delineating how foreign policy decision-making procedures at the highest levels of political power in the Soviet Union influence, and are influenced by, the voluminous writings churned out by less highly placed bureaucrats, scholars and journalists in their specialized journals and newspapers.
Finally, my third aim is to examine the foreign policy of the German Democratic Republic. Although the predominant focus of this study centers on the Soviet Union and its ties with West Germany, it is impossible to understand this topic without taking full account of the policies and attitudes of the East German leadership. Of course, there can be no doubt about the fact that the GDR's room for maneuver in international affairs is limited decisively by the Kremlin; in no way can East Germany be considered a fully independent actor in the world arena, not even with respect to issues affecting its own destiny, such as those connected with the "German question." Moreover, East Germany and the Soviet Union share a number of vital common interests vis-à-vis the FRG which have not varied throughout the entire period to be covered in this book. Not the least of these is the fundamental commitment of both allies to the preservation of the GDR as an internationally recognized and internally stable communist-ruled state, and to secure Bonn's acceptance of these facts.

In spite of the ties that bind East Berlin and Moscow tightly together, however, the two partners have not always seen eye to eye on major questions of how to deal with the Federal Republic. At times they have clashed openly, and with quite ironic results. In the early 1970s, for example, the GDR under the leadership of Walter Ulbricht defiantly opposed the Soviet Union's rapprochement with Bonn; by the middle of the next decade, under Erich Honecker, the East Germans appeared to be more inclined to pursue detente with the FRG than their comrades in the Kremlin. Exactly why these shifts have occurred in East Berlin's policies, and how extensively they have affected Soviet behavior, are questions that occupy a central place in any consideration of Soviet-German relations.

In order to provide some answers to them, it will be necessary to perform the same kinds of analysis on East German foreign policy as on Soviet policy. The relationships between continuity and change, between external behavior and internal decision-making, and between the perceptions of the leadership and those of the secondary elite will therefore receive just as much attention as they apply to the GDR as they will receive with regard to the Soviet Union. The ensuing study will therefore constitute in the truest
sense an exercise in comparative foreign policy. By constantly holding up Soviet perceptions and policies next to East German perceptions and policies on the very same issues affecting relations with the Federal Republic, it will be possible to show how East Berlin has influenced Moscow, and how Moscow has influenced East Berlin. East Germany will be treated here both as a factor affecting Soviet behavior as well as an object of analysis in its own right, possessing state interests and capabilities for foreign policy action, however limited, of its own.

What follows in the next chapters, then, is a comparative study of Soviet and East German perceptions and policy decisions with respect to West Germany from 1963 to 1989. It begins with Nikita Khrushchev's ultimately abortive effort to revive the Soviet Union's long dormant dialogue with West Germany by arranging a summit meeting with Chancellor Erhard in Bonn. It concludes with Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Bonn in the first half of 1989.

Explaining Soviet Policy: Three Domestic Variables

The main thesis of this study is that Soviet -- as well as East German -- policy towards the Federal Republic of Germany has been determined in this period not only by the attempts of Moscow and East Berlin to influence each other, but also by three additional variables: the nature of the decision-making regime in Moscow and East Berlin; elite perceptions of the Federal Republic and its role in East-West relations; and the main directions of Soviet and East German international economic policy, particularly as they pertain to East-West trade.

Before I explain each of these variables at greater length, I should underscore the fact that, in one way or another, all three of them are rooted in the domestic systems of the Soviet Union and the GDR, respectively. The decision-making regime refers to the organization and orientation of political power at the highest echelon; elite perceptions reflect discussions and disagreements within the foreign policy establishment; and East-West trade policy is intimately connected with the performance of the domestic economy. Thus I accept the basic premise of the second group of Soviet foreign policy
analysts described at the outset of this chapter, to the effect that Soviet foreign policy cannot be explained simply by looking at Moscow's external behavior in the international system. While the USSR, like most any other state, may possess certain enduring "objective" interests such as the maintenance of elementary security and the promotion of national well-being, the precise definition of these interests in the context of specific situations, and the ways these interests are pursued in practice, are invariably determined by individual leaders. As the leaders change, perceptions and policies may change also. So, too, the peculiar role played by ideology in Soviet foreign policy may vary from one leader to the next, as the head of the party and other members of the Soviet elite may bend and shape the interpretation of Marxist-Leninist strictures to suit their own priorities as well as the prevailing realities of the day. Our examination of Soviet foreign policy must be sensitive to these variations. The quest for a more comprehensive understanding of why the Soviets behave as they do must therefore delve as deeply as the available information will allow into the internal complexities of decision-making and policy debates.

Although the variables just cited are far and away the most important factors impinging on Soviet and East German policy towards West Germany, one additional factor should also be highlighted. This is the role of public opinion.

Most studies suggest that the public's impact on foreign policy in western democracies is marginal, especially in peacetime. But should we dismiss it entirely when looking at non-democratic systems such as the Soviet Union and the GDR? In the case of the Soviet Union, I believe we can. While public opinion polling has been virtually non-existent on this subject in the USSR, it is safe to say from general observations of the Soviet scene that the great silent majority of the Soviet population has been at the very least permissive, and possibly even supportive, of the main tendencies of Soviet foreign policy towards the Federal Republic of Germany in the period to be investigated here. The East German case, however, is more complicated. The population's impact on the government's foreign policy behavior has traditionally been more acute in the GDR than in the Soviet Union; one need
only think of the effect of the exodus of nearly three million people from East Germany on the decision to build the Berlin Wall as one of the more dramatic examples of this reality. As Germans, the citizens of the GDR have an emotional and, in numerous cases, a personal or familial stake in the improvement of inter-German ties at the official level. In recent years a growing number of East German dissidents, peace activists, youthful protesters and ordinary citizens determined to leave the country have looked to West Germany for support of one form or another, thereby compounding the pressures on the GDR's political authorities. These pressures cannot help but exert some influence on the way East Germany's ruling elite conducts its policies towards the FRG. While East German leaders are rarely candid about these matters in public, their behavior with respect to West Germany frequently reveals their sensitivity to popular attitudes. The influence of public opinion as a major variable affecting East German foreign policy will therefore receive ample attention at the appropriate junctures in the succeeding chapters.

Decision-making Regimes

That Soviet foreign policy is often a function of who is in charge in the Kremlin is a fact that has been amply demonstrated by a number of scholars who have fixed their sights on power struggles or other political processes taking place at the highest levels of party and governmental authority. The policy preferences and priorities of the top leader (usually the chief of the party); the scope and limitations of his authority to pursue these objectives; and the influence of various bureaucratic players in the policy-making game (particularly the military) are among the factors singled out by these analysts as having a crucial bearing on how the Soviet ship of state charts its course across the high seas of international politics. However, as some scholars have indicated, there is a need to systematize our approach to the connection between politics in the Kremlin and the Kremlin's behavior in international politics. There is a need, in short, to devise analytical
categories and to formulate hypotheses designed to increase the level of generalization about this critical nexus between power and policy.

One particularly illuminating approach to this problem reached the conclusion that key aspects of Moscow's foreign policy varied with the way power was distributed at the top of the political hierarchy. Depending upon whether the leading decision-making organs were organized under a single dominant leader, or whether power was shared in any of several different modes of collective leadership, Soviet policy towards the United States was found to exhibit greater or lesser degrees of consistency, coherence, risk-taking propensity and responsiveness to changing conditions in the outside world.5

On the basis of this and other, less rigorous, studies, I propose to relate variations in the conduct and public discussion of Soviet foreign policy towards West Germany to four basic decision-making regimes. (In accordance with this study's comparative perspective, the same categories apply to the GDR.)

The first of these regimes is distinguished exclusively by the distribution of decision-making authority at the top. In fact, power in this regime is not so much "distributed" as it is monopolized by a single dominant leader who is able to impose his will on the other leading members of the party and state hierarchy. Following the term used for this regime type in the study just cited, I shall call this the directive decision-making regime.

The other three regimes are all characterized by a greater degree of power sharing among the predominant leaders. In essence, they may be thought of as communist-style coalition governments. Each is composed of individuals who are joined together on the basis of certain common interests and outlooks, but who may nevertheless differ on specific policies, whether for reasons of political "philosophy," bureaucratic self-interest, rivalry for power or other considerations. The main distinction among these three more collectively organized regimes, as I conceive of them, lies in their predominant political orientation. Accordingly, the three may be labeled the reformist, the conservative, and the centrist decision-making regimes, respectively. I believe that defining the various coalition-type regimes by their basic political orientation is more conducive to explaining the substance of their
foreign policy proclivities than a typology based solely on the way political power is shared within a given regime.

At the same time, however, the ability of any of these four regimes to conduct an effective foreign policy -- to put together a coherent plan, to respond to changing conditions, to make the necessary compromises, and so on -- depends not only on the factors just cited but also on the degree of its internal stability. A stable regime may find it easier to conceptualize and carry out an agreed upon policy than one riven by constant disputes. By the same token, each of these four regime types may traverse a series of phases, starting with a formative period, in which the internal distribution of power and its predominant political orientation are still taking shape, and continuing through a more mature period (one marked by relatively greater stability), before proceeding on to a phase of degeneration, in which the prevailing premises of power and policy come undone. While this cyclical progression is by no means the inevitable fate of all decision-making regimes in Soviet-style systems, evidence of its compelling reality abounds.

Accordingly, as this study proceeds across the period extending from 1963 to 1989, it will pay very close attention to the nature of the decision-making regimes wielding power in Moscow and East Berlin, as I have defined them, as well as to their relative stability and respective phase of development. At various stages along the way, it will relate the regimes in question to Soviet and East German policy towards West Germany by looking not only at the relevant policy decisions taken by the regimes in question, but also at four specific attributes of decision-making that are particularly instructive about how the Soviets and East German conduct foreign policy. (The list could of course be expanded to include additional attributes, but I have deliberately limited the choice to a few which seem especially important.)

These decision-making attributes are, first, policy coherence -- that is, the extent to which the various facets of diplomatic, economic and military initiatives are woven together in a coordinated fashion in pursuit of officially declared policy goals; second, policy responsiveness -- that is, the decision-makers' ability to recognize changes in the international
environment and to adjust their policies accordingly; third, willingness to compromise with foreign governments, a notion that speaks for itself; and fourth, openness to internal debate. This last factor is especially important in clarifying the relationship between decisions and perceptions in Soviet foreign policy. It goes directly to the question of how and when the key decision-makers influence, or are influenced by, public discussions of issues that have an obvious relevance to identifiable foreign policy choices. By focusing intensely on this relationship, it will be possible to arrive at some generalizations about how the organization of power in the primary foreign policy elite relates to the public discussion of policy throughout the foreign policy establishment.

To place the foregoing points in clearer perspective, let us look briefly at some of the ways in which the four decision-making regimes, together with the related factors of stability and phase of development, may correlate with the attributes of foreign policy decision-making just mentioned. For now, these correlations should be regarded merely as hypotheses, to be verified, invalidated or refined in the light of the evidence to be presented in the chapters that follow.

As a result of the overwhelming power it confers on a single leader, the directive decision-making regime may move in any political direction that the leader wishes—reformist, conservative, etc. With all the separate reins of policy-making held firmly in the hands of one individual, one would expect policy coherence to be rather high. However, what the directive decision-making regime gains in coherence it may lose in responsiveness. If the supreme leader is a resourceful and flexible person, his regime may be as responsive as any other; but if he is dedicated to the compulsive pursuit of an idee fixe, the result could be an exceptionally low level of adaptability, as well as an equally diminished willingness to compromise with other governments, whether adversaries or allies. Similarly, a leader driven by an exclusionary policy vision that admits of no alternatives would be prone to close off public debate on the issues. Members of the primary and secondary elites would then be reduced in their speeches and publications to parroting the official wisdom handed down by the leader.
As the next chapters will show, Walter Ulbricht's tenure at the helm of the GDR provides a prime example of the directive regime, complete with its most dysfunctional characteristics.

A reformist coalition is defined by the determination of the principal leader and his closest allies within the leadership to make significant changes in Soviet policies. These changes would necessarily concentrate on the domestic political system for the most part, but shifts in foreign policy soon becomes intertwined with them. Above all, a reformist regime may require a period of calm in the international environment in order to turn its attention more fully to the difficult business of bringing about internal transformations. In addition, reforms centering on the Soviet economy may require an expansion of trade and other economic contacts with the industrialized democracies. Both of these considerations, as well as a host of related ones, would serve to increase the Kremlin's willingness to seek compromises with its principal adversaries (or even with its allies in matters subject to dispute). For the same reasons, a reformist decision-making regime would also be inclined to take advantage of changes in the behavior of other states in order to promote a less hostile international climate, thus increasing its responsiveness. Meanwhile, a reformist regime is the most likely of all four decision-making regimes to encourage a vigorous open discussion of policy-related issues, including matters of foreign policy. Although this discussion may be carefully controlled by the reformist leadership with a view to promoting its own agenda for change, while retaining the party's ability to clamp down the lid of censorship on opinions adjudged to be completely out of bounds, the range of what is permissible to enunciate in public forums would nevertheless be expanded to a greater extent than would be the case under other decision-making coalitions.

The degree to which a reformist regime will produce a coherent foreign policy is problematic, however. Much depends upon the coalition's internal stability. If the leaders who are most responsible for pushing the reform programs are supported by a clear majority of the members of the key decision-making organs (usually the party Politburo and Secretariat), the degree of policy coherence could be relatively high. Thus a commitment to reduce
tensions on a global scale, to forge a significant detente with the West and to accelerate East-West trade would then combine with related initiatives to create the tranquil international conditions conducive to a domestic thaw.

But if the reformist leader or leaders must fight a rearguard struggle with conservatives within the ruling bodies who oppose the extent or pace of the reforms, the result may be a zig-zag foreign policy that reflects internal compromises between the proponents of international detente and more hardline forces resolved to keep domestic as well as foreign policy revisionism within tightly guarded limits. Moreover, a reformist leader trying to cope with an unruly coalition may run the risk that opposition to his domestic initiatives may spill over into his foreign policy undertakings. In this case, opponents of his drive for internal change may come out against foreign policy initiatives they might otherwise favor, but for the fact that increasingly intolerable domestic reforms demand an all-out assault on the leader's authority. Internal instability, in short, would appear to increase the likelihood of foreign policy incoherence in a reformist decision-making regime.

The experiences of Nikita Khrushchev and Mikhail Gorbachev offer rich opportunities to test these propositions against the record in the ensuing chapters.

The reigning consensus in a conservative decision-making coalition rests on individuals and bureaucratic agencies devoted to the preservation of the domestic status quo. The representatives of this type of regime are united in their dedication to the unassailability of the leadership's authority at home and the enhancement of Soviet power in international affairs. A cardinal element of the conservative regime is the enormous deference accorded to the military hierarchy. While the military may not have an absolute veto power over all major foreign policy activities, its wishes are taken into careful consideration by the main political authorities whenever issues having a bearing on security policy come up. The party leader himself may be either a centrist or an unreconstructed hardliner; whatever the case, he is certainly not a reformer. His basic inclination is to make sure that the government's principal policy choices are acceptable to the more
conservative members of the ruling coalition. This may at times entail a process of bargaining and log-rolling but, even so, the leader's personal predilections are not so far removed from those of the conservatives that internal compromises are unreachable.

Under these conditions, the coherence of a conservative decision-making regime's foreign policy should be reasonably high. As with any coalition, however, the chance remains that the separate strands of policy may not fit well together, and may even work at cross-purposes, if a given policy is the result of internal consensnsus-building procedures rather than one chosen because of its inherent optimality. In a communist system as in democratic systems, "satisficing" often carries the day over strict rationality. This is especially the case when the internal consensus confers considerable decision-making authority on its more conservative elements. For example, the coalition's commitment to promoting a robust military development program may run counter to its formally stated desire for political detente and economic cooperation with the West. Indeed, the very definition of "detente" may be understood within such a coalition as including, rather than repudiating, some of the more hard-nosed features of the conservatives' world view. In cases such as these, policy coherence can diminish to such low levels that the credibility and effectiveness of the Soviet position in the international arena may be placed in jeopardy.

Conservative regimes are not by nature incapable of adapting to observable changes in the international environment, nor are they averse to making compromises. However, both their responsiveness and their readiness to grant concessions are subject to the irreducible limitations imposed by their reluctance to undertake major alterations in the status quo at Soviet expense, or to countenance a perceived diminution of Soviet power. This means that conservative decision-making coalitions may find it difficult to change course in the event of new opportunities or impending failures that may demand a reevaluation of the main tenets of the prevailing consensus. It also means that conservative regimes may be resistant to compromises with foreign governments that overstep the boundaries of the conservatives' most cherished principles.
Public discussion of policy issues in a conservative regime may be welcomed, but, as in other areas of the regime's operations, the field of tolerated activity is fairly narrow. Discussions of foreign policy issues must therefore confine themselves to opinions and options deemed acceptable by the decision-makers. Policy debates may still go on within these prescribed parameters, but once the coalition's basic foreign policy orientation and its definition of the international situation is fixed, there may be a tendency on the part of some academicians and journalists to adjust their positions to conform with the official line. (Whether they do so independently of outside pressures or in response to instructions from above may be impossible to determine.) On the assumption that the attenuated of open policy debate reduces the policy-makers' ability to consider new ideas or policy approaches at variance from the prevailing consensus, this means that the entire foreign policy establishment may end up saying and hearing only what the decision-makers prefer to believe.

In sum, a stable conservative decision-making regime's paramount advantage over other regimes may be its ability to project strength both at home and abroad. However, its chief deficiency may turn out to be that, when faced with mounting difficulties or new opportunities, it cannot adapt, it cannot back down, and it cannot learn. The Brezhnev coalition will constitute a vivid example of this type of regime in subsequent chapters.

The centrist decision-making regime is carefully balanced between relatively conservative forces and those who are either reform-minded or, at the very least, highly flexible in their approach to domestic and foreign policy. Neither wing has an inalienable veto privilege in matters of high policy. The linchpin of this type of regime is an adaptable and adroit party leader, one who enjoys the confidence of both of these broadly defined groups and who is therefore able to forge working majorities on policy decisions as they arise without permanently antagonizing those on the losing side of the vote to such an extent that oppositionist cabals come into being against him. By virtue of these defining features, centrist coalitions should display a rather high level of responsiveness and willingness to compromise with foreign governments.
Policy coherence may be somewhat reduced, however, as the hallmark of the centrist regime is its ability to shift course whenever realities make a change in direction mandatory or desirable. What keeps these apparent inconsistencies from getting out of hand is the fact that the center of political gravity in this type of regime is, precisely, the center. The span of opinion is not very wide from one end of the coalition to the other. This minimizes the likelihood of irreconcilable clashes of principle or open confrontations. Change, when it comes, tends to be marginal. Policy extremes, whether in the form of radical reform or a militant resistance to change in foreign or domestic policy, are eschewed by a centrist coalition because they threaten to disturb its delicate internal balance and narrow its range of maneuver.

Open policy debate in a centrist regime should tend to reflect the alternative viewpoints considered acceptable by the members of the coalition. Foreign policy discussion, in particular, would presumably provide rationales for various policy choices under consideration by a decision-making elite that, within the limits specified by its centrist consensus, wishes to keep its options open.

Erich Honecker’s ruling coalition in East Germany constitutes an illustrative working model of the centrist decision-making regime.

The dominant patterns of the four decision-making regimes just adumbrated are most likely to be observed when the regime in question has matured to its fullest potential and has achieved a wide measure of internal stability. As noted earlier, however, each of these regimes usually goes through an initial process of formation, and each may ultimately (though not necessarily) decline into a phase of progressive degeneration. These processes of genesis and decline, respectively, may trigger tendencies of their own that affect the regime’s approach to foreign policy. During either their formative or their degenerative phase, for example, the three coalition-type regimes can be expected to exhibit a low degree of policy coherence, a low degree of responsiveness to outside stimuli, and a correspondingly low willingness to compromise. This occurs because the details of power-sharing and policy direction have yet to be worked out in the initial phase of
development, while these very details, which hold the coalition together during its mature stage, are increasingly called into question as the coalition falls apart. Open policy debate, however, may rise in either of these two phases, as the coalition in the making surveys the available options while the coalition in decline is no longer certain of its purposes. A directive regime has similar problems, but precisely how they are managed depends to a considerable extent on the political style of the leader and on the strength of his opposition.

These phase-related tendencies may serve to reinforce the more mature characteristics of a decision-making regime in some instances, while counteracting them in others. Thus, a conservative coalition that already exhibits a relatively reduced willingness to compromise on certain international issues while at the peak of its power may become even less inclined to make major concessions as its internal coalescence evaporates. By contrast, a reformist regime that manifests a high willingness to compromise once it has firmly consolidated its domestic position may not be ready for serious compromises at the initial stages of its development or may become incapable of making them once it has begun to disintegrate into a collection of warring factions.

How these various decision-making regimes come and go is not the main subject of this study. Nor is it possible here to indicate how these same categories can be applied to other communist states at different periods of their history. For the purposes of this study, the regimes just described will be utilized solely as an independent variable having an impact on Soviet and East German foreign policy. It is time now to look at the second of the domestic variables to be treated here, elite perceptions of West Germany.

Perceptions of the FRG and Its Role in East-West Relations

What are Soviet aims with regard to West Germany? Western specialists on Soviet foreign policy who have addressed this question have come up with several alternative responses. One general tendency, for example, views Soviet policy towards Bonn as essentially hostile and manipulative. A
prominent example of this interpretation holds that Soviet leaders have long sought to detach West Germany completely from its alliance with the United States, above all by achieving the withdrawal of American military forces from the Federal Republic and by maneuvering the West German government into a state of neutrality, whether official or undeclared. Once neutralized, the Federal Republic would then be at the mercy of Soviet whims. This notion forms the centerpiece of the argument that what the Soviets want more generally is the "Finlandization" of all of Western Europe. A variant of this position contends that, at the very least, the Soviets seek to "decouple" Bonn and Washington as much as possible.

Some of those who stress the consciously manipulative purposes of Soviet policy are skeptical, however, about Moscow's desire to bring about a clear and permanent break between Bonn and Washington. They regard the Soviets as highly ambivalent about the desirability of a complete American troop withdrawal from the FRG, inasmuch as a possible result of such a step might be the removal of American restraints on West Germany's military ambitions. Those arguing this point assume that Moscow is even more alarmed at the prospect of a significantly expanded West German military posture than at the maintenance of the American troop presence on the continent. Such fears would be compounded if Bonn were to compensate for the loss of American protection by gaining access to nuclear weapons. One variation on this theme is the notion that the USSR seeks to "contain" the Federal Republic as its minimum goal, while endeavoring to loosen its attachments to the United States as its maximum goal.

Another group of analysts takes the view that, in fashioning their policies towards West Germany (and towards the West more generally), the Soviets are acting largely out of weakness. It is the failure of their own economy, in this view, that impels Soviet leaders to move towards accommodation and detente, even if greater economic dependence on the capitalist world may be the price the Kremlin has to pay for western assistance.

In most cases, scholars and other analysts who put forward these interpretations of the Kremlin's aims arrive at their conclusions by inferring
Soviet motivations from Soviet actions. Occasionally the observations they make about Soviet behavior with respect to West Germany are supported by sporadic references to statements by Soviet leaders or writings by Soviet academicians. However, these allusions to Soviet elite perceptions are rarely elucidated systematically. All too often, individual analysts are content to present what they conceive to be "the" Soviet position on West Germany, without looking attentively at the variety of viewpoints that rise to the surface when the Soviets themselves discuss the Federal Republic in the open press.

A central contention of this study is that the Soviet foreign policy establishment has advanced two divergent sets of views about West Germany during the years under investigation. One view essentially favors overtures to Bonn for the purpose of exploring the possibilities of political accommodation or economic cooperation. It is based on a generally positive appraisal of the FRG's acceptability as a reliable partner in diplomatic or economic undertakings. The other view exhibits greater reluctance to engage in such direct exchanges with the FRG. This perception is reflected in outspokenly negative images of West Germany's political, economic or military ambitions. At times, one or the other of these two images has tended to dominate public discourse about the FRG on the part of Soviet leaders and academicians. But there have also been periods during which the division of opinion on West Germany has been quite vigorous, reflecting serious debate within the Soviet elite. Much the same can be said about East German perceptions of the Federal Republic.

Policy disagreements of this kind have been most in evidence at certain decisive turning points in Soviet-West German relations, when critical decisions have had to be made. Should Khrushchev go to Bonn to meet with Chancellor Erhard in 1964? Under what conditions should Moscow sign a renunciation of force treaty with the Brandt government? Should West Germany be penalized for deploying new intermediate range American missiles in the early 1980s? Should Erich Honecker go to Bonn to meet with Chancellor Kohl? Should Gorbachev make significant concessions to West Germany in the late 1980s? In these and other instances, the pages that follow will demonstrate
that some Soviets, and some East Germans, would have answered these questions by saying yes, while others would have said no. In some cases, the main axis of disagreement falls between Moscow and East Berlin; in others, it is the Soviet elite itself that is most divided; and in still others, the elites of both the USSR and the GDR are each internally split into contending positive and negative camps.

These examples of serious foreign policy contention need to be comprehensively documented and explained. So, too, do the periods of elite consensus that occasionally witness more unified public discussions of the FRG within the Soviet Union and the GDR. As this analysis proceeds, it will seek above all to substantiate one fundamental premise: the images of West Germany that are projected by Soviet and East German political leaders and foreign policy specialists are indicative of genuine policy alternatives. Perceptions, in other words, are directly related to policies.

The articulation of these policy-relevant discussions about the Federal Republic usually revolves around positive or negative depictions of the West German government and its foreign policy orientation, particularly as it pertains to relations with Moscow and East Berlin. Is Erhard a potentially "businesslike" statesman, or is he just a reincarnation of the intransigent Adenauer? Can the Social Democrats be trusted to promote cooperation with the East, or are they just as perfidious as they were in the 1920s? To what extent was Helmut Schmidt personally responsible for the NATO decision to install the new U.S. missiles in Western Europe? How should Helmut Kohl be evaluated? Questions such as these provide the context within which debates over West Germany's reliability as a negotiating partner can be conducted out in the open by the Soviet and East German elites.

In addition to providing assessments of Bonn's foreign policy aims in the short run, a number of specialists in the Soviet Union and the GDR are also engaged in a continuing examination of the long-term tendencies of West Germany's international orientation. The crux of this discussion is the question of where the FRG fits into the evolving pattern of U.S.-West European relations. Is Bonn increasingly moving away from the United States in search of a more independent status in foreign affairs, or is it still firmly
committed to following the U.S. lead in East-West relations? Under what conditions can West Germany be encouraged to assert greater independence from Washington? Such long-range issues are of central relevance to Soviet and East German policy towards the FRG. Indeed, they go right to the heart of the broader aims of Soviet policy as it relates not merely to West Germany, but to the wider horizon of East-West relations in their entirety.

Western observers are themselves divided in their interpretation of Moscow's ultimate aims with respect to the West. As already noted, some maintain that the Finlandization of Western Europe is what Soviet policy is all about. Others, however, suggest that Soviet policy is mainly concerned with inducing the West Europeans to influence American policy towards the USSR and, when appropriate, vice versa. Variants of this position tend to play down the Finlandization thesis while acknowledging that the Soviet Union actively seeks to promote and exploit conflicts between the United States and its West European allies. A few students of Soviet foreign policy have detected divisions within the Soviet establishment on the subject of how to deal with the Atlantic alliance. Jerry Hough, for example, distinguishes between one point of view which favors emphasizing Western Europe as the primary target of Soviet diplomatic efforts, and another viewpoint which insists that the United States must be the main focal point of Moscow's attempts to come to terms with the West. Reaching a roughly similar conclusion, Ernst Kux divides Soviet experts on East-West relations into "Yaltaists," who prefer dealing with the United States, and "Rapalloists," who prefer dealing with Western Europe, and particularly with West Germany. Hannes Adomeit observes three distinct analytical tendencies among Soviet experts concerned with these issues: "Europeanism," a view which encourages neutralism and greater independence from the United States on the part of the West European governments; "Atlanticism," which stresses Soviet-American cooperation in dealing with Europe's problems; and "pan-Europeanism," a combination of certain elements of the first two approaches.

How we categorize contending Soviet viewpoints is a matter of vital importance to our understanding of Moscow's aims and methods in international politics. Whether the Soviet elite is composed exclusively of varying degrees
of hardliners, or includes more moderate forces desirous of a long-term accord with the West, is critical to the West's efforts to ascertain the immediate and future directions of Soviet policy and, not incidentally, to conceive of an informed strategy of its own in the light of these assessments.

Scholars who have attempted to discover and identify differentiated opinions within the Soviet foreign policy establishment have come up with a number of schemes for classifying the various patterns of thought they have observed. One of the more common approaches is to divide Soviet positions into left and right orientations, with the left leaning towards a hardline position and the right favoring a greater degree of accommodation. A variant of this classificatory system groups Soviet foreign policy orientations into hard, moderate and soft lines. A number of analysts who have examined Soviet writings on the United States have proposed additional categories for ordering contending Soviet viewpoints into distinct political tendencies. While all of these analysts agree that divergent opinions do in fact exist in open source publications in the Soviet Union, they may differ not only in the way they classify the various alternative viewpoints, but also on the vital question of how great these divergences really are. Some scholars maintain that there is a fairly wide range of opinion separating hardliners from accommodationists in the Soviet Union, but others emphasize the commonalities that unite these two groups on fundamental issues (such as, for example, an essentially conflictual view of East-West relations).

In an earlier work, I examined Soviet academic writings on U.S.-West European relations and proposed dividing them into "marginal left" and "marginal right" perspectives. While the considerations that led me to these conclusions still seem valid in many respects, I have learned in the course of my research for the present volume that my earlier categories offer at best only a partial explanation of policy differentiation in the Soviet Union on these issues. As my reading of Soviet analyses of West Germany and its role in U.S.-West European relations progressed, it became increasingly evident that four sets of views could be distinguished. Each of them addresses a question that is central to virtually all Soviet thinking about the West: To what extent are relations among capitalist states characterized
by cooperation and unity, and to what extent are they disrupted by conflict and "inter-capitalist contradictions"?

This is an issue that derives its significance from Lenin, who asserted that both cooperative and conflictual tendencies are always operative simultaneously in relations among capitalist states. At any given period, however, one tendency may emerge as dominant over the other. It is therefore the task of Soviet experts on international relations to determine the relative strength of these centrifugal and centripetal tendencies, respectively, and to chart their likely future path. Serious debates have at times broken out over this question, providing Soviet writers with a conceptual framework for discussing alternative approaches to the West in general, and to West Germany in particular. As the subsequent chapters will show, prominent Soviet and East German leaders have also taken sides on these issues, with clearly discernible implications for immediate policy decisions.

The first pattern may be labeled the maximalist orientation. Its distinguishing feature is a generally unfavorable evaluation of western governments and foreign policies, resulting in an unmistakably hardline posture when it comes to defining the Soviet bloc's relations with the West. This viewpoint tends to place greater emphasis on the forces that unite the capitalist world than on the contradictions allegedly tearing it apart.

In this respect, the maximalist position generally stresses the collaborative elements at work in relations between the United States and the Federal Republic, highlighting Bonn's willingly assumed role in "U.S. global strategy." Indeed, as far as West Germany is concerned, the maximalist standpoint adopts an overwhelmingly negative outlook. It would recommend an attitude of utmost circumspection in dealing with the FRG, whose "revanchist essence" is said to mark the policies of even the most pro-detente government in Bonn. Adherants of this view warn against the dangers lurking in politically risky economic contacts with the West, and especially with the FRG. To the extent that the maximalist orientation sanctions cooperation with the West at all, it would appear to do so only on the basis of the maximum possible advantages for the Soviet Union and the GDR, with the minimum possible concessions or risks.
The second pattern may be called the Europeanist orientation. This orientation is characterized by its accent on the primacy of Western Europe in Soviet policy towards the West. Analytically, it is rooted in the perception that there exists a long-term trend in the direction of Western Europe's independence from the United States as the result of increasingly divergent political, economic and military interests. It therefore attaches greater significance to the "contradictions" corroding NATO's unity than to the elements of partnership holding it together. It further contends that Soviet policy can, and should, actively promote and take advantage of these contradictions. Although it acknowledges that favorable Soviet ties with Western Europe can at times have a salutary effect on U.S.-Soviet relations, and that U.S.-Soviet cooperation may exert a positive influence on Soviet-West European relations, the preponderant emphasis of the Europeanist argument falls on the notion that Western Europe is more interested in detente with the socialist states than is the United States. Hence Europeanist analyses of the world scene occasionally combine quite favorable impressions of selected West European governments with highly disparaging comments about U.S. foreign policy.

Most, though by no means all, exponents of the Europeanist viewpoint generally offer positive images of West German foreign policy, drawing clear distinctions between "revanchist" and "realistic" forces in the FRG. These positive images, moreover, are not necessarily confined to West German Social Democrats, but may also apply in varying degrees to certain Christian Democratic leaders such as Chancellors Erhard, Kiesinger or Kohl. Some outspokenly Europeanist analysts would even appear to favor efforts to preserve a positive working relationship with Bonn, as opposed to Washington, in times of acute East-West tension. By contrast, a number of advocates of Europeanism appear to place greater confidence in France than in the Federal Republic, thus suggesting that the Europeanist orientation is a bit more complicated than the term "Rapalloist" would imply. In any event, the main policy prescriptions of the Europeanist tendency would seem to lie in the direction of expanded diplomatic and economic cooperation with Western Europe.

One implication of this view would be that Moscow should confer a
higher priority to influencing West European governments and public opinion in controversial East-West issues of concern to Europe than to dealing primarily with the United States in such issues. Europeanism would thus regard a multipolar approach to the various western capitals as potentially more rewarding than a bipolar relationship with the United States. Another implication of this view is that the Soviet Union would probably be better off without the presence of American troops on the continent, a policy sometimes justified by references to the obstacles standing in the way of West European military cooperation and West Germany's access to nuclear weapons.

The third pattern of argumentation and policy advocacy is what I call the Americanist orientation. This view rests on the assumption that the United States is not only the USSR's principle preoccupation in world affairs generally; more to the point, it is also Moscow's primary interlocutor in East-West relations and in European affairs. The analytical premise underlying this notion is that, while contradictions between the U.S. and Western Europe may well be on the rise, the United States remains the preeminent power in the capitalist camp. As such it frequently succeeds in asserting its will over its European allies, or else acts unilaterally in blatant disregard of its allies' preferences. As a consequence, advocates of the Americanist position would probably argue in private that Moscow must either give prime consideration to Washington in the elaboration of policy towards the West, or at least endeavor to strike a balance between the U.S. and Western Europe in its overall approach. In practice this would call for efforts aimed above all at inducing the West Europeans to influence American policy in favorable directions. In contrast to the Europeanist orientation, the Americanist view would not be exceptionally predisposed to court the West Europeans in hopes of decisively increasing their independence from Washington.

While this concept would by no means preclude direct overtures aimed at improving relations with countries like West Germany, the Americanist posture would tend to suggest that Bonn should not be entitled to special consideration, especially during periods of aggravated East-West discord. Consequently the Americanist orientation exhibits shifting positive and
negative images of the FRG, depending on circumstances. Sometimes these images can be noticeably more negative than the ones conveyed by analysts more inclined to Europeanism. Moreover, the Americanist viewpoint is not entirely averse to a continuing American military presence in West Germany, on the express grounds that an intensified West European -- and above all West German -- military effort in its absence might be much more detrimental to Soviet interests than the status quo. In essence, the Americanist orientation is more comfortable with a bipolar superpower relationship -- whether cooperative or confrontational -- than with the frustrations, and potential dangers, of a multipolar balancing act in relations with the capitalist world.

Finally, the fourth pattern may be called the Atlanticist orientation. This pattern lies in between the Europeanist and Americanist orientations, and is characterized by a tendency to place roughly equal emphasis on each of the two tendencies, the centripetal and the centrifugal. Quite frequently, analysts who employ this mode of argumentation will portray the intense contradictions unraveling the U.S.-West European relationship in some areas (for example, economic relations) as being counterbalanced by equally intense cooperation in others (e.g., the military sphere). In terms of policy prescription, the Atlanticist orientation would appear to be the most ambiguous of the four, since its talmudic world view points out both the existence of distinct limits to Western Europe's prospective independence from the United States as well as the presence of exploitable opportunities for exacerbating the conflicts separating Western Europe from the United States. On the whole, the Atlanticist viewpoint would seem to recommend opportunistic efforts to favor either Washington or Western Europe as the occasion demands, playing off one against the other without anticipating an apocalyptic break-up of the western alliance in the foreseeable future. At times, however, the tone of Atlanticist analyses can be quite hostile in their portrayal of both the U.S. and Western Europe, thus suggesting a hardline policy attitude that would stress the need for utmost caution and toughness in pursuing this zigzag approach.

In keeping with these outlooks, the Atlanticist orientation regards West Germany as a source of serious conflicts with the United States, but
insists that Bonn seeks to keep these conflicts confined to the framework of the Atlantic alliance. While the FRG may indeed be striving for greater autonomy from the U.S., its main purpose in doing so is to improve its own bargaining position, and hence its own influence, within NATO. As a result, proponents of the Atlanticist viewpoint paint a mixed picture of the Federal Republic, with contrasting positive and negative images that reflect the complexities of Bonn's ambivalent relationship with the United States.

As I have just described them, these four orientations represent ideal types. Precisely how they are presented by Soviet and East German writers in actual practice, with all their caveats and nuances, will be a major preoccupation of this study. Moreover, as already indicated, there will be a concerted effort to relate these arguments as articulated by members of the secondary elite to the statements and actions of the decision-makers. Can the various Soviet and East German leaders who have exercised power in our period be identified with the maximalist, the Europeanist, the Americanist or the Atlanticist orientations? Are any of the decision-making regimes defined in the preceding pages consistently associated with one or another of the four outlooks? And, most importantly, what do these discussions about U.S.-West European relations tell us about the policy choices taken by Soviet and East German decision-makers in their dealings with the Federal Republic? These and related questions occupy a considerable portion of this study's central concerns.

Soviet and East German Views on East-West Trade

The last main variable impinging on Soviet and East German policy towards the Federal Republic centers on the issue of East-West trade. As one scholar has shown in elaborate detail, the desirability of expanded trade and technology exchange with the West has been a subject of intense debate at all levels of the political establishment ever since the inception of the Soviet state.\textsuperscript{22} It has also been a matter of controversy in the GDR. During the period under consideration here, the main question has not been whether the Soviets or East Germans will trade with West Germany, but rather how much, at
what political price, and towards which domestic ends? These and related
issues have sparked vigorous debates both within the Soviet and East German
elites as well as between them.

In some instances, perceived weaknesses in the domestic economy have
prompted decision-makers in Moscow and East Berlin to step up their economic
contacts with the West Germans. Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Gorbachev and Honecker
have all justified detente with Bonn on the basis of its recognized economic
benefits. But these leaders have not always adopted the same rationale when
defining the extent or ultimate purposes of economic cooperation with the FRG.
Brezhnev, for example, changed his mind on this issue, switching from a
relatively reserved proponent of intensified trade to one of its most
enthusiastic supporters. The latter position was not universally applauded
within Brezhnev’s conservative Politburo. Gorbachev has been an even more
vocal advocate of East-West trade, and has sought to widen its institutional
scope with the aim of furthering his plans for the restructuring of the Soviet
economy (perestroika).

In contrast to these pro-trade views, some members of the Soviet and
East German elites have expressed fears that excessive long-term economic
dependence on the West, and particularly on West Germany, might result in
debilitating political dependence. This, in essence, was Walter Ulbricht’s
view. Scholars studying the GDR in the 1963-1971 period have largely
overlooked the extent to which Ulbricht’s opposition to detente with Bonn was
tinged with economic trepidations. So great were his concerns, in fact, that
Ulbricht spearheaded a number of significant changes in East Germany’s
domestic economic policies largely in response to the challenges he perceived
in East Germany’s international environment. This connection between
Ulbricht’s foreign policy and his domestic economic priorities will receive
thorough coverage in later chapters.

In sum, the analysis of this last variable, like the previous two,
will trace the linkages between foreign and domestic policy in the Soviet
Union and the GDR, as well as the links between publicly articulated
perceptions and the major policy decisions taken by the leadership.
Caveat Lector

Now that the basic outlines of this study have been elucidated, a few remarks about the its underlying assumptions and methods of procedure are in order. While much of what follows will be old hat to practiced students of Soviet affairs, it deserves to be stated explicitly, if only to avoid misunderstandings about the premises that govern my approach.

First, I do not uncritically assume that the policy discussions and debates that are published in the Soviet or East German press represent an exact duplication of the conversations that take place behind the closed doors of government offices, or even academic lounges, in Moscow and East Berlin. We are dealing, after all, with material that has been pressed through the mill of official censors (or written with the censors firmly in mind). Inevitably, important details of the Soviet and East German policy-making process remain obscured behind a wall of secrecy. It is reasonable to assume, however, that the literature and statements released for public consumption are at the very least broadly indicative of the issues and policy choices confronting political leaders and analysts, and that the divergent positions observable in print do in fact mirror, however obliquely, at least some of the viewpoints under discussion in camera. This assumption is particularly justified if the issues and policy options discussed in open forums appear to "make sense" when viewed against the background of the known realities — that is, the facts as we see them in the West — about Soviet or East German foreign policy.

Nevertheless, however faithful we may try to be to the writer's true intentions when reading censored literature, it is perhaps inevitable that the meanings we ascribe to these esoteric communications are ultimately a matter of interpretation on the part of the analyst. Mindful of this fact, I have tried to be as sensitive as possible to the nuanced and often quite subtle shadings of emphasis with which policy positions can be articulated in the Soviet Union and the GDR. Usually the intended meaning of a word or phrase cannot be determined without a close reading of the entire text. Accordingly, I have tried wherever possible to derive the messages being conveyed from the
full context in which they appear. In my view, this form of what may be
called contextual content analysis is preferable to other analytical
techniques, such as quantitative content analysis, that pick out selected
words or phrases without taking due account of the various meanings they may
acquire as part of a larger argument or statement. In effect, I have let the
Soviets and East Germans speak for themselves as much as possible, in many
instances citing key passages verbatim from their writings and speeches.

Another detail that should be borne in mind is that my efforts to
categorize various elite communications focuses mainly on thought tendencies
rather than on groups or factions. Thus I prefer to look at such things as
"Europeanist orientations" rather than "Europeanists," or "Americanist
viewpoints" rather than "Americanists." To be sure, some individuals
consistently embrace only one of the four interpretations of U.S.-West
European relations described earlier, and I shall try to determine whether
there are any institutional explanations for these examples of consistency.
(Are members of the military, for example, consistently maximalist in their
outlook? Are the members of certain international affairs research
institutes consistently Europeanist or Americanist?) However, some members
of the elite are not always so consistent; some change their views over time,
while others cannot be readily classified at all. Analyzing their viewpoints
in terms of thought tendencies rather than in terms of fixed groups of
individuals establishes a stable backdrop against which changes in the
positions of various personages can be more easily tracked.²³

I should also point out that, from here on, I shall generally use the
term "images" as opposed to "perceptions" when referring to Soviet and East
German characterizations of West Germany or of other aspects of the
international scene. Strictly speaking, images are descriptions of phenomena
as articulated in words. A perception is a mental cognition or interpretation
of reality. Whereas images are spelled out in language, perceptions are
locked away in the mind of the speaker or writer. In practice, analysts of
published Soviet sources are unavoidably limited to interpreting what the
Soviets say: we cannot be certain about what they may "really think."
Usually, however, the general sense of Soviet perceptions can be inferred from
the publicly expressed images. This is true above all because, in communist esoteric communications, images quite often are intentional political messages, deliberately contrived to convey distinct policy positions. To refer to an example employed earlier, negative images of West Germany are normally intended to signify a hostile policy orientation, whereas more positive images quite often are expressions of a more forthcoming position.

Finally, I have sought to concentrate on those issues which are manifestly topics of internal debate within the USSR and the GDR. I am less concerned with analyzing the foreign propaganda efforts of these two governments, which are mainly directed at influencing policy or public opinion abroad.

Sources and organization

The sources consulted for this study center above all on the leading foreign affairs journals and other relevant policy-oriented publications published in the Soviet Union and the GDR. To be precise, I have examined every article of relevance to the issues treated in this study that have appeared between 1963 and 1989 in Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnoshenya (the monthly publication of the Institute on the World Economy and International Relations in Moscow); International Affairs (the official English translation of Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn', a journal with close links to the Soviet Foreign Ministry); SShA (the journal of the Institute on the USA and Canada); Kommunist (the leading theoretical journal of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union); Voprosy ekonomiki; Deutsche Aussenpolitik (published until 1983 by the Institute for International Relations in the GDR); Einheit (the monthly journal of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany); and Wirtschaftswissenschaft. These periodicals may be regarded as representing the mainstream of public foreign policy discussion in the USSR and the GDR. In all, I have read more than two thousand articles appearing in them. My reading of other journals, as well as of daily newspapers such as Pravda, Izvestia, Krasnaia zvezda and Neues Deutschland, has been extensive but more
selective. I have also read a large number of books published in the Soviet Union and East Germany, most of which are included in the bibliography.

For the views of the decision-makers, I have examined nearly all of the speeches addressing foreign policy issues in this period by the key members of the primary elite who speak out on foreign policy issues with some regularity. In all of these efforts my research has been greatly facilitated by the Daily Reports published by the U.S. Foreign Broadcast Information Service. Finally, interviews with a number of the academicians and journalists cited in my study, which I conducted in Moscow in the spring of 1987, were very useful in clarifying my understanding of their views.

The chapters that follow are arranged chronologically. Within each chapter I have sought to relate the unfolding course of events to the principal variables that, in my view, best explain the content and purposes of Soviet and East German behavior with respect to West Germany. The concluding chapter draws together the main themes pursued in the preceding ones. It also offers some generalizations regarding the formulation, conduct, and relative success or failure of Soviet and East German policy towards the Federal Republic of Germany.
NOTES

1. Particularly representative of the externally oriented approach to the study of Soviet foreign policy are the works of Adam B. Ulam, especially *Expansion and Coexistence* (New York: Praeger, 1968) and *Dangerous Relations: The Soviet Union in World Politics, 1970-1982* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983). For a recent statement of the view that Soviet Union behaves like a typical great power, see Barry R. Posen, *Competing Images of the Soviet Union,* *World Politics,* vol. xxxix, no. 4 (July 1987), pp. 579-597. Another work which stresses the great power elements in Soviet policy and minimizes the impact of divergent foreign policy viewpoints in the Soviet elite is Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Game Plan* (...) The notion of the Soviet Union as a revolutionary state has been advanced by Henry Kissinger in *A World Restored* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957) and ...


Eran suggests that, in the Brezhnev era, Soviet officials relied heavily on the input of academic specialists, but also urged them to reach a consensus position on many issues. Hough notes that the influence of academicians on policy-makers is at best indirect, but he points out that some of these scholars occasionally interact with Foreign Ministry or party officials in inter-agency committees or when preparing classified memos. Bialer also notes this "staff function" that Soviet academicians perform for the leadership, but warns that it may be misleading to deduce the views of the leaders from the writings of the scholars.


10. See, for example, the chapters by Hillel Ticktin and Antonio Carlo in Egbert Jahn, ed., Sozioökonomische Bedingungen der sowjetischen Aussenpolitik (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 1975). The English language version of this book is ....... [TO BE SUPPLIED]


13. See the chapters by Robert Legvold, Angela Stent Yergin and John Lehman in Ginsburgs and Rubinstein, supra.

14. Hough......[TO BE SUPPLIED]


21. Lenin wrote that, in relations among capitalist states, "two trends exist: one, which makes an alliance of all the imperialists inevitable; the other, which places the imperialists in opposition to each other -- two trends, neither of which has any form foundations." "Report on Foreign Policy Delivered at a Joint Meeting of the All Russia Central Executive Committee and the Moscow Soviet, May 14, 1918," in V. I. Lenin, Collected Works (Moscow: Progess Publishers, 1965), vol. 27, p. 369.


CHAPTER TWO
KHRUSHCHEV'S THWARTED INITIATIVE: 1964

In 1964, Nikita Khrushchev embarked on what proved to be his last major foreign policy initiative. Beginning in March, the Soviet leader communicated to the West German government his desire for a meeting with Ludwig Erhard, who had assumed the office of chancellor in October of the previous year. This would have marked the first Soviet-West German summit since 1955, when Konrad Adenauer, Erhard's predecessor, journeyed to Moscow for talks that resulted in the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic. In pursuit of the new initiative, Khrushchev in July dispatched his son-in-law, Alexei Adzhubei (who was also the editor of Izvestia), to West Germany for the purpose of reaffirming the Soviet leader's interest in reviving the Soviet-West German dialogue. An invitation went out to Khrushchev in early September, and plans began to go forward in Bonn and Moscow for Khrushchev to visit West Germany sometime in early 1965.

Of course, the proposed summit meeting never took place. In mid-October, Khrushchev was removed from power by a coalition of Soviet leaders led by Leonid Brezhnev and Alexei Kosygin. In view of the timing of the palace coup, some analysts of Soviet affairs have wondered whether Khrushchev's ouster was motivated, at least in part, by fears within the Kremlin hierarchy that Khrushchev was about to "sell out" the GDR in some form of grand bargain with West Germany. While no new evidence has come to light which might put all speculation to rest on this matter, a close reading of the available sources suggests that opposition to Khrushchev's demarche towards Bonn was indeed prevalent within the Soviet foreign policy establishment throughout 1964, but that Khrushchev had no intention of negotiating a sweeping settlement of the German problem at East Germany's expense. Rather, it appears that the controversies engendered by Khrushchev's diplomacy provided one more pretext among many others which Khrushchev's opponents in the CPSU Presidium seized upon when drawing up their brief against him. These
controversies were quite visible in the Soviet Union, where arguments both for and against Khrushchev's germinating dialogue with Bonn could be read in the writings of the secondary elite. Added to these internal disputes, the Soviet leadership also had to contend with Walter Ulbricht and the East German authorities, who made their opposition to Khrushchev's demarche unequivocally clear.

In developing his overture to West Germany, Khrushchev appears to have been motivated by three primary considerations. The first was economic. In late 1963, Khrushchev announced that the USSR urgently required a major overhaul of its chemical industry. Soviet agriculture, in particular, was in need of increased supplies of chemical fertilizer. Khrushchev made it known that Moscow would seek western assistance not only for direct imports of nitrogen fertilizer, but also for aid in constructing new chemical plants in the Soviet Union. In March, just as Khrushchev was signaling his interest in a meeting with Erhard, the Soviet government signed an agreement to purchase a herbicide plant from Krupp. Adzhubei pursued these efforts in July, when he met with leading executives from such West German manufacturing giants as Krupp, Thyssen, Hoechst and others.

Khrushchev's second motivation was to explore the possibilities of drawing Bonn away from the United States. In justifying this endeavor, Khrushchev openly referred to the "splits, cracks and breaches" allegedly unraveling the Atlantic alliance.

Finally, Khrushchev was also interested in reiterating directly to Erhard the USSR's principal demands on West Germany. These included the necessity of West German recognition of the postwar territorial status quo, and above all recognition of the "existence" of the GDR; acceptance of the legal separation of West Berlin and the Federal Republic; and a West German pledge not to seek nuclear weapons, or even to participate in such NATO nuclear-sharing schemes as the proposed Multilateral Force (MLF). Together these may be considered Moscow's minimum demands in its dealings with Bonn, and Khrushchev, far from showing signs of diverging from them in 1964, repeatedly reaffirmed them.
Nevertheless, Walter Ulbricht was sufficiently alarmed at the prospect of a separate Moscow-Bonn dialogue that he mounted a vigorous campaign to prevent it from taking place. The SED leadership appeared to be especially concerned about a potentially significant increase in Soviet-West German economic cooperation. Accordingly, in April the East German government sardonically declared that "the GDR is not willing to sell its political rights to the revanchists for nitrogen or anything else." Ulbricht announced an ambitious chemical modernization program of his own, palpably designed to convince Moscow that East Germany, not West Germany, should be its primary economic partner, both for now and in the future. The GDR combined these measures with devastatingly critical comments about West German economic "imperialism," spearheaded by a speech by SED Politburo member Albert Norden who lambasted as "fascist" the very firms whose executives Adzhubei had just met while in the FRG.

Against Khrushchev's assertion that there were growing "contradictions" in the western camp, the East German primary and secondary elites insisted that Western Europe, and above all West Germany, were solidly united behind the United States. As the Soviet media made positive references to the Rapallo and Genoa conferences of 1922, the East Germans offered grim reminders of the Locarno treaty of 1925, through which Germany had moved closer to the West. Finally, as Khrushchev made it clear that he preferred to establish a Soviet dialogue with Bonn right away, while relegating negotiations between the FRG and the GDR to a subsequent phase of diplomacy, the East German leadership advertized its displeasure at being pushed to the sidelines, and insisted that no progress towards detente in Europe could be achieved without immediate inter-German talks. The Soviets tried to mollify Ulbricht with a Soviet-GDR Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. The treaty, signed on June 12, reflected Khrushchev's priorities rather than Ulbricht's however, and the USSR delayed its ratification for three months.

By that time, Khrushchev's political star was visibly on the wane. In early September, a West German embassy official was mysteriously attacked with an injection of mustard gas, a deed quite possibly engineered by internal
opponents of Khrushchev's opening to Bonn. By early October, Brezhnev and Suslov implied that they would provide more reliable support for the GDR than Khrushchev. On the night of October 14-15, Khrushchev was deposed.

An analysis of the writings of Soviet and East German foreign affairs specialists reveals interesting differences. Soviet writers were very divided in their portrayals of the Erhard government, with positive characterizations of recent shifts in Bonn's foreign policy contrasting openly with more negative appraisals that denounced Erhard as a reincarnation of Adenauer. These arguments were in turn buttressed by Europeanist analyses of U.S.-West European relations, which were obviously supportive of Khrushchev's opening to Bonn, and by maximalist analyses, which in effect argued against Khrushchev's initiative. A similar debate occurred between advocates and foes of wider Soviet economic contacts with the West. These divergences within the secondary elite in the USSR reflected the ambivalence within the Soviet decision-making elite on Khrushchev's diplomatic foray, an ambivalence that developed into a decision by Khrushchev's opponents in the Presidium to stop his German initiative in its tracks once they took power.

By contrast, the East German secondary elite tended to line up squarely behind Ulbricht's maximalist position on all questions except the issue of east-west trade. On this latter question, there was some evidence of a dispute between those writers who joined with Ulbricht in opposing a significant expansion of trade with the FRG, and those who favored expanding economic ties with the West, an attitude known in the GDR as Westdrall.

As in the Soviet Union, the writings of the secondary elite in the GDR were broadly indicative of the policy orientations of the leadership. While most East German writings tended to mirror Ulbricht's dominant position in the SED, Soviet writings reflected an ambivalent, and quite possibly divided, Soviet decision-making elite.
Conclusions

The evidence indicates that Khrushchev's initiative towards Bonn was thwarted primarily because of his inability to stabilize his power within the Soviet leadership. As a reformer who sought to promote the de-Stalinization of Soviet political and cultural life, to reorganize party and government structures, and to decentralize economic planning procedures, Khrushchev had incurred the animosity of senior political figures, as well as countless bureaucrats, who were reluctant to move ahead with these and other proposed changes. Khrushchev also had alienated high ranking military officials through his plans for troop reductions. These and additional familiar aspects of Khrushchev's domestic reform programs, together with such glaring foreign policy failures as the Cuban missile crisis and the growing rift with China, proved to be his undoing. In essence, these problems forged a broad-based anti-Khrushchev coalition that was determined to bring the Soviet leader down. Khrushchev's German initiative became caught up in this general anti-Khrushchev campaign.

Significantly, statements by Brezhnev and Suslov in support of the GDR made just weeks before Khrushchev's dismissal seemed to signal opposition to the prospective Khrushchev-Erhard summit, but neither of these successors to Khrushchev's mantel repeated Ulbricht's call for immediate inter-German negotiations. The events of the next several years would confirm the impression raised by these facts that Brezhnev, Suslov and company were not opposed to a Moscow-Bonn dialogue with Bonn per se (as Ulbricht certainly was); rather, their opposition to it in 1964 was motivated mainly by the desire to get rid of Khrushchev.

Thus the flip-flops in Moscow's policy towards West Germany in 1964 can best be explained in terms of the political instabilities in the Kremlin associated with the last phases of Khrushchev's always shaky reformist coalition. While Khrushchev was still at the helm, Soviet policy exhibited a fairly high level of coherence (expressed desires for detente combined with Khrushchev's hopes for broader East-West economic cooperation and arms
reductions in some areas), a quick responsiveness to the new situation in Bonn as Erhard replaced Adenauer, and at least the appearance of some willingness to compromise with the FRG in the future. By September and certainly October, however, these attributes of Soviet policy towards the FRG were summarily reversed. As Khrushchev fell from grace, and then from power, Moscow's German policy plummeted to lower levels of coherence, responsiveness to the possibilities created by Erhard's desire for talks, and willingness to compromise with Bonn on any outstanding issue. A lively public debate about West Germany, with competing positive and negative images of Erhard's government vying for the attention of readers of the open press, reflected these internal conflicts. Khrushchev’s Atlanticist orientation was replaced, for the moment at least, by official silence on the status of U.-S.-West European relations.

By contrast, Walter Ulbricht presided over a largely subservient Politburo and Secretariat. The East German press obsequiously reproduced his uniformly anti-Bonn attitudes, with virtually no debate. Ulbricht himself admitted that East German economists and scientists had advised against his proposals for rapidly accelerating chemical production, an initiative which he pushed forward apparently on his own authority. Ulbricht's policy at this time, reflecting an adamantly maximalist view of East-West relations, displayed a high degree of coherence (with his plans for intensified economic development closely attuned to his attempts to derail the Moscow-Bonn summit); a low degree of responsiveness (rather than adapt GDR policy to the new situation, he flatly opposed any change in the status quo in relations with the FRG); and an iron-clad resistance to compromise, with either Erhard or Khrushchev. It was Ulbricht's unchallenged authority in the GDR, however, together with his untiring public opposition to Khrushchev's West German policy, that added yet one more stone to the heavy load of political opposition to Khrushchev that ultimately tipped the scales against the Soviet leader in October 1964.
CHAPTER THREE
PROSPECTS FOR CHANGE IN EUROPE: 1965-1967

Although the Soviet leaders who deposed Khrushchev in 1964 reaffirmed their support for the GDR and broke off negotiations on a summit with the West German government, it was not immediately apparent that they had completely repudiated Khrushchev’s bid to improve ties with Bonn. Expressions of solidarity with East Germany did not necessarily mean full endorsement of Ulbricht’s intransigent maximalism. Over the course of the period from 1965 to the end of 1967, it became increasingly evident that key members of the post-Khrushchev leadership shared many of the same concerns that had prompted Khrushchev to move in Bonn’s direction.

This became especially apparent after the establishment of the Grand Coalition government in December 1966. Prior to that time, Kremlin decision-makers displayed a marked ambivalence towards the FRG. In 1965, for instance, Soviet leaders tended towards the negative side of the spectrum in their remarks on West Germany. Few of them, however, were as categorical as Ulbricht in his unrelenting condemnation of the FRG.

Significantly, the Soviet secondary elite displayed a wide variety of views both on West Germany itself, and on the broader issue of U.S.-West European relations. Positive portrayals of selected features of West German politics and foreign policy were interspersed among predominantly negative critiques of the FRG. Opinions were especially divided on the present and future course of the SPD. Meanwhile, analysts of political relations among the NATO states presented a diversity of arguments, representing maximalist, Europeanist, Americanist and Atlanticist orientations, respectively. This diversity of opinion on West Germany and the status of U.S.-West European relations can best be explained as the reflection of a new decision-making coalition in its formative stages. With power relationships still in a state of flux in the Politburo, and with major foreign policy initiatives still on hold, the new leadership team in the Kremlin probably welcomed a debate on these issues so as to examine its options for the future.
The Soviet primary elite continued to appear divided on a number of foreign policy issues at the 23rd CPSU Congress, held in March 1966. While Brezhnev uttered sharp criticisms of the FRG, emphasizing Bonn's collusion with the United States, Foreign Minister Gromyko adopted a more balanced stance, mixing critical observations with expressions of hope for a positive turnabout in Bonn's relations with the USSR. At the same time, Gromyko spoke out in favor of improved relations with the United States, especially with respect to negotiations on a nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT), which could be used to deny West Germany access to nuclear weapons. Gromyko's remarks contained a judicious mixture of Europeanist and Americanist elements, a combination the exemplified what may be called the Atlanticist tendency in Soviet foreign policy. In practical terms, this orientation is characterized by a tendency to switch back and forth between overtures to the United States and overtures to Western Europe, as justified by the opportunities of the moment, without moving exclusively towards one or the other of these two patterns. In essence, this was the approach favored by Khrushchev, and Gromyko showed every sign of favoring the flexibility this Atlanticist orientation conferred on Soviet policy-makers.

Other speakers at the party congress appeared to back Gromyko's line (eg., Kosygin, Podgorny), while still others took a staunchly hardline approach towards the FRG (eg., Shelest, Malinovsky). Divergent viewpoints were also aired on military spending and East-West trade.

Once the Grand Coalition was installed in office in December 1966, Brezhnev edged closer towards a more accommodating posture towards Bonn. While the Soviet leadership exhibited a marked reluctance to attack the new Bonn cabinet during its first months in office, Ulbricht rejected the Grand Coalition from the start as simply another "rotten egg" West German government unwilling to accept the realities of postwar Europe. Ulbricht's alarm intensified in early 1967, as Romania established diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic. At this point, the Soviets rallied to East Germany's defense. At a gathering of Warsaw Pact leaders held in Karlovy Vary in April 1967, it was agreed that no other East European states would normalize
diplomatic ties with the FRG until Bonn agreed to recognize the GDR. This policy was dubbed the "Ulbricht doctrine" in the West.

A close reading of the speeches made by Soviet and East German leaders at this time reveals that significant differences nevertheless persisted in their respective attitudes towards the new West German government. Whereas Ulbricht was not to be outdone in his bromidic assaults on the Grand Coalition, Brezhnev tempered his criticisms of Bonn with more positive assessments of a possible upturn in Soviet-West German relations. To some extent, the Soviet leader was reticent about precluding the possibility that West Germany might yet begin to adopt a foreign policy posture more independent of the United States.

This prospect was in keeping with the increasingly Europeanist bent of Soviet foreign policy over the past year, an inclination promoted in considerable measure by President de Gaulle's decision to remove France from the military structure of NATO, followed by his visit to the USSR in the summer of 1966. Indeed, several analysts of East-West affairs in the Soviet Union were placing increasing emphasis on the "contradictions" in U.S.-West European relations. Precisely where the Grand Coalition stood in this process was a matter of open debate. While some analysts voiced hope of a potential swing towards greater "realism" in West German policy, a possibility regarded as especially promising in the case of the SPD, other Soviet writers expressed greater skepticism about Bonn's priorities, with some of them harshly denouncing the SPD leadership's foreign policy. There was no ambivalence in Ulbricht's analysis of these issues, however. At the Karlovy Vary conference, he testily remarked that it was simply "not true" that members of the West German government, including Willy Brandt, wished to enhance Bonn's independence from the United States; all of them, he insisted, were adamantly committed to the "Bonn-Washington axis."

As this period came to a close, it was evident that a potentially significant rift was developing between Soviet decision-makers, who were ambivalent about the Grand Coalition government but remained open to the prospects for a favorable turn, and the East German leadership, which
uncompromisingly rejected any dialogue with Bonn except on maximalist terms. These viewpoints were reflected in the analyses of the international situation presented by representatives of the Soviet and East German primary and secondary elites, respectively. While the Soviets tended increasingly towards a Europeanist orientation, and publicly debated the future of West German policy and the role of the SPD, the East Germans were firmly wedded to a maximalist interpretation of U.S.-West German relations and to a hostile position on the SPD. Once again, the writings of the secondary elites in both countries were broadly indicative of the general disposition of the decision-makers.

Conclusions

Soviet policy towards West Germany in the 1965-67 period in many respects represented the product of a decision-making regime that was still in its formative stages. To be sure, power in the Politburo was steadily moving towards Brezhnev (backed by Suslov), and away from Kosygin and Podgorny. In the process, it was also moving in a decidedly conservative direction. Kosgin's hopes for economic reform were essentially dashed by Brezhnev and the forces supporting him by 1965; hopes for a reduction in arms expenditures voiced by Podgorny (and probably shared by Kosygin) were effectively countered by Brezhnev and Suslov, both of whom asserted the necessity of expanded military strength. Brezhnev's speech at the 1966 Party Congress gave evidence of the new Soviet leader's conservative leanings.

Nevertheless, the post-Khrushchev leadership was not unmindful of changes in the international environment, particularly those transpiring in U.S.-French relations and in the dramatic entry of the SPD into the cabinet in Bonn. What the Brezhnev-led coalition lacked at this point, however, was a coherent strategy for dealing with these changes. Public debates on West Germany and U.S.-West European relations reflected uncertainty as to where these trends might lead. In the absence of a coherent plan that would specify the political, economic and military components of Moscow's response to these
new opportunities, Soviet policy exhibited only a moderate degree of responsiveness. De Gaulle was given encouraging signals and was welcomed to Moscow; negotiations with the Kiesinger government on a renunciation of force treaty were initiated. However, the Soviets showed no willingness to compromise with either France or West Germany on basic issues that were of paramount importance to De Gaulle or the Grand Coalition. Soviet proposals on inter-bloc relations were blatantly intended to lure the West Europeans out of their alliance with the United States completely, something not even De Gaulle favored; and the warming trend in relations with the Kiesinger-Brandt government turned frosty after Bonn established diplomatic relations with Romania. The renunciation of force negotiations bogged down as neither Bonn nor Moscow was ready at this stage to make major concessions. The Soviets were willing to deal with Bonn only on the basis of the FRG’s acceptance of the postwar territorial status quo, including recognition of the GDR, and the Grand Coalition government was not prepared to go this far.

The Soviet leadership was by no means entrenched in a maximalist position, however, and the debates in the open press on West Germany and U.S.-West European relations offered striking evidence that the Brezhnev coalition was carefully examining its options.

Once again, the Ulbricht government in East Germany presented a stark contrast to these trends in the Soviet Union. As the leader of a tightly managed directive regime, Ulbricht saw to it that his maximalist opposition to any serious dialogue with the FRG was the order of the day throughout the East German elite. One of the leading proponents of a more relaxed inter-German relationship in the SED, Erich Apel, fell victim to Ulbricht’s rigid insistence on linking the East Germany as closely as possible to the USSR, even if the GDR was materially disadvantaged in the bargain. Apel committed suicide in 1965, ostensibly because of his opposition to the terms of the latest Soviet-GDR trade treaty. Apel was known to favor not only “a wide detente” with the FRG, but an expanded economic cooperation between the two German states as well.
Ulbricht's highly coherent world view wedded his maximalist, anti-Bonn foreign policy to an economic orientation that preferred to look East rather than West. (Of course, the GDR maintained trade and other economic relations with West Germany, but Ulbricht's discomfort at this necessity of life for the GDR manifested itself in a campaign to make East Germany "disturbance free" from the FRG's economic machinations in the future. This was the so-called Störfreimachen campaign.) Ulbricht's foreign policy also demonstrated a low level of responsiveness to the changes taking place in Bonn, and an equally low willingness to compromise. Once again, the veritable absence of public debate in the GDR served silent testimony to the unassailability of Ulbricht's predominance.

CHAPTER FOUR
THE CZECH CRISIS ...D ULBRICHT'S GRAND DESIGN

The Czech crisis dominated events in both the USSR and East Germany throughout 1968. With the installation of Alexander Dubcek as head of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in January, a train of events was set in motion which led to rising concern in both Moscow and East Berlin about the "democratization" process taking place inside Czechoslovakia, as well as about the foreign policy implications of the Dubcek leadership's opening to the West. Ultimately, these concerns culminated in the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in August.

From the very outset, it was Ulbricht and the SED leadership who led the charge against the reformist impulses of the new Czech leaders. Stern warnings that the Czech government was overstepping the accepted boundaries of one-party rule began issuing from East Germany as early as January. The Soviets did not begin publicly criticizing the Czech reformers until March.

While the escalating polemics of Soviet and East German leaders against the Czech reform movement have been amply documented by other scholars, it is less well known that a critical component of the GDR's
campaign against the Prague Spring involved vital economic considerations. A central theme propagated by the East German media, as well as by Walter Ulbricht personally, was that Dubček's quest for economic assistance from the West (and, most importantly, from West Germany) threatened to place Czechoslovakia in a relationship of "economic dependence" on the West, a condition that was but a short step away from "political dependence." This danger was perceived as all the more acute in view of West Germany's "bridge-building" policy, which was avowedly aimed at utilizing Bonn's immense economic and technological resources to attract the governments of Eastern Europe into a more accommodating relationship with the FRG, ultimately for the express purpose of isolating the GDR. Accordingly, the East Germans declared that the states of the Soviet bloc must henceforth seek to develop their economic and scientific-technical potential "by our own means."

The months that followed the invasion demonstrated that this exhortation was no mere propaganda slogan. It was a guide to actual policy in the GDR. While the East German leadership did not advocate an immediate cut-off of economic ties with the West (indeed, Ulbricht freely admitted that East-West trade was beneficial for the East German economy), it nonetheless strove to convince the Soviet Union and the East European members of the bloc to begin pursuing a long-term effort designed to reduce the socialist camp's reliance on western products, especially in the area of high technology. For its part, the GDR was now ready to prove that the socialist states already possessed the capacity to accelerate domestic high-technology development at much faster rates than was generally thought to be possible or desirable.

Accordingly, starting in October, the GDR announced that it was abandoning as inadequate the targets recently set in the 1966-70 five year plan for certain high-technology and related areas. New plan targets were fixed that considerably exceeded the goals specified in the plan. (The 1966-70 plan, it should be noted, was promulgated only in 1967, more than a year behind schedule.) In the process, it was decided to recentralize economic decision-making procedures in these same areas so as to reinforce central supervision over this acceleration process. This step marked a partial
retreat from the decentralization measures initiated in the GDR in 1963 as the key element of East Germany's pioneering economic reforms. In short, both the plan targets as well as the very organization of the East German economy were now being decisively altered under the stimulus of what was perceived to be both a pressing, as well as a long-term, foreign policy threat. The linkage of foreign and domestic policy in the GDR, always a close one, had never been so demonstrably evident as now. Moreover, the GDR clearly expected other countries in the Warsaw Pact alliance system to follow the East German example.

Together with a number of recent ideological innovations propounded by Walter Ulbricht, these efforts constituted a comprehensive "grand design" for East Germany's tightly intertwined foreign and domestic policy orientations. Hostility towards West Germany; accelerated technological development "by our own means"; and a deliberate attempt to promote the GDR's image as a model of advanced socialism to be emulated by the other states of the Soviet bloc -- these comprised the foundation stones of Ulbricht's endeavor to enhance the GDR's own role within the bloc and to advance an alternative conception to detente with the West. Taken together, these separate diplomatic, economic and ideological components of Ulbricht's world view constituted a highly coherent foreign policy program.

As for Moscow, the gradual and somewhat agonizing movement towards a decision to intervene militarily in Czechoslovakia was not accompanied by a clear-cut repudiation of the FRG, as it was in East Berlin. To be sure, Soviet relations with Bonn soured as the Czech crisis worsened. But Brezhnev and his like-minded colleagues seemed noticeably disinclined to use the Czech crisis as a pretext for abandoning their cautious wait-and-see policy towards Bonn. (Meanwhile, Piotr Shelest, together with certain high-ranking Soviet military figures, appeared to be more one-sidedly hostile towards the Grand Coalition government.)

Once again, members of the Soviet secondary elite presented a wide spectrum of views on U.S.-West European relations, with maximalist, Europeanist and Atlanticist orientations dominating the discussion. They also
continued to differ in their evaluations of the FRG, advancing contrasting positive and negative images of West German politics and foreign policy. While some warned of U.S.-FRG collaboration against the socialist states, others spoke of growing strains in American-West German relations, occasioned in part by Bonn's desire for greater independence from the U.S. in pursuing its own foreign policy interests. East German analysts, however, remained entrenched in their maximalist foreign policy orientation, resting on their depiction of a tightly constructed "Bonn-Washington axis," and they advanced unrelievedly negative views of West Germany.

Conclusions

Inasmuch as the Soviet leadership was completely absorbed with the Czech crisis in 1968, relations with Bonn did not make much headway. Brezhnev took internal advantage of the crisis by solidifying his position as the leader of the ruling coalition. He deftly maneuvered his way between those in favor of Soviet military action against the Dubcek regime and those opposing it, ultimately siding with the more conservative forces. With their attentions turned in a such a concentrated fashion towards the events in Czchoslovakia, Brezhnev and his fellow coalition members still did not have a coherent policy formulated with respect to the FRG beyond a rejection of the Grand Coalition's principle negotiating preconditions. As the crisis progressed and as Brezhnev and the Politburo majority moved into an increasingly hardline position, Moscow appeared to be unresponsive to Bonn's pleas for restraint in the Czech situation and its calls for a continuing Soviet-West German dialogue. By the same token, the Czech crisis, by reinforcing conservative tendencies in the Soviet Politburo, kept Moscow's willingness to entertain compromises with the FRG to a low level. (In fact, Moscow broke off talks with the Grand Coalition on a renunciation of force treaty in the midst of the Czech crisis, and blamed Bonn for interfering in Czchoslovakia's internal affairs.) Images of the FRG in the Soviet press became increasingly negative as a result of these occurrences. At the same
time, however, academic debates reflecting Europeanist and Atlanticist views continued to take place among academicians in 1968, demonstrating that the Brezhnev Politburo still did not rule out a possible revival of talks with the FRG. While increasingly conservative in its political leanings, the Brezhnev Politburo was not uniformly maximalist.

In view of his well articulated world view, which united diplomatic, economic and ideological elements together in a tightly woven whole, Walter Ulbricht's foreign policy in 1968 was characterized by a high degree of coherence. As far as West Germany was concerned, however, the SED chief was less inclined than ever to adapt himself to the Kiesinger-Brandt government's calls for improved inter-German relations. The thought of adapting the GDR to the Prague Spring was completely out of the question; it had to be stopped.

Compromise with either Bonn or Prague was therefore rejected out of hand by Ulbricht in 1968. Meanwhile, once again, members of the East German primary and secondary elites did little more than reiterate Ulbricht's strongly pronounced views.

CHAPTER FIVE
TURNING POINTS: 1969

As all eyes turned towards the critical Bundestag elections in West Germany set for October, Moscow and East Berlin displayed increasingly divergent viewpoints on the prospects for a new government to be composed of the SPD and the FDP. Both of these parties made known their interest in a fresh start for Bonn's Ostpolitik, in spite of the military intervention in Czechoslovakia. Most importantly, 1969 witnessed heroic attempts by the GDR's primary and secondary elites to propagate the central tenets of Ulbricht's grand design. These efforts did not meet with great success.

At the start of the year, a Berlin crisis appeared to set the stage for a revival of tensions in the area. While Ulbricht clearly opted to exacerbate and exploit the situation, the Soviets sought to minimize frictions
while reaffirming their traditional position on the Berlin issue. The dust from this latest flap over Berlin had barely settled when Soviet forces clashed with Chinese troops on the Ussuri River. The East Germans tried to implicate West Germany in China's bellicose policies, but the Soviet media was less inclined to harp upon this theme of Chinese-West German collusion.

Just as significantly, Ulbricht's campaign to promote accelerated economic development "by our own means" in the advanced socialist states found no positive resonance either in the Soviet Union or in Eastern Europe. On the contrary, Poland retreated from its earlier support for Ulbricht's maximalist positions and announced its readiness to improve relations with Bonn. Poland's urgent need for economic assistance was the fulcrum accounting for this decisive foreign policy shift. Moreover, Leonid Brezhnev, who in the past had stigmatized western economies while urging greater respect for the advantages of socialism, now began altering his own views on East-West trade. At a CPSU Central Committee plenum in December, he berated the Soviet economy for its lackluster performance in key areas. Meanwhile, the Soviets began negotiations with West Germany to acquire wide diameter steel pipe for their latest oil and gas pipeline project. Not even Ulbricht's putative allies in the Soviet hierarchy, such as Shelest, echoed his injunction to develop socialism "by our own means."

In spite of these rebuffs, Ulbricht vowed to press ahead with his program of economic acceleration, with investments highly concentrated in a few advanced economic sectors. The plans issued at the end of the year for 1970 reflected these lofty ambitions, in the face of overwhelming evidence that the East German economy had failed to meet the revised plan targets for 1969. Indeed, statements by both SED Politburo members and economists in the secondary elite offered explicit testimony to the existence of mounting internal opposition to Ulbricht's grandiose economic schemes.

Together with his obduracy in economic matters, Ulbricht in 1969 redoubled his efforts to promote the GDR's image as a model of advanced socialism within the Soviet bloc. The signal event in this domain was the publication in September of a massive textbook entitled *The Political Economy*...
of Socialism and its Application in the GDR. Ulbricht's personal contributions to this volume were heralded in adulatory terms, while the SED chief himself affirmed that other socialist states would surely benefit by studying the GDR's example.

Nevertheless, Soviet decision-makers and policy analysts appeared to be more interested in the formation of the Brandt-Scheel government than in Ulbricht's anti-detente strategy. Both before and after the elections of October 3, a vigorous debate was in progress in the Soviet secondary elite on the current status of U.E.-West European relations (with Europeanist approaches contending with more hardline maximalist and Americanist analyses). A related debate was taking place on the current status of U.E.-West European relations (with Europeanist approaches contending with more hardline maximalist and Americanist analyses).

Conclusions

Although it was evident that Brezhnev had secured his position as the leader of the Politburo, especially after having successfully weathered the Czech crisis, the Soviet leadership still had not come up with a coherent foreign policy designed to respond not only to the new government that took office in Bonn in the fall, but also to the Nixon administration, which had assumed power in January bearing hopes of an "era of negotiation." In short, a foreign policy consensus had yet to emerge from the Brezhnev coalition. Brezhnev himself, as we have seen, was in the process of doing his own about-face on the crucial subject of East-West trade.
Accordingly, Soviet policy towards West Germany still lacked coherence; the degree of Soviet responsiveness was correspondingly low; so too, apparently, was its readiness for major concessions at this point. Nevertheless, the Soviets continued to keep their minds open: as noted above, debates on the new West German government and on the evolving trends in U.S.-West European relations continued unabated, and the controversy over Berlin was kept within limits. Clearly, the Brezhnev-led Politburo majority had no wish to tie its hands to a maximalist repudiation of a dialogue with Bonn.

Ulbricht's directive regime once again followed its leader in pursuing a maximalist anti-Bonn policy, even after Brandt's election. Policy coherence continued to be strong, as Ulbricht doggedly pushed onward with a domestic economic policy that was basically the internal reflection of his foreign policy. Not surprisingly, Ulbricht's willingness to adapt to another new West German government and his readiness for compromise were at typically low levels. Ulbricht's persisitence, however, was bordering on the irrational, as the results of his accelerated growth programs clearly warranted a retrenchment. The SED chief would not hear of it, and the absence of open debate in the leading journals and newspapers reflected Ulbricht's single-mindedness.

CHAPTER SIX
CONCEPTUALIZING DETENTE: 1970

The year 1970 proved to be a critical one in Moscow's relations with the Federal Republic as well as with the GDR. It began with the signing on February 1 of a major economic accord between the Soviet Union and the FRG. The agreement, which provided for the exchange of West German wide-diameter steel pipe for future deliveries of Soviet oil and natural gas, was the largest East-West trade deal ever concluded up to that time. It paved the way for the unprecedented political discussions between West German and Soviet officials, led initially by Egon Bahr and Gromyko, which continued through the
spring and summer and culminated in the signing of the historic renunciation of force treaty on August 12.

The East German leadership was visibly perturbed by these developments. Once again, the Ulbricht regime's response comprised a mixture of outspoken political pronouncements and domestic economic adjustments. In keeping with the cardinal elements of Ulbricht's grand design, the GDR openly proclaimed its hostility to Bonn, muting it only partially after August 12, and obstinately pursued its internal economic acceleration program until its collapse appeared unavoidable.

Shortly after the announcement of the Soviet-West German pipeline agreement, Walter Ulbricht launched a new campaign in the domestic economy. Spearheaded by the slogan, "Overtake without catching up," the campaign was aimed at accelerating growth rates in East German labor productivity "by leaps and bounds" until, at some unspecified future time, the GDR surpassed the West in this vital category of economic progress without ever pausing to "catch up." In the spring, the East German government issued directives designed to give effect to Ulbricht's latest initiative. Most importantly, statements made by Ulbricht and other SED leaders made it clear that the GDR was undertaking these domestic economic efforts primarily for foreign policy purposes, as a vital component of Ulbricht's drive to convince East Germany's allies to eschew expanded economic ties with the West and to develop socialism "by our own means."

As in previous years, however, there were no signs that either the Soviet Union or the states of Eastern Europe were prepared to follow Ulbricht's advice. On the contrary, the Brezhnev leadership was now heading full tilt towards detente with Bonn. A comparison of speeches by Soviet leaders shortly after the conclusion of the Bahr-Gromyko talks in the spring reveals that the four main figures in the CPSU Politburo -- Brezhnev, Kosygin, Suslov and Podgorny -- were quite positive in their characterizations of the FRG. More negative images were expressed by Shelest, Shelepin, Ponomarev and key military figures. The prevailing policy line favored the conclusion of an agreement with West Germany, however. The accord was ready for signature
after a final series of Soviet-West German negotiations in July. Meanwhile, the Soviets pressured the GDR into holding two sets of summit negotiations with the FRG. Conducted in Erfurt and Kassel in the spring, these talks proved inconclusive, a result plainly desired by the East Germans. At the same time, the Soviets accepted Bonn’s view that any future agreement to recognize the GDR would have to come on a de facto basis only, not de jure. This was another setback for Ulbricht’s long-standing maximalist policy.

Several months after the signing of the renunciation of force treaty, speeches by several key Soviet leaders provided strong evidence that an agreement had indeed been reached within the Soviet leadership on the parameters of Moscow’s future relationship with the West German government. While all the leading figures praised the August 12 accord (including Shelest and Defense Minister Grechko), there were divergent accents placed on the economic and military aspects of detente, respectively. Kosygin and Podgorny were far more vocal in their support for expanded East-West trade than either Suslov or Grechko, for instance; but the latter two figures, both conservatives, were correspondingly more emphatic in their demand for continued "vigilance" in security matters than the former. Both Suslov and Grechko called openly for the "strengthening" of Soviet military power, an appeal absent from the utterances of Kosygin and Podgorny. Most importantly of all, Brezhnev placed roughly equal emphasis on the desirability of intensified economic cooperation with the West as well as on military vigilance. It was apparent that Brezhnev was the keystone who held together the ruling coalition’s consensus on detente with Bonn: political and economic cooperation were to be pursued hand in hand with military growth. Thus, in the very year in which a major milestone was reached in Moscow’s tortuous relationship with the Federal Republic, the Soviet leadership had come to an internal agreement that detente would not preclude a robust military development program.

Just as external pressures were building up in the GDR to accept a Soviet-West German rapprochement, internal pressures were undermining the viability of Ulbricht’s program of accelerated growth in the fields of high
technology and labor productivity. By late summer and early fall, it was evident that the growth targets set for these sectors could not be met. Even more ominously for Ulbricht, there was growing criticism in the press on the part of SED Politburo members, as well as by economists in the secondary elite, of the disproportions that had been created by Ulbricht's economic priorities of the preceding two years. The policy of concentrating investment resources on specific advanced sectors had led to intolerable shortages in other vital areas, such as energy and consumer necessities. Another sign that Ulbricht was in trouble politically surfaced in the early fall, as various SED leaders began speaking of the need for a strict ideological Abgrenzung (delimitation, in the sense of a sealing off) between the populations of East and West Germany. This notion implied the inevitability of closer political and citizen-to-citizen contacts between the GDR and the FRG in the future, as foreseen in the emerging context of détente. Thus some East German officials, notably Honecker, Axen and Stoph, appeared ready to bow to existing realities and now began planning for a new era in inter-German relations.

Meanwhile, in the Soviet Union, an analysis of how prominent members of the secondary elite evaluated the implications of the turnabout in Soviet-West German relations provides some interesting insights into how the Soviets interpreted and conceptualized détente with Bonn. While one view looked forward to an intensification of "contradictions" between Bonn and Washington, a manifestly Europeanist argument, another view held that the U.S. still dominated the NATO alliance. Proponents of the latter position also sharply criticized West German politicians (including Helmut Schmidt, the defense minister) for allegedly continuing to seek FRG participation in a European nuclear force. This viewpoint had all the earmarks of the Americanist orientation. In addition, Soviet academicians who favored the positive turn in Soviet-West German relations drew a sharp distinction between the political and economic aspects of Bonn's policies, on the one hand, and their military aspects, on the other. While the Brandt-Scheel government was praised for its move towards political "realism" and economic cooperation with the socialist states, it was castigated for reputedly seeking to promote the arms race in
Europe. (This charge was essentially false, as Brandt repeatedly called for mutual and balanced force reductions in Europe as an indispensable component of the detente process.)

This two-sided image of the FRG put forward by certain Soviet academicians at the end of 1970 reflected the consensus that had been reached at the upper levels of power in the Kremlin. It provided further evidence that the Soviet decision-making elite was very much interested in political and economic detente with Bonn, but was not interested in a serious reduction in military forces on the continent. The events of the following two years would confirm this impression. At the same time, examples of maximalist logic, buttressed by preponderantly negative images of the Brandt government, could still be found in the Soviet specialized press even after the signing of the Soviet-West German renunciation of force treaty. These negative images testified to the enduring presence of suspicion, if not actual hostility, towards the Federal Republic within the Soviet establishment in spite of the crowning achievements of detente.

Conclusions

Moscow's giant step in Bonn's direction in 1970 coincided with an initial decision within the Kremlin primary elite on the broad parameters to be observed in Soviet-West German relations. First, there was a general agreement on the political, i.e., diplomatic, contours of detente. This meant, in practice, that the Soviets might be willing to effect compromises in some areas, such as Berlin and inter-German relations, but the details would be worked out later. In exchange for such future concessions, however, Bonn would agree to recognize the postwar status quo, if only on a de facto basis. Moscow's commitment to the territorial status quo had not changed since Khrushchev's time, and it represented the sine qua non of any positive relationship with Bonn. Second, there was to be expanded economic cooperation with the Federal Republic. And third, there was to be continuing military (and, as applicable, ideological) "vigilance" on the part of the Soviet Union
vis-à-vis West Germany. While all members of the ruling elite seemed to agree on the first point, some seemed to favor less East-West trade and more military development (like Suslov and Grechko), others favored the reverse of these priorities (like Kosygin and Podgorny). Brezhnev held the two groups together, and a general consensus was reached.

The Soviets now had a detente policy that reflected an internal consensus, but whether it would be regarded in the West as a coherent and internally consistent policy remained to be seen. Meanwhile, as a result of this consensus on the scope and limits of detente, the Brezhnev coalition now exhibited a high level of responsiveness to Bonn's new overtures, as well as a relatively high willingness to exchange compromises with the FRG. Policy debates continued, but not over the desirability of detente itself so much as over its likely effects on U.S.-West German relations. Moreover, as noted, some academicians articulated what appeared to be the reigning consensus on detente policy in the Brezhnev coalition.

It was in East Germany that the internal consensus was falling apart. Ulbricht's obdurate refusal to go along with Moscow's rapprochement with Bonn met with a decisive Kremlin rebuff. Moreover, the internal pillars of Ulbricht's anti-detente policy were crumbling; the old man's economic acceleration policies had visibly and undeniably collapsed. With these failures, the sturdy bases of Ulbricht's rule began to fall apart. Other members of the ruling elite, as well as academicians and journalists, now voiced open criticism of Ulbricht's economic ventures. The emergence of the notion of Abgrenzung, which Ulbricht never shared, was another sign of the degeneration of Ulbricht's directive regime. The coherence of the aging SED leader's foreign policy accordingly began to unravel; prospective new leaders, like Honecker, Axen, and Stoph, showed signs of bending to the new situation created by the Soviet-West German accord, with a possible readiness to compromise. Policy differentiation in the open press clearly reflected opposition to the leader's policies. Walter Ulbricht was virtually finished as a directive leader.
CHAPTER SEVEN
EXTENDING DETENTE: 1971-1972

The combination of foreign policy intransigence and domestic economic failure led to Walter Ulbricht's removal from power in May 1971. His heir apparent, Erich Honecker, now acceded to the position of First Secretary of the SED. In a series of dramatic announcements, the SED Politburo quickly repudiated the main tenets of Ulbricht's economic policies and ideological innovations of the previous two to three years. The new SED chief also fell into line behind Moscow's detente policy. While Honecker initially continued to call for the GDR's de jure recognition by Bonn, he did so in a far less combative manner than Ulbricht, and ultimately retreated from this position in 1972. At the end of that year, the FRG and the GDR signed the Basic Treaty clarifying the legal bases of their relationship.

The Soviet Union in these years took decisive measures to broaden detente to include the United States. Moscow had already in 1970 issued a formal invitation to the U.S. to participate in an "all-European" security conference. In the same year, four power negotiations in Berlin were initiated, and resulted in the signing of the Quadripartite Agreement in September 1971. In May 1971, Brezhnev announced the Kremlin's willingness to join in negotiations on force reductions in Europe, a move whose timing appeared to be deliberately calculated to prevent a positive vote in the U.S. Congress on Senator Manfield's resolution to withdraw U.S. armed forces from Europe. And in May of the following year, President Nixon journeyed to Moscow to sign SALT I and a host of other agreements with the Soviets. These efforts displayed the USSR's policy at this time of linking detente in Europe with detente in its relations with the United States, a policy in conformity with what I have labeled the Atlanticist orientation. Meanwhile, statements made during the 24th CPSU Congress, held in March and April 1971, revealed once again that prominent Soviet leaders such as Brezhnev and Suslov were rhetorically committed to political detente with the West, but were equally
committed to promoting a robust military development program in spite of any future negotiations on force reductions in Europe. (As in the previous year, Brezhnev was more outspokenly favorable to East-West trade than Suslov, but the latter occasionally offered epigrammatic comments in its support of the idea.)

While policy discussions within the secondary elite in East Germany in these years again mirrored the political priorities set by the SED First Secretary -- first Ulbricht, then Honecker -- they reflected a broader spectrum of opinion in the Soviet Union. Clearly differentiated examples of maximalist, Europeanist, Americanist and Atlanticist viewpoints could all be found in the leading Soviet journals. These writings suggested that the Soviet foreign policy establishment was still divided in its appreciation of the likely consequences of detente, both in regard to West Germany and to the West more generally.

Conclusions

The 1971-72 period witnessed the elaboration of a detente process that had already received its initial impetus in 1970. Accordingly, the Brezhnev coalition exhibited the same tendencies with respect to policy coherence, responsiveness, and willingness to compromise as in that year. Brezhnev managed to consolidate his position still further through the demotion of Shelest, and he succeeded in negotiating a SALT treaty with the United States. While Brezhnev thus stood closer to the center of the prevailing Soviet political spectrum than other officials, he showed anything but an inclination to pursue political reform domestically, nor did his arms control policy suggest a wholesale diminution of military priorities in the Soviet budget. The need for "vigilance" and "strengthening" were periodically reiterated by the Soviet leader. The general trend of the Politburo's policies, therefore, were centrist-conservative. Policy debates continued over the question of centrifugal and centripetal tendencies in U.S.-West European relations.
However, the Brezhnev Politburo, having concluded major agreements with the United States in this period, was pursuing an avowedly Atlanticist policy.

The description of the decision-making regimes presented at the outset of this summary suggested that, in its formative stages, any coalition-type regime is likely to exhibit a foreign policy marked by low levels of coherence, responsiveness and willingness to compromise, and higher levels of open debate. In contrast to these predicted tendencies, however, the new Honecker-led coalition in the GDR, despite some signs of reluctance, quickly joined in the gathering momentum of detente. It fell into lock step behind Moscow's detente policy, and displayed a rather high level of responsiveness and willingness to compromise in the process. Public discussion of foreign policy opened up only a little, with the expression of Atlanticist and Europeanist perspectives replacing the turgid litany of maximalism. What accounts for these tendencies that run counter to what we might expect of a formative coalition?

The answer appears to be threefold. First, the Politburo and Secretariat which Honecker inherited was made up essentially of the same people who had been part of Ulbricht's regime; no introductions were necessary, no real process of "formation" had to take place. Second, and most importantly, the SED leadership, starting with Honecker himself, knew that it had no choice but to act in conformity with Soviet wishes. The SED's sudden responsiveness to the Brandt government and its evident willingness to compromise were the result of a clear recognition of what Moscow expected, if not demanded. Finally, Honecker probably realized that the days when the GDR would be governed by a directive leadership were over, at least for the foreseeable future. If he did not fulfill Soviet wishes, Moscow could surely find someone else in the SED hierarchy who would.
The mid-1970s constituted a period of transition in Soviet-West German relations between the heady days of detente in the first part of the decade and the tense confrontation over the arms race in Europe that dominated the latter part of the seventies and extended into the 1980s. These years were further characterized by a broad consensus within the Soviet foreign policy establishment, including both the decision-makers in the Kremlin and the academicians and others who comprise the secondary elite, on the nature of detente, on the images used to describe West German politics, and on the current trends in U.S.-West European relations. As in previous periods, there was a very close correlation between publicly articulated perceptions and the leadership's actual policies. On all counts, the same can be said about East Germany.

As Moscow, Bonn and East Berlin settled down to implement, and interpret, the landmark political accords that had been reached between 1970 and the end of 1972, Soviet officials put forward a rather elaborate explanation of their understanding of detente. As advanced by leading officials (and by Brezhnev above all), and substantiated in the academic journals and the official press, this comprehensive world view consisted of a set of principles that emphasized two things. First, the cooperative aspects of detente had brought mutual benefits to the East as well as to the West, particularly in the economic domain. Second, and just as importantly, Soviet and Warsaw Pact military power was largely responsible for inducing the West to come to terms with the socialist states in the first place, and was vital to the preservation of detente in the future. In a number of constantly reiterated theses, Soviet authorities at every level of the establishment were remarkably candid in their allusions to the importance of military "vigilance" and the need to "strengthen" Soviet military might in order to keep detente alive. Far from being viewed as incompatible with detente, therefore,
military development was regarded by the Soviets as its essential
precondition.

This composite elucidation of the Soviet conception of detente, with
its cooperative and conflictual elements, clearly reflected the dominant
consensus of the Brezhnev leadership. As the events of the first part of the
decade had already suggested, Brezhnev managed to stitch together a coalition
consisting of proponents of expanded East-West trade (like Kosygin, Podgorny,
and lower level officials such as the Foreign Trade Minister, Patolichev) and
advocates of a robust military development program (like Suslov, Grechko and
Ponomarev). Brezhnev himself once again held these two wings of the coalition
together through his vocal advocacy of both points of view. As this consensus
solidified in the mid-1970s, its conservative nature became increasingly
apparent. For one thing, Soviet conventional military deployments in the
Warsaw Pact area increased both quantitatively and qualitatively. For
another, economic cooperation with the West (and particularly with West
Germany) rose significantly, but only within the limits imposed by Moscow's
unwillingness to alter its internal bureaucratic structures. Finally, this
period of international detente was accompanied by the continued oppression of
dissidents and would-be emigres at home.

Soviet images of West Germany at this time also reflected a carefully
balanced mixture of positive and negative elements that conformed to the
broader Soviet understanding of detente. Both Willy Brandt and his successor,
Helmut Schmidt, were depicted as favoring improved relations with the East
while at the same time maintaining intimate ties with the United States. Once
again, Soviet decision-makers as well as members of the secondary elite made a
clear and sharp distinction between economic issues and security issues: Bonn
was lauded for its efforts to promote trade with the East, but severely
castigated for its growing role in NATO and for its increasingly blunt
criticisms of the Warsaw Pact's military growth. There were also continuing
differences over the interpretation of Quadripartitie Agreement on Berlin.
Despite an exchage of visits by Brezhnev to the FRG and Schmidt to the USSR,
the atmosphere in Soviet-West German relations became increasingly tense as the decade progressed.

Meanwhile, Soviet academicians and journalists interested in the ebb and flow of U.S.-West European relations moved towards a visible consensus position in these years. While opinions continued to differ on the question of the relative weight of "contradictions" versus cooperation in these relationships, the dominant viewpoint that emerged in these years was Atlanticist. This view clearly reflected the opinions voiced by the top leadership in favor of pursuing detente with Western Europe and with the United States simultaneously. Although some academicians still leaned towards a Europeanist approach and others preferred an Americanist orientation, several prominent advocates of these two tendencies explicitly moved towards a more Atlanticist position. The consensus within the secondary elite thus mirrored the consensus among the decision-makers.

Among the issues under discussion in these years among Soviet foreign policy experts, two questions in particular deserve to be highlighted in view of their importance for practical policy decisions. One of these issues was imbedded in the official detente doctrine referred to earlier. This was the notion that the "myth of the Soviet threat" was declining in the West, and especially in Western Europe. Prominent "bourgeois" politicians and growing segments of the population in the West, according to this view, no longer believed the official NATO warnings about a potentially aggressive and increasingly well-armed Soviet military machine. While the Soviets could indeed cite leading political figures and point to recent public opinion polls in the West to substantiate this claim, the notion that the USSR was no longer feared in Western Europe presented a potential problem when juxtaposed with another constituent element of the Soviet doctrine of detente, namely, the notion that constant military vigilance and expanding military strength were vital to the maintenance of East-West cooperation. As subsequent events would show, the Soviets could not have it both ways. Sooner or later, military growth would prove to be incompatible with a decline in the "myth of the Soviet threat". If the Soviets were aware of this inconsistency, their
speeches and writings did not seem to signal any such awareness in the mid-1970s.

The second important question concerned the factors promoting U.S.-West European contradictions: Were these contradictions more likely to be promoted in an atmosphere of East-West cooperation, or could they also flourish during periods of confrontation? While this question never developed into a full-fledged debate, alternative views were nonetheless expressed on it from time to time. The issue had serious implications for the future of Soviet foreign policy. If conflicts between the United States and Western Europe -- always a desirable development from the Soviet point of view -- required a tranquil international atmosphere, then clearly it would behoove Moscow to refrain from actions that might fan East-West tensions. But if, as some academicians argued, U.S.-West European contradictions were so unavoidable that they would multiply in spite of a hostile East-West environment, then one could infer that the Kremlin need not hold back from any undertakings to which the West might voice strenuous objections. While the decision-makers did not openly take part in the discussion of this issue, its appearance in the leading foreign affairs journals suggested that it was a matter of some importance to the Soviet foreign policy establishment.

Meanwhile, the GDR in these years managed to steer a steady course between Moscow and Bonn. After having shifted East Berlin's policy from Ulbricht's maximalism towards a position more in keeping with Soviet preferences, Erich Honecker made certain that Moscow remained the focal point of East German policy. The GDR accordingly continued to maintain its vital economic links to the Soviet Union, and was especially responsive to Soviet demands for increases in military expenditures. Moreover, the Honecker government in many respects followed Moscow's lead in charting a middle path between cooperation and conflict in its relations with Bonn.

Accordingly, the East German leadership's official detente concept placed equal emphasis on the benefits as well as the dangers of a closer inter-German relationship. Initially, in 1973 and in 1974, the main thrust of East Germany's publicly articulated perceptions of the FRG was negative. This
no doubt reflected the regime's fears about the unknown effects of the sudden and massive upsurge in the number of West Germans and West Berliners now allowed to visit the GDR. These negative images, centering on the Abgrenzung theme, were occasionally matched by hostile actions. (A dispute over the status of Berlin resulted in traffic disruptions; the GDR at one point also raised minimum currency exchange requirements for West German visitors.)

However, once it became clear that the GDR could maintain its internal stability in spite of the influx of West Germans, the leadership relaxed and sought to improve its ties with Bonn towards the latter part of this period. East Germany's emergence into the world community as a duly recognized state, a status symbolized by its full participation at the Helsinki conference, unquestionably served to ease its anxieties about detente. So, too, the Honecker administration's decision to seek greater infusions of economic assistance from West Germany also promoted a more forthcoming attitude towards Bonn.

By and large, the policy orientations of the East German leadership were reflected in the writings of the secondary elite. Images of West Germany displayed a mixture of positive and negative elements, and discussions of U.S.-West European relations, while understandably not as numerous as in Soviet publications, nevertheless offered theoretical justifications for cooperation with the FRG as well as warnings about Bonn's close military ties with the United States.

The only serious debate that took place in these years in East Germany centered on the desirability of expanding trade relations with the Federal Republic. Some cautioned against too much economic dependence on the West (though not as vociferously as Ulbricht had done), while others strongly supported an expansion of trade ties. These differences within the secondary elite suggested that the East German decision-makers were themselves of two minds on the issue.
Conclusions

Soviet policy towards Bonn in these years can be explained in large part by the nature of the Brezhnev-led coalition that held power in the Kremlin. Essentially, a consensus prevailed that reflected a strong conservative bias. However, the elite's articulation of its understanding of detente, and the policies that flowed from it, were not internally consistent. Earlier, I defined policy coherence in terms of the consistency between Soviet actions and the Soviets' declared goals. Publicly, the Brezhnev regime announced that it was in favor of promoting "detente" with the West, by which it meant, in this case, cooperation. However, its broader conception of why detente had come about and what was needed to keep it going, when elaborated into a comprehensive world view, plainly indicated that a broad-based program of military modernization and the quantitative expansion of military hardware was to be an integral component of Soviet policy towards the West. Certainly from a western point of view, these two elements of cooperation and military development could not be considered mutually compatible. In this sense, then, Soviet policy towards West Germany (and towards the West more generally) was lacking in coherence.

Soviet responsiveness was also rather low in this period, both to the appeals of the West German government for internal reforms that might facilitate a broadening of economic contacts as well as to calls for a halt to military deployments in the Warsaw Pact area. Moscow's willingness to compromise on these issues was similarly low. Meanwhile, it appeared that debate on foreign policy issues was attenuating and moving towards acceptance of the leadership's preferred images of West Germany and of U.S.-West European relations. The Atlanticist outlook presominated over Europeanist and Americanist orientations.

Honecker's coalition regime in East Germany seemed to share many of the characteristics of the Soviet regime. Certainly in 1973 and 1974, it showed distinct conservative tendencies. However, by 1975 and 1976, the GDR became more responsive to Bonn's overtures and more willing to compromise on
certain issues (such as the minimum currency exchange, which was lowered in 1975) in order to widen its economic ties with the Federal Republic. Policy debates were kept within certain limits, but the fact that differentiated opinions could be expressed in the open press at all on such questions as the nature of U.S.-West German relations or the desirability of expanded trade with Bonn showed how far the GDR had come since the officially prescribed uniformity of Ulbricht's directive regime.

CHAPTER NINE

The inconsistencies lurking in the Soviet regime's approach to East-West relations erupted into a protracted crisis that lasted from the late 1970s until the first years of Gorbachev's leadership. This period coincided with the gradual waning of the Brezhnev regime and its replacement by two short-lived successor governments headed by Yuri Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko, respectively. As the Brezhnev era slowly came to an end (a fate prefigured by the deaths of Kosygin and Suslov in the early eighties), and as Andropov and Chernenko departed the scene in rapid succession before being able to make much of personal mark on Soviet policy, decision-making in the Soviet Union bore all the hallmarks of, first, a degenerative regime (Brezhnev's) and, subsequently, formative regimes (Andropov's and Chernenko's). These decision-making regimes displayed low levels of policy coherence, responsiveness to the outside world, and willingness to compromise, together with a greater degree of open debate.

The central issue that obsessed Soviet and West German policy makers in these years was the question of intermediate range nuclear forces (INF) in the European theater. In 1976, Moscow began deploying a new generation of intermediate range missiles, the SS-20, in the western USSR (as well as in the eastern portion of the country, facing Asia). By the early 1980s, nearly 250
of these weapons stood facing Western Europe. The response by NATO, culminating in the famous "two-track" decision of December 1979, is a familiar story. It is generally assumed in the West that the Soviets were united in their response to this crisis, firmly committed to an obstinate policy of not giving in to western proposals for the elimination of the SS-20s. But was this actually the case?

As the earlier description of decision-making regimes points out, a coalition dominated by conservative viewpoints is not likely to make concessions to the West on matters that go against the grain of a robust Soviet military posture. To be sure, this in itself goes a long way to explaining Moscow's resistance to western proposals on this issue. However, there is considerable evidence that the Soviet foreign policy establishment was not in fact united on the question of how to deal with the INF issue, particularly as it applied to West Germany. As the controversy heated up, especially after the NATO decision, signs of a wide-ranging debate among members of the Soviet secondary elite intensified. While some took a hardline position that vilified West Germany as co-responsible for the NATO decision, others took a decidedly more nuanced line that stressed America's culpability for the NATO decision and viewed West Germany as more interested in detente than in a confrontation over the missiles. While the first group gave every indication of wanting to penalize the FRG in some way or another for its role in the INF controversy, the second group quite obviously sought to leave open the possibility for a positive working relationship with Bonn in spite of the missile issue.

This debate gathered force with growing explicitness in the first half of the 1980s. Several issues provided the context within which the contending viewpoints argued their case. One question had to do with meting out responsibility for the general decline in East-West detente: Who was to blame, Bonn or Washington? Proponents of the anti-Bonn viewpoint stated that West Germany was co-responsible with the United States for destroying detente; those more favorably inclined towards Bonn contended that the U.S., not the FRG, was primarily responsible for these disturbing trends. The second issue
was more to the point: Who was responsible for the NATO two-track decision? Some answered this question by pointing the finger of culpability directly at Helmut Schmidt, on the grounds that Schmidt lobbied intensively in Washington to get the Carter administration to take action against the "modernization" of the Soviet intermediate range missile forces. (Several writers, in fact, maintained that Bonn "imposed" the missile decision on Washington.) By contrast, others averred that Schmidt never asked for new American Pershing 2 and cruise missiles in Europe, but was forced to take them by an American administration bent on accelerating the arms race in Europe. (In support of this point of view, several authors wrote that Washington had "imposed" the NATO decision on Bonn.) Soon after Helmut Kohl assumed power, with a pledge to deploy the missiles, opinions were once again sharply divided within the Soviet secondary elite. While some reproached Kohl for his determination to go ahead with the deployments, others insisted that he was acting under intense American pressure.

Additional questions also served to draw a distinct battle line between the two sets of views. The anti-Bonn forces stated that no progress could be made in inter-German relations until Bonn met all of Honecker's so-called 'Gera demands' (which called, among other things, for recognition of East German citizenship). The individuals more favorable to West Germany, by contrast, insisted that failure to make progress in the issues raised by Honecker in his speech at Gera did not preclude progress in other areas of interest to the two German states. The anti-Bonn group labeled Helmut Kohl a "revanchist" because of his statements in favor of regaining lands taken from Germany at the end of the war; the pro-Bonn forces acknowledged that there was indeed a rise in revanchism in Germany in recent years, but they did not personally associate Kohl with it. In all, the debate between those inclined to punish Bonn and those opposed to such a move ranged over seven separate issues, with starkly contrasting views registered on either side of each separate question.

Precisely where the Soviet primary elite -- the decision-makers themselves -- stood on this divisive debate was not immediately apparent.
Brezhnev made fewer and fewer public appearances in his final years, and his speeches were characterized by his typically dualistic approach to West Germany, marked by positive references to economic cooperation and severe warnings against challenging the Soviets with new missiles. The disarray in the Kremlin that accompanied the brief and fragmentary reigns of Andropov and Chernenko, both of whom fell ill shortly after assuming power, also added to the lack of clear direction at the top of the Kremlin hierarchy on this issue. A definitive line did not emerge until 1984. In the spring, elements of the Soviet media began what soon amounted to a concerted effort to stigmatize the Kohl government, and West Germany more generally, in the most vituperative terms used by Soviet propaganda organs since the 1950s. As Chernenko slowly faded from public view, the Soviet government went ahead with plans to deploy new short-range missiles in the GDR and Czechoslovakia as "counter-measures" to the Pershings and cruise missiles. The culminating event in the crisis came in early September 1984, as Erich Honecker announced that he was postponing his long-planned visit to Bonn. It appeared evident that, in Moscow if not in East Berlin, the anti-Bonn forces had carried the day: Bonn was to be punished for its actions.

As to East Berlin itself, a number of remarkable events were taking place. First, members of the East German secondary foreign policy elite were just as divided as their Soviet counterparts over the unstated question of whether or not to penalize Bonn for its role in the INF controversy. The leading journals displayed a division of opinion that matched the contending viewpoints to be observed in the Soviet specialized press. Indeed, the very same questions were at issue in East Germany as in the Soviet Union. Quite clearly, like-minded individuals in the GDR and the USSR were publicly joining forces to influence policy-makers in each country.

But whereas the absence of clear leadership associated with Brezhnev's degenerative decision-making regime and with the formative regimes of Andropov and Chernenko might account for the expanded opportunities for an open debate in the USSR, what accounted for the equally sharp differentiation of opinions in the GDR? Was Honecker's regime weakening? On the contrary. The evidence
suggests that the Honecker-led coalition, and quite possibly Erich Honecker himself, were simply uncertain about how far the GDR should go towards punishing Bonn over the missile issue. To be sure, Honecker and other East German leaders (Axen, Stoph, Sindermann, et al.) had stood four-square behind the Soviet government in seeking to get the FRG to back away from the NATO two-track decision. However, over the course of the 1970s, the GDR had not only gained a greater measure of international recognition than ever before; it had also come to learn that Bonn no longer sought to isolate the GDR from the world community or to destabilize communist rule from within. Moreover, East Germany was increasingly interested in taking advantage of West Germany's economic largesse, which Bonn willingly shared with the GDR in exchange for East Berlin's compliance in easing travel restrictions on Germans of both countries. To "punish" Bonn, in short, might require the GDR to punish itself, if a long-term decrease in political and economic cooperation with the FRG was to be the substance of these punitive efforts. Finally, the strains created by the INF controversy had spilled over into the public in the GDR, spawning a peace movement that created new headaches for the Honecker government.

Faced with these conflicting pressures, Honecker in late 1983 asserted that the new Soviet missiles intended for deployment in East Germany were "no cause for jubilation." Although he agreed to postpone his trip to West Germany in September of the following year, he made it clear that a postponement was not a final cancellation of the long-awaited visit. Negotiations with the FRG proceeded on a host of inter-German issues. In addition, the GDR greatly increased the number of East German citizens legally allowed to emigrate to the West, a sign of a growing willingness to effect compromises on major issues with the FRG.

When compared with the harsh conservative line that had triumphed in Moscow in 1984 (in large measure due to the influence of Gromyko), the stance adopted by the Honecker government stood out as considerably more flexible and moderate. Honecker's ruling coalition, it seemed, was moving closer to the center.
Conclusions

The INF controversy engendered serious conflicts within the Soviet foreign policy establishment. The more conservatively oriented members of the Soviet decision-making elite were inclined to move ahead with deployment of the SS-20s in spite of the political costs in Moscow's relations with the FRG. Brezhnev appeared from his public statements to share these views, as did Andropov and Chernenko. However, as the Brezhnev era came to an end, and his two successors proved unable to establish their own stable governments, the opportunities widened for a debate on policy towards West Germany within the secondary elite. Usually, a division of opinions in the secondary elite signals a similar division, or at least ambivalence, at the top of the decision-making hierarchy. In public, however, Soviet leaders adopted a unified stance, culminating in a harsh anti-Bonn campaign in 1984.

In general, Soviet policy towards Bonn (and towards the West more generally) exhibited a low levels of coherence, responsiveness, and willingness to compromise. Public debate, however, grew as authority at the top weakened.

In the GDR, the debate on policy towards Bonn was just as intense as in the USSR. However, far from reflecting a decline in power at the top, this debate revealed a growing flexibility on the part of the Honecker-led ruling coalition to adapt to the vicissitudes of East-West relations. As time wore on, the GDR's policy towards the FRG displayed greater coherence, as the GDR's desire for economic and other benefits from Bonn resulted in a desire to defuse the tensions surrounding the INF issue. Accordingly, the GDR showed greater responsiveness to the opportunities offered by the FRG, and a somewhat higher willingness to compromise on some issues. (For instance, the GDR did not insist on a resolution of the Gera demands before negotiating other agreements. It also rolled back some of the higher minimum currency exchange requirements imposed in 1980 when faced with a possible cutback in West German credits.) Open debate served the purpose of allowing the decision-makers to fluctuate between alternative positions, within a prescribed band of official acceptability. These are the hallmarks of a centrist decision-making regime.
The assumption of the position of General Secretary of the CPSU by Mikhail Gorbachev in March 1985 set off an extraordinary sequence of developments in Moscow's domestic and foreign policies whose ultimate consequences are still not clear. Many western observers have been completely taken by surprise by the scope of Gorbachev's commitment to the restructuring of Soviet political structures and practices internally (and particularly by the extent of glasnost) and by his marked retrenchment from the heavily militarized aspects of Soviet foreign policy as practiced by his predecessors. The INF treaty and the agreement to withdraw from Afghanistan are, of course, Gorbachev's two main achievements thus far in the international domain.

After more than three years in power, Gorbachev's decision-making regime bears all the characteristics of a reformist coalition. Whether it has stabilized itself into a mature reformist regime, in which a clear majority in favor of the leader's reform ambitions can be assured, is still questionable, however. To a considerable extent, Gorbachev's regime still appears to be in its formative stages. More conservative voices continue to speak out openly about the dangers of moving too far and too fast, a fact that from time to time is explicitly admitted by Gorbachev himself. At the very highest reaches of power, Yegor Ligachev, who is generally regarded as the number two man in the leadership, has signaled his disapproval of the pace of the reform drive as well as of its extension into controversial areas of Soviet culture. Conservative holdovers from the Brezhnev era, entrenched in their sinecures within the party apparatus and state bureaucracy, are still in a position to block and, where possible, lobby against Gorbachev's reform programs.

While the General Secretary and his closest allies in the leadership have managed to undertake a major housecleaning, removing hundreds of powerful national and regional officials from the seats of power (along with perhaps
thousands of other, less highly placed, functionaries), the job of revamping the entire party and state elite so that it reflects an irreversible majority in favor of perestroika still has yet to be completed. Moreover, while Gorbachev has also succeeded in reducing the overwhelming influence of the Soviet military on major foreign policy decisions, it is still not certain how the military establishment, particularly its more conservative elements, will react to future arms control or defense budget-cutting initiatives promoted by Gorbachev and his key supporters.

According to the characterization of a reformist regime presented in the first part of this report, Gorbachev's coalition should display a high degree of coherence, responsiveness, and willingness to compromise in its foreign policy, together with a high degree of open discussion on foreign policy issues. Such, at least, are the attributes associated with a reformist regime in its mature phase, once it has attained a relatively high degree of internal stability. However, in its formative stages, any decision-making coalition in a Soviet-type system is likely to exhibit lower levels of foreign policy coherence, responsiveness, and willingness to compromise -- thus counteracting the trends just mentioned. Policy debate, however, would nevertheless be relatively high in a formative regime, thus reinforcing the tendencies to be expected of a mature reformist coalition. How has Gorbachev's leadership behaved when viewed against these expectations? Gorbachev's policy towards West Germany, and towards the broader issue of U.S.-West European relations, will be taken as indications of his performance in these areas.

Actually, progress in Soviet relations with the FRG under Gorbachev has been slow to recover from the tensions of the early eighties. A warming trend, however, has definitely begun. The bitter propaganda barrage against the FRG which took place in 1984 abated noticeably after Gorbachev's assumption of power. Since then, official remarks about the FRG have mixed positive assessments with pointed, though less vituperative, criticism. (Naturally enough, these criticisms were particularly sharp after Helmut Kohl in a Newsweek interview likened Soviet propaganda techniques to those of Josef
Goebbels.) On the positive side, Foreign Ministers Genscher and Shevardnadze have exchanged visits; President von Weizsäcker journeyed to Moscow in 1987; Chancellor Kohl is scheduled to make a visit of his own in the fall of 1988, and Gorbachev is due to make a return visit to Bonn in the first half of 1989.

Nevertheless, Gorbachev's overtures to Bonn have not been as energetic as his relations with other leading figures in the West, notably Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. In fact, Gorbachev's early efforts to engage the Reagan administration in a fruitful dialogue have revealed that his approach to the West has a distinctly Atlanticist orientation. Instead of trying to isolate the United States from its key West European allies, Gorbachev and his principle foreign policy advisors (above all Dobrynin and Yakovlev, both of whom are more informed about the United States than about Western Europe) apparently decided early on to go directly to the White House to negotiate possible settlements to some of the major disputes aggravating East-West relations. Evidently it was believed that Washington, not the capitals of Western Europe, held the key to such pressing problems as SDI, INF and Afghanistan. At the same time, however, Gorbachev's government moved out to Thatcher, Mitterrand and even to Kohl in an effort to use these governments as levers to influence American policy in favorable directions.

This approach, which confers roughly equal status on the United States and Western Europe, and which seeks to influence the one to influence the other as the occasion demands, is the Atlanticist approach in its purest form. Its adoption by Gorbachev has been particularly evident in his regime's relations with West Germany. In 1985 and 1986, the Soviets sought to induce the Kohl government to convince the United States to back away from SDI; in 1987, as the INF negotiations reached a sensitive stage, they counted on the United States to pressure the West German government into abandoning its objections to the final terms of the treaty. More recently, it is clear that the Soviets are hoping that Foreign Minister Genscher can move the United States (as well as his own fellow cabinet members) towards a favorable accord on conventional weapons in Europe. In adopting this Atlanticist approach, Gorbachev appears to be no different from Khrushchev or Brezhnev.
Gorbachev's chief foreign policy difference with Brezhnev resides in the methods to be used in implementing this Atlanticist strategy. Whereas Brezhnev's conservative coalition was determined to proceed with its arms buildup no matter what the cost to Moscow's ability to promote "contradictions" between the United States and its West European allies, Gorbachev has evidently decided that Soviet interests are best served by a measurable diminution in East-West tensions. This explains his readiness to accept the main principles of the U.S. position on INF, and his determination to get out of Afghanistan.

Two factors seem to be at the root of this accommodationist policy. First, Gorbachev clearly needs a less hostile international environment so as to concentrate on his domestic reforms. And second, he apparently feels that U.S.-West European conflicts are more likely to intensify as the result of a relaxation of tensions rather than in a highly charged atmosphere of East-West confrontation. The lesson Gorbachev seems to have learned from the previous years of confrontation is that East-West tensions only drive the United States and the West Europeans together; a more relaxed climate, however, may give rise to disagreements among the Atlantic allies, as some NATO governments may be more willing to come to terms with Moscow on various issues than others. (The tension between Washington and Bonn on the INF treaty and on a future conventional arms agreement, as noted above, is a case in point.) The writings of Soviet academicians in the Gorbachev period offer further confirmation of the fact that Gorbachev has adopted this line of reasoning.

In view of these considerations, it appears that Gorbachev's policies towards the West are indicative of a far greater degree of coherence than that displayed by Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko. A determined effort to diminish international tensions conforms both to the requirements of Gorbachev's domestic reform ambitions as well as to the continuing Soviet desire to exploit and, whenever possible, to promote U.S.-West European contradictions. (It should also be noted that Gorbachev is seeking to expand economic contacts with the West by restructuring the Soviet economy so as to reduce red tape and other bureaucratic obstacles to economic cooperation.)
More East-West economic cooperation, in turn, is designed to provide additional impulses to perestroika.) Accordingly, Gorbachev's government has exhibited a high degree of responsiveness to western initiatives and to the West's willingness to engage the Soviets in a new round of cooperation. A correspondingly high readiness to effect serious compromises has also been manifest in Gorbachev's policies.

Moreover, Gorbachev's new regime has promised a more open discussion of foreign policy issues, in keeping with its commitments to glasnost. To this end, one of the Soviet Union's leading foreign policy journals (Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnoshenia) in the summer of 1987 announced that it planned to break away from more than ten years of intellectual sterility by publishing "new ideas" and fresh concepts on international issues. Thus far, however, there has been relatively little debate between contending foreign policy viewpoints. Much of the writing in the main journals in recent years has tended to reflect the Gorbachev team's pet foreign policy themes of interdependence and the need for East-West detente. Publicly articulated perceptions, in other words, are still closely related to the government's actual policies. Nevertheless, the debate continues within the Soviet secondary elite on the relative merits of the Europeanist, the Americanist and the Atlanticist orientations to U.S.-West European relations. The promise of more open debate on other issues cannot be discounted.

In short, the Gorbachev government in its foreign policy activities displays many of the characteristics of a stable and mature reformist regime. While it may require the vantage point of several more years to come to a final conclusion on this point, it seems for now that there is a stronger consensus within the Gorbachev leadership on foreign policy than there is on domestic policy. One implication of this fact, if true, is that a reformist regime may not require a stable consensus on domestic issues in order to carry out a coherent and consistent foreign policy.

And what of the GDR? The Honecker regime has shown signs of both relief and consternation at the separate strands of Gorbachev's policies.
The East German leadership was clearly relieved at the attenuation of East-West tensions ushered in by the Gorbachev team. The INF agreement, which included provisions for the withdrawal of the new shorter range missiles from East Germany, was a welcome development for East Berlin. At one stroke, it enabled the GDR to proceed with its economic and other cooperative agreements with Bonn on a more secure footing, and it reduced some of the domestic pressures stemming from the peace movement. As a consequence, Honecker was able to proceed with his oft-postponed visit to the FRG in 1987.

To bolster these tendencies towards detente, Honecker has personally assumed credit for certain "theoretical" advances in the Soviet bloc's conception of peaceful coexistence. His ruling coalition has also energetically joined in a series of negotiations with the SPD on arms control and other issues, including a statement of jointly shared political principles. These talks are very much in conformity with Moscow's desire to encourage pro-detente sentiments in West Germany, especially if they serve the further goal of weakening alliance ties between West Germany and the United States. But they also allow the GDR to pursue its own interest in cooperation with Bonn, and presumably to enhance its prestige in Moscow as a valuable asset in Soviet policy towards the FRG.

Meanwhile, the GDR has made it clear that Soviet and East German relations with the FRG, however cooperative, are ultimately founded on certain unalterable principles that cannot be compromised. These include the familiar components of what Moscow and East Berlin have traditionally called the "postwar realities." Thus, as far as East Berlin is concerned, the "German question" is closed, the GDR must be accorded more formal juridical recognition by the FRG, and West Berlin must in no way be considered a constituent part of the Federal Republic. Honecker's "Gera demands," moreover, still stand. Whether Honecker fears that Gorbachev may compromise the Soviet Union's commitments on these vital issues is a matter of conjecture. Rumors circulating in the West in 1987 to the effect that Gorbachev might be considering the destruction of the Berlin wall provoked a flurry of excitement in the FRG. Similarly, a cryptic statement by Valentin
Falin, the former Soviet ambassador to Bonn who now heads Novosti Press, to the effect that the Quadripartite Agreement is not the "last word" on Berlin, sparked still more speculation about possible Soviet concessions in the offing. Thus far, at least, doubts about Moscow's adherence to the central features of the "postwar realities" appear unfounded. Pravda, in fact, excised President von Weizsäcker's remarks about the future reunification of Germany in its rendition of his Moscow speech.

If the Honecker regime has no grounds for fearing a serious withdrawal of Soviet support for the life-and-death interests of the GDR, the consternation it has openly displayed towards Gorbachev has focused above all on the new Soviet leader's reform programs. The East German leadership has made it plain in a variety of ways that major economic reform, and excessive "openness," are not on the GDR's political agenda. The first is viewed (at least in official statements) as unnecessary; the second is regarded as potentially destabilizing.

In sum, the Honecker government displays the chief characteristics of a centrist coalition. When viewed in comparison with Brezhnev's conservative regime, and Gorbachev's reformist leadership, Honecker's administration stands quite visibly in between the two. On the one hand, it has openly rejected the confrontationist approach to East-West relations pursued by Brezhnev and his immediate successors from the late 1970s onwards; and on the other, it is clearly uncomfortable with some of the more radical aspects of reform espoused by Gorbachev. Meanwhile, Honecker in recent years has further consolidated his own position as the adaptable leader of an adaptable coalition. He has reshuffled the SED Politburo and Secretariat to reduce the power of those opposed to greater economic and political cooperation with Bonn (such as the Berlin party chief, Naumann) and to enhance the authority of those in favor of it. Thus far, he has also managed to keep overtly reformist views from being articulated by members of either the primary or the secondary party elite.

In the process, the GDR under Honecker's leadership has pursued a coherent foreign policy, with fairly high levels of responsiveness and willingness to compromise. Discussion of foreign policy issues has taken
place within the parameters recognized by the authorities as acceptable for public debate. Together, these characteristics are indicative of a centrist decision-making regime.

CHAPTER ELEVEN
CONCLUSIONS

Two broad sets of conclusions flow from the analysis presented in the preceding chapters. The first concerns Soviet policy towards West Germany; the second deals with what this study tells us about analyzing Soviet foreign policy more generally.

To begin with, Soviet policy towards the Federal Republic during the period under scrutiny has exhibited a number of constants: features that have not varied in spite of the changes in decision-making regimes and other aspects of the political environment both inside and outside the USSR. As they pertain specifically to West Germany itself, these constants have consisted of the determination, first and foremost, to "close" the German question by refusing to permit the reunification of Germany on western terms; second, and relatedly, to obtain Bonn's formal acceptance of the postwar territorial status quo (at the very least on a de facto basis); third, to secure the political and economic viability of the GDR, above all by obtaining Bonn's formal recognition of the GDR; fourth, to keep West Berlin juridically and politically separate from the Federal Republic as much as possible; and, fifth, to limit the development of West Germany's military power, above all by blocking its access to nuclear weapons. These fundamental aims have not only not varied during the 1963-89 period; they have been the foundations stones of Soviet policy towards West Germany since the late Stalin era.

Beyond these basic goals, the Soviets have also sought to improve their ties with the FRG, a process which reached its crowning heights with the historic accords of the early 1970s. But to what end have these improvements
been sought? Are the Soviets driven by a calculated scheme aimed at splitting the FRG off from the United States and neutralizing it? Or can Moscow's aims be defined in other terms?

The chief conclusion that the present study reaches on this score is that all the Soviet leaders in this period, from Khrushchev to Gorbachev, have essentially pursued an Atlanticist policy towards the U.S.-West European alliance in general, and towards the Washington-Bonn relationship more particularly. The Soviets have never had a viable policy designed to achieve a complete rupture between the U.S. and the FRG. Unquestionably, if West Germany (or any other NATO state) were summarily to declare its neutrality and announce its withdrawal from its alliance commitments, this would no doubt be "cause for jubilation" in Moscow. But there is no evidence to indicate that the Soviets believe that this is a realistic prospect in anything resembling the predictable future. On the contrary, Soviet leaders from Khrushchev to Gorbachev have consistently acted on the premise that West Germany will continue to maintain its strong political, economic and military attachments to the United States and to its West European partners. The chief objective of Soviet policy, therefore, has been to weaken the ties binding West Germany to its main alliance partners, not to break them completely. Finlandization may be possible for Finland; it is not a possibility for the Federal Republic.

The writings of Soviet specialists on East-West relations testify to these objectives. To be sure, there is a Europeanist viewpoint observable in Soviet writings that places heavy emphasis on the desirability -- and possibility -- of working to increase Western Europe's independence from the United States. But even this Europeanist perspective usually includes the explicitly articulated notion that any increase in foreign policy independence on the part of the West European states, including West Germany, will most likely occur within the context of the Atlantic alliance rather than outside of it. While the Europeanist viewpoint would urge the adoption of policies aimed primarily at cultivating Western Europe, it does not anticipate a
complete and permanent break-up of Western Europe's ties with the United States.

Meanwhile, the Europeanist perspective has always been counterbalanced in this period by another set of views that I have labeled Americanist. Writers who espouse this line of thinking tend to emphasize the persistence of Washington's leadership role within the Atlantic alliance, even in periods of acute conflict between alliance partners on opposite sides of the ocean. Whatever the degree of U.S.-West European tension, it is the United States, in this view, that continues to hold the predominant economic and military power within the alliance, and these assets ultimately confer superior political influence on the U.S. in its dealings with its allies. Moreover, analysts who display a marked Americanist orientation also point out that West European governments, as well as most citizens of the NATO countries, want to maintain close links with their trans-Atlantic partner. Some of these writers are also fond of indicating that certain West European leaders or political parties who are considered to be highly responsive to Soviet initiatives (such as the SPD) are outspoken proponents of the Atlantic alliance, and are not to be trusted to break ranks completely with the United States or to favor every initiative that is put forward by the Warsaw Pact countries. (Some writers even portray West European pacifist parties, such as the West German Greens, in a negative light: they are occasionally portrayed as "undisciplined," "unrealistic" and "anarchistic" -- qualities that are traditionally viewed with contempt by Marxist-Leninists.) Finally, and most importantly, Americanist writers occasionally go out of their way to indicate the positive side of NATO from the Soviet standpoint: it acts as a barrier to further West German military expansion. Thus the notion that Moscow may be less interested in evicting the American troop presence from Western Europe than in keeping the Bundeswehr from becoming more powerful is not just an idea that western analysts may impute to Soviet strategy; in fact, various Soviets have said as much in print.

Thus both the Europeanist and the Americanist positions hover close to a central line of consensus in Soviet thinking on U.S.-West European
relations. Both regard the Atlantic alliance as here to stay; both regard the main task of Soviet policy as that of exploiting and promoting disagreements among the NATO allies as they arise; neither expects an imminent break-up of the alliance itself. Where they differ is on the relative amount of emphasis to be accorded to Soviet policy. While the Europeanist view holds that the greatest opportunities for taking advantage of rifts in the alliance lie in Western Europe, the Americanist argument warns that these opportunities are not as great as they may seem, and that an excessive reliance on the West Europeans is both unrealistic and potentially dangerous for the USSR.

The central line of consensus towards which the Europeanist and Americanist outlooks gravitate is what I have called the Atlanticist orientation. This viewpoint is the most explicit of the three in articulating the view that the Atlantic alliance is rather evenly balanced between conflict and cooperation among its principal members, above all the United States and Western Europe writ large. Hence the proponents of this view would recommend that Moscow should not permanently accord greater deference to either the United States or to the West European countries as a matter of general policy; rather, the Kremlin should play both ends up the middle in an opportunistic fashion. To switch back and forth between the U.S. and Western Europe; to get the West Europeans to influence American policy, and vice versa, as conditions dictate: these are the hallmarks of the Atlanticist orientation.

The preceding examination of Soviet policy towards the FRG, and of the articulated viewpoints of the leading Soviet decision-makers on this issue, show that this Atlanticist approach is the one that has been most consistently adopted by the Kremlin leadership over the course of the period examined in this book. What Moscow has sought to achieve, in other words, is a greater degree of multipolarity within NATO, not the absolute dissolution of the alliance itself.

To some, this subtle appreciation of the realities of East-West relations, and of West-West relations, may constitute prima facie evidence that the USSR may therefore be viewed as a typical "great power" in its
approach to foreign policy. Lest ideology be completely ignored as a contributing factor to Soviet foreign policy considerations, it should be recalled that the Soviets continue to regard its relationship with the West essentially in adversarial terms. This hostility unquestionably features elements that are traditionally associated with great power rivalries: territorial disputes, expansionist ambitions, demands for security and prestige, and other quintessentially "national" interests. But the intensity of the distrust of the West that characterizes Soviet policy cannot be explained by these facts alone. It is the Marxist-Leninist world view that stigmatizes "capitalists" and advocates of "bourgeois democracy" in the first place as the ineluctable enemies of the Soviet state. (These terms of opprobrium are also on occasion specifically applied to the SPD, with whom the Soviets continue to share a legacy of mistrust.) And it is the Leninist tradition in foreign affairs, together with its Stalinist admixtures, that instructs Soviet leaders in the need for "realism" and adaptability in the conduct of foreign relations. "Never tie your hands" is a Leninist admonition that still reverberates in the halls of the Kremlin down to the present day. It is the hallmark of the Atlanticist approach to relations with the West. To this extent, with its insistence on realism and flexibility, the foreign policy conceptions of Leninist ideology are perfectly compatible with the hard-boiled opportunism of great power politics.

While Soviet policy towards the Federal Republic has therefore been guided by these regularities, there has nevertheless been an appreciable amount of variation in the way Moscow has pursued its unaltering goals towards the FRG and in the way it has implemented its Atlanticist approach to East-West relations.

As this study has endeavored to show, these variations can be explained for the most part by four variables. One of course, has been the influence of the GDR. While Moscow has invariably managed to compel the East German leadership to adapt its policies towards West Germany in accordance with overriding Soviet interests, the Kremlin has also had to take East German views into consideration when shaping the content and timing of its approach to
the FRG. At times the Soviets have allowed the East Germans to influence Kremlin decisions on West Germany, as when the Brezhnev-Suslov team exploited Ulbricht's opposition to Khrushchev's demarche towards Bonn in 1964. At other times, the Kremlin has had to delay its efforts to pursue détente with Bonn because of the GDR's objections, as in the last phases of Ulbricht's reign. And at other times the Soviets have probably had cause for concern that the GDR, in the Honecker era, might be moving too far and too fast in its own pursuit of détente with the FRG. Ultimately, of course, Moscow's fundamental aims with regard to the Federal Republic, as defined above, are completely compatible with those of the GDR. Furthermore, as already noted, Moscow invariably has the final say in determining what the GDR must or must not do. Within the limits established by these realities, however, the Soviets must still be attentive to the wishes of their East German allies when fashioning their policies on West Germany.

The other three factors that explain variability in Moscow's West German policy are more internally rooted. They are, of course, the nature of the decision-making regime; elite perceptions of the FRG and of its role in East-West (and West-West) relations; and the shifting emphasis accorded to the importance of East-West trade.

The principal implication of the first variable is that different Soviet (and East German) leaders, through the mechanism of differently configured ways of organizing power at the top and different policy orientations, have pursued Moscow's enduring goals with respect to the FRG in a variety of different ways. A directive decision-making regime, like Ulbricht's, can go in any direction the leader prescribes. (In Ulbricht's case, it was a maximalist direction that rejected any thought of compromise, or even dialogue, with the FRG unless Bonn was willing to accept the GDR's maximum demands.) Coalition-style regimes, however, pursue policies more in keeping with the predominant political consensus of the ruling clique, whether reformist, conservative or centrist. Each of these decision-making regimes, moreover, exhibits different tendencies towards policy coherence,
responsiveness to external events, willingness to compromise, and openness to publicly articulated policy discussion and debate.

A few examples of how these variations manifest themselves will suffice to bring these points into greater clarity. The conservative coalition headed by Leonid Brezhnev succeeded in concluding a remarkable series of agreements with the FRG and its allies in the early 1970s that appeared to be the harbinger of a new era of cooperation and goodwill between Moscow and Bonn. The Kremlin had come forward with a number of important concessions, above all in the area of inter-German relations, in order to bring these agreements about. However, over the course of the 1970s, it was increasingly apparent that Moscow's desire for improved political ties (as well as expanded economic cooperation) with the FRG did not include a serious effort to achieve a breakthrough in the area of military detente. On the contrary, the Soviets expanded both numerically and quantitatively their conventional capabilities in the European theater. This effort culminated in the modernization of the USSR's intermediate range nuclear missile arsenal with the deployment of the SS-20s starting in 1976.

It has not been possible to determine with documented evidence precisely when and why the Soviets decided to deploy the SS-20. Conceivably, the introduction of the new weapon may have been determined after the failure of Soviet efforts to convince the United States to include its forward based systems in Europe in the SALT II negotiations. Be that as it may, what can be documented is the Soviet conviction that detente with the West required continuing "vigilance" in the military domain and the continued "strengthening" of Soviet and Warsaw Pact armed forces. Rather than being viewed as incompatibe with detente, the steady expansion of Soviet weapons developments was regarded in Moscow as detente's essential precondition. This was made clear by Brezhnev and Suslov in 1970, only months after the signing of the historic renunciation of force treaty with the FRG. It was reiterated in a more elaborate fashion over the course of the ensuing decade in the conceptualization of detente put forward by leading Soviet political figures and by authoritative specialists in the secondary elite. The decision to
deploy the SS-20, in essence, represents an outgrowth of this fundamental understanding of the nature of the detente process on the part of the Brezhnev regime.

This militarized conception of detente reflected the conservative orientation of Brezhnev's ruling coalition. One of the cardinal features of this type of orientation is that it accords a significant amount of deference to the Soviet military. From their public statements, it appeared that Brezhnev and Suslov were quite willing to pursue this conservative course soon after they removed Khrushchev from power; others, like Kosygin and Podgorny, may have had their reservations about it, but they publicly acquiesced in the arms build-up policy by the mid-1970s.

As we know, the SS-20's ignited an acute and protracted conflict in East-West relations (and in Soviet-West German relations), one which froze the germinating detente of the early seventies. What accounts for Soviet behavior in this crisis? It is quite possible that the Soviets intended the SS-20s from the outset to promote the "de-coupling" of U.S. and West German war strategies. By increasing the risk to West Germany of a highly accurate nuclear strike, the SS-20s might confront the United States with the painful choice of either staying out of a nuclear war in Europe or risking total nuclear devastation by retaliating. Moreover, the very presence of the missiles on Soviet soil could provide the Kremlin with a new means of political blackmail for use in its dealings with the West German government. While these calculations cannot be discounted when assessing Moscow's motivations for installing the missiles, it must also be pointed out that the SS-20s were part of an on-going process of military modernization, and that the underlying rationale for this broader effort was set forth by authoritative leaders and commentators at least as early as 1970. Whether or not the Soviets had developed the highly refined calculations about the purposes of the SS-20s just ascribed to them, they certainly believed that the quantitative and qualitative enhancement of Soviet military capabilities was a desideratum per se. This was the basic principle that guided the overall policy orientations of Brezhnev's conservative coalition, convinced as it was that the Soviet
Union's status in world affairs necessitated a highly developed military machine of equal stature to that of the United States (and perhaps even greater).

It is also a well-known fact that, once NATO embarked on its strategy of opposing the SS-20s with new American missiles in Western Europe, a controversy developed within the leading West European countries -- and in West Germany above all -- that almost resulted in the collapse of NATO's "two track" approach to the INF problem. To be sure, the Soviets did what they could to promote the efforts of anti-missile sentiments in Western Europe. It is most unlikely, however, that Moscow foresaw how NATO would react, and how West European publics would respond, when it first conceived of the SS-20s.

The breadth of public opposition to the NATO missiles in Western Europe probably came as much as a surprise to Moscow as it did to most West European governments.

In view of the statements made by Soviet leaders and academicians over the course of the 1970s, it appears that the Soviets were motivated in their decision to deploy the SS-20 by the same Atlanticist considerations that guided Moscow's policies towards the FRG more generally. That is, the SS-20s, and the accompanying conventional deployments, were predicated on the notion that the FRG was going to be a strong and loyal member of the NATO alliance for the indefinite future. To deal with the FRG's "position of strength," the Soviet Union, in these calculations, needed to develop a position of equal or superior strength. Far from expecting the SS-20s to pull the Federal Republic away from the United States, therefore, the Soviets most probably deployed these missiles with the express purpose of strengthening their hand in dealing with a tightly solidified Washington-Bonn alliance in the long term.

Soviet behavior in the course of the INF controversy also betrays the attitudes to be expected of a conservative coalition. Once it became clear that the Schmidt government regarded the SS-20s with utmost seriousness, and that the newly blossoming Soviet-West German detente was in jeopardy, Brezhnev's Politburo held fast to its position on military modernization. This decision was clearly incompatible with the requirements of detente.
(particularly those enunciated by Willy Brandt), which demanded a relaxation of military tensions. Brezhnev's conservative policy thus lacked coherence; its resolve to proceed with a military build-up contradicted its avowed interest in political and economic cooperation with the FRG. It also displayed diminishing levels of responsiveness to West German warnings about the detrimental political repercussions of the SS-20s, and equally reduced indications of a willingness to compromise on the INF issue. Neither Andropov nor Chernenko could break the resulting impasse.

The upshot of the controversy was a serious failure for Soviet foreign policy. Instead of promoting West Germany's relative "independence" from the United States, Moscow had managed to drive Bonn and Washington closer together than they had been during Brandt's tenure in office. The "contradictions" in U.S.-West German relations, in the end, proved to be less powerful than the enduring elements of unity -- and in large part because of Soviet actions.

In stark contrast to his predecessors, Gorbachev has sought to break the gordian knot of the INF controversy by adopting a more accommodationist approach to East-West relations. As the leader of a reformist regime in its formative phases, the new Soviet leader has shown greater coherence, greater responsiveness, and a greater willingness to compromise with the West than the more conservative Soviet leaders who preceded him. In view of his reformist priorities at home, Gorbachev needs a protracted period of calm in the USSR's international environment. He has also called for greater infusions of western technology and expertise to promote the aims of domestic "restructuring." In pursuit of these goals, he has taken lengthy strides towards accommodating the West not only in the INF question, but in such other bothersome areas of East-West tension as Afghanistan. In short, Gorbachev's approach in foreign affairs is profoundly influenced by his reformist political orientation.

At the same time, Gorbachev shows signs of pursuing the same Atlanticist orientation towards the West that guided previous Soviet leaders, including Brezhnev. His principal difference with Brezhnev's approach centers
on methods, not goals. Brezhnev apparently believed that U.S.-West European "contradictions" could grow even during periods of East-West confrontation. Gorbachev recognizes that these conflicts among the western allies are more likely to develop and proliferate only under conditions of detente. His own perceptions of the West, as articulated in some of his most important foreign policy speeches, make it clear that the exploitation of contradictions among the western allies is still a major objective of Soviet foreign policy. Accordingly, Gorbachev thus far has displayed a considerable degree of flexibility and opportunism in his efforts to get the West Europeans to influence the United States, and the U.S. to influence the West Europeans, as the occasion demands. This Atlanticist concept has been especially evident in the Gorbachev regime's alternating demarches towards Washington and Bonn on such issues as SDI, the INF agreement, and the prospect of a future accord on conventional weapons in Europe.

Meanwhile, the Honecker coalition in East Germany has displayed the defining tendencies of a centrist decision-making regime. With its repudiation of Brezhnev's confrontationist stance in the missile controversy, and its clearly pronounced misgivings about the more radical elements of Gorbachev's perestroika and glasnost campaigns, the Honecker government has positioned itself in between these two tendencies, with the express aim of pursuing cooperative relations with Bonn while avoiding the instabilities that may result from domestic reform.

As the foregoing review of the INF issue has suggested, one cannot simply speak of "the" Soviet policy towards West Germany. Within the context of the constant elements mentioned at the start of these concluding observations, Soviet (and East German) policies towards the FRG have differed from one decision-making regime to another.

Moreover, there has been an on-going debate in both countries about the nature of the FRG and its role in East-West relations. The West German government and its foreign policy inclinations have been alternately viewed in a positive or a negative light by various Soviet decision-makers and foreign policy specialists. So too, as already suggested, the question of whether
Bonn is becoming more independent of the United States, and what this relative independence implies, has also been a subject of discussion. It is on this issue, in particular, that the contending Europeanist, Americanist and Atlanticist policy orientations have centered their arguments.

In addition, there have been differing approaches to the question of trade with the FRG. While both the USSR and the GDR have always traded with Bonn in our period, there have been significant differences of opinion on the extent to which these economic ties should be developed. Ulbricht strenuously opposed excessive reliance on West Germany; Brezhnev shifted from a reserved viewpoint on this issue to a vigorous approval of expanded trade; Honecker has also pursued a cooperative approach; and Gorbachev, most of all, has sought to remove the bureaucratic barriers to joint ventures and other more advanced forms of East-West cooperation, with a view to promoting even further the development and restructuring of the Soviet economy.

Finally, what does this study tells us about how we should go about studying Soviet foreign policy? The main conclusion that deserves to be highlighted here is that the aims and methods of Soviet policy towards West Germany, and towards the West more generally, can be understood on the Soviets' own terms, by reading their own writings, listening to their own statements, and then comparing these articulated viewpoints with their actual behavior. Even before the remarkable outpouring of candor flowing from the new glasnost, there was much to be gleaned about Soviet intentions from open Soviet sources themselves. Deeds have tended to match words; policy options have been detectable in public debates; the analyses presented by the secondary elite can be related to the actions taken (or considered) by the primary elite; and the various alternative viewpoints advanced in the Soviet press have tended to "make sense" when held up against the available evidence. In short, there has been an intimate connection between images and policies throughout the entire period examined in this study.

Furthermore, an analysis of the factors impinging on Soviet decisions regarding West Germany suggests that key elements of the domestic system must be granted ample consideration in any analysis of Soviet foreign policy.
While the Soviets, like their counterparts in other governments, are of course influenced by the events that take place in the international system and in the political life of other countries, how these events are interpreted and how the Soviet government responds to them depends to a considerable measure on internal factors, such as the ones explored in this study. It is these internal factors, moreover, that go a long way towards explaining the shifts and variegations in Soviet foreign policy.

In view of the fact that significant shifts have occurred in Soviet policy towards West Germany over the past twenty-five years, the question inevitably arises as to whether these changes in policy should be regarded as essentially "tactical." If by "tactics" we mean the flexible implementation of a more broadly conceived strategy that is less subject to short-term fluctuations, then the changes observed in Soviet policy towards the FRG over the years may indeed be considered tactical. But what, then, is the strategy? Ultimately, the guiding Soviet strategy towards West Germany -- and towards the West more generally -- in this period has been that of peaceful coexistence. It is a strategy that rests upon an enduring hostility and mistrust of the West (above all for ideological reasons), but which posits the need for varying degrees of cooperation with the capitalist countries (above all for reasons of security and economic self-interest). Lacking the capacity to either revolutionize or destroy capitalism, and lacking the means -- and even the inclination -- to bring about the collapse of the western alliance system, Moscow has had to learn to live with the West as best it can. It is within this strategic context of peaceful coexistence that the tactical options of Europeanism, Americanism, Atlanticism and even maximalism derive their ultimate purpose.