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Walter C. Clemens, Jr.

International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), Vol. 49, No. 3. (Jul., 1973), pp. 385-401.

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NICHOLAS II TO SALT II: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN EAST-WEST DIPLOMACY *

Walter C. Clemens, Jr.

THE arms race as a problem in East-West relations has been marked by aspects of both continuity and change. If we look back not only to the first disarmament efforts of the Bolsheviks but to Tsarist diplomacy, the elements of continuity appear at least as significant as the changes that have affected Soviet policy over the years. Moscow's negotiating behaviour even in recent times continues to bear striking resemblances to the approach of Tsarist Russia to the Hague Conference on the Limitation of Armaments in 1899 (and again in 1907).¹ Like Tsar Nicholas II, Soviet leaders from Lenin to Brezhnev have been aware of Russia's technological and material disadvantages *vis-à-vis* the West. Nicholas, for example, called the Hague Conference in part because he sought to outlaw the rapid-fire cannon available to Austria but not to Russia, unless at great expense. Soviet leaders, in their time, have also sought to negate the West's lead in various fields of military technology: atomic weaponry (by exploiting the ban-the-bomb campaigns of 1946–52); the West's plans for tactical nuclear weapon deployment in Europe (by the atom-free zone proposals of 1956 and later); outer space surveillance (by denouncing spy satellites as contrary to international law until Russia also obtained such craft in the early 1960s). Indeed, the Kremlin seems to have finally decided to take part in the strategic arms limitation talks (Salt) with Washington only after the Johnson Administration asked Congress for funds in 1968 to deploy antiballistic missile defences (ABM), an expensive and sophisticated system in which the United States might produce another 'gap' to Russia's disadvantage.² The American lead in the testing of

* The article draws in part from the author's forthcoming book on the super-powers and arms control to be published later in 1973.

¹ For documentation on Tsarist policy in 1899, see L. Teleshevskoi (Ed.), 'K istorii pervoi Gaagakoi konferentsii 1899 g.', *Krasnyi arkhiv*, LI–LII (Moscow, 1932), pp. 64–96, and 'Novye materialy o Gaagskoi miroi konferentsii 1899 g.', *Krasnyi arkhiv*, LIV–LV (Moscow, 1932), pp. 49–70.

² For historical analyses of recent Soviet participation in efforts to contain the super-power arms race, see Thomas B. Larson, *Disarmament and Soviet Policy, 1964–1968* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969), pp. 139–183; Walter C. Clemens, Jr., *The Arms Race and Sino-Soviet Relations* (Stanford, Calif.: The Hoover Institution, 1968); Roman Kolkowicz *et al.*, *The Soviet Union and Arms Control: A Superpower Dilemma* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970); Thomas W. Wolfe, 'Soviet Approaches to SALT', *Problems of Communism*, XIX, No. 5 (September–October 1970), pp. 1–10; Lawrence T. Caldwell, 'Soviet Attitudes to SALT', Adelphi Paper No. 75 (London: IISS, 1971).

multiple warheads was no doubt another incentive to Moscow to participate in the Salt negotiations.

The diplomacy of Nicholas II appealed to pacifist sentiments at home and abroad, just as Soviet propaganda has courted elements of the liberal bourgeoisie, the working class, the oppressed nations of the Third World, as well as the war-weary people of the Soviet Union.³ Like Tsarist Russia, the Soviet Union has also been constrained by the views of its allies. Thus, despite its original reasons for calling the Hague Conference and wanting it to succeed, St. Petersburg had to promise the French that no agreements would be reached before they had consented to attend. Analogous pressures from Pankow and Peking have no doubt contributed to occasional harsh notes in the Kremlin's negotiations with the West in the 1950s and 1960s.

More ironic even than the cross-pressures from allies were those from within the Tsarist government. Nicholas was eventually compelled to assure some of his own ministers that Russia would not agree to major arms controls at The Hague because force or the threat of force would be needed to obtain Russia's political and territorial objectives in the Far East (where war with Japan was anticipated) and at the Turkish Straits (near which a number of Balkan wars would be fought before Sarajevo).

Soviet arms control policy has also been the result of conflicting pressures, from Lenin's day to the present (though dissent was muffled in the years of high Stalinism). These pressures have reflected the same kinds of bureaucratic interests and institutional orientations that characterise decision-making processes in the United States and other countries.⁴ Thus, a relatively conciliatory position towards negotiations with the West was developed in the Soviet Foreign Ministry (or Commissariat) under Chicherin, Litvinov and Gromyko—all of them professional diplomats well versed in foreign cultures and languages, but (partly because of their cosmopolitan ways) relatively low in the Party hierarchy. This professional orientation and its concomitant willingness to explore the possibilities of negotiation were not nearly so pronounced when the Foreign Ministry was headed by Trotsky, Molotov or Shepilov—in part because these men were ranking Party leaders first (at least two of them ideological hardliners) and only secondarily concerned with

³ See Nikolai Notovitch, *La Pacification de l'Europe et Nicholas II* (Paris: P. Ollendorf, 1899). For a study of Stalin's use of the peace movement as an adjunct to Soviet policy, see Marshall D. Shulman, *Stalin's Foreign Policy Reappraised* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963). Reviewed in *International Affairs*, April 1964, p. 328.

⁴ Sovietologists have probably exaggerated the degree to which various parts of the Soviet policy apparatus have worked in concert. For a collection of essays that persuasively challenge the old orthodoxy, see H. Gordon Skilling and Franklyn Griffiths, *Interest Groups in Soviet Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971). Reviewed in *International Affairs*, October 1971, p. 832.

diplomacy. Vyshinsky's term as Foreign Minister (1949–53) coincided with the height of the cold war and internal tensions in the Soviet Union, producing a climate unsuitable for exploring detente, even if the Foreign Minister had not been notable for his legalistic defence of, and other involvement in, the purges of the 1930s.⁵

The contrast between the world views associated with the Party hardliner and the professional diplomat was illustrated by the different ways in which Trotsky and Chicherin spoke, in their day, of 'peaceful co-existence'.⁶ This concept can be rendered in two ways in Russian: as *mirnoe sozhitel'stvo* or as *mirnoe sosushchestvovanie*. The first of these expressions more nearly approximates to 'peaceful co-habitation', implying a more active but less enduring relationship than the second term, which literally means 'peaceful co-existence', connoting a more stable but also a more formal relationship. Trotsky seems to have been the first Soviet leader to speak of *mirnoe sozhitel'stvo*, a term that he used in a basically revolutionary context from November 1917 until the Brest-Litovsk Treaty concluded in March 1918. He used this term, for example, in the same speech in which he called for 'no war, no peace'. It was left to Trotsky's successor as Foreign Commissar, Chicherin (once employed in the Tsarist Foreign Ministry), to use *mirnoe sozhitel'stvo* in a more conciliatory sense, as he did in September 1918 when attempting privately to convince the Kaiser's government of Moscow's interest in good-neighbourly relations and 'peaceful co-habitation'. Chicherin later described Soviet Russia's peace treaty with Estonia in February 1920 as 'the first experiment in *mirnoe sozhitel'stvo* with bourgeois states' and 'a dress rehearsal for understanding with the Entente'.

Chicherin also seems to have been the first Soviet spokesman to employ the more formal expression for co-existence when, on June 17, 1920, he called for '*mirnoe sosushchestvovanie* with other governments, no matter what they are'. Such niceties, of course, have been blurred

⁵ From 1917 until 1971 there have been only seven Soviet Foreign Ministers: Trotsky (November 1917–April 1918); Chicherin (1918–29); Litvinov (1929–39); Molotov (1939–49 and 1953–56); Vyshinsky (1949–53); Shepilov (during 1956); Gromyko (1957–). The first two professionals—Chicherin and Litvinov—became members of the Party Central Committee only late in their careers. Gromyko attained this status in 1956. Trotsky, Molotov and now Gromyko have been the only Foreign Ministers to become full members in the Party Politburo. Vyshinsky and Shepilov were alternate members of the Politburo (or Presidium) during their incumbency. For detailed studies of Chicherin and Litvinov, see the essays by Theodore H. von Laue and Henry L. Roberts in Gordon A. Craig and Felix Gilbert (Eds.), *The Diplomats, 1919–39* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1953). Reviewed in *International Affairs*, April 1954, p. 216. See also the analytical survey by Robert M. Slusser, 'The Role of the Foreign Ministry', in Ivo J. Lederer (Ed.), *Russian Foreign Policy* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1962, pp. 197–242. Reviewed in *International Affairs*, January 1963, p. 113). See esp. the discussion of Litvinov's place in the power struggles of the 1930s (pp. 215–230). Many other essays in the Lederer book are relevant to the problems of continuity and change discussed here.

⁶ The following analysis is based on Franklyn Griffiths, 'Origins of Peaceful Coexistence: A Historical Note', *Survey*, No. 50 (January 1964), pp. 195–201.

in later Soviet treatments of the problem, but Lenin seems never to have used the term *mirnoe sosushchestvovanie*, though in February 1920 he did speak of Soviet policy in Asia as '*mirnoe sozhitel'stvo* with all peoples, the workers and peasants of all nations awakening to a new life, a life without exploitation, without landowners, without capitalists, without merchants'. Lenin did, however, speak of *mirnoe sozhitel'stvo* with bourgeois governments in October 1922, when he told the London *Observer* that lack of full Soviet participation at the Lausanne Conference would impede trade 'so that there would be either no grounds at all left for peaceful co-existence or it would be unusually hampered', and that the League of Nations was without 'real equality of nations or real prospects of peaceful co-existence between them'.

Stalin, after Lenin's death, used both terms for co-existence, but declared that the period of *mirnoe sozhitel'stvo* was receding into the past, giving way to a period of imperialist attacks. At the same time as Litvinov was presenting Moscow's appeals for total and complete disarmament at the League of Nations, Stalin declared that the task was to delay war by buying off capitalists and applying all measures to maintain peaceful relations. 'The basis of our relations with capitalist countries', he declared, 'consists of admitting the *sosushchestvovanie* of the two opposing systems'. As Franklyn Griffiths has pointed out in his essay on these changes, Stalin's 'acceptance' evolved into Khrushchev's active pursuit of *mirnoe sosuchchestvovanie*.⁷ If Stalin accepted peaceful co-existence out of weakness, Khrushchev later made it a foundation of Soviet policy at a time of mutual deterrence.

Chicherin and Maxim Litvinov (first his deputy, later his successor as People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs) took the lead in formulating the Soviet position on disarmament at a number of international conferences.⁸ It was Chicherin who, in mid-1921, first expressed the Soviet government's interest in 'disarmament of any kind', though he also noted that it doubted whether 'guarantees' would be found to assure the implementation of disarmament measures (about to be discussed at the Washington Naval Conference), a point that Comintern statements made in much stronger language. Before the Genoa Economic Conference in 1922, Litvinov seems to have drawn up theses on a 'pacifist programme' to be presented by the Soviet delegation, a procedure approved by the Party's Central Committee. Chicherin was apparently instructed to elaborate the details of the programme, which he did in consultation with Lenin. Later the Soviet Foreign Commissar presented this programme with a great flourish at Genoa. Litvinov, for his part, led the Soviet delegation at the Moscow Conference on the Limitation

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

⁸ For documentation, see the author's 'Lenin on Disarmament', *Slavic Review*, XXIII, No. 3 (September 1964), pp. 504-525.

of Armaments later in 1922, demonstrating much of the style and substance he showed when Moscow joined the League of Nations disarmament talks in 1927. As recent documentation has shown, however, in 1922 Chicherin was rebuked for going too far towards concessions to the West (a fate suffered more visibly in 1957 by Harold E. Stassen, who was alleged by John Foster Dulles to have exceeded his instructions in arms control talks with Moscow⁹). After an exchange of telegrams with Chicherin, however, 'the Politburo [to quote a senior Soviet historian] decided that Chicherin was right' and directed him to make 'concessions in strict dependence on the amount and terms of the loan granted to Soviet Russia'.¹⁰

We can only speculate whether Zinoviev and other Comintern leaders welcomed the disarmament declarations and proposals of the Soviet Foreign Commissariat, or whether they simply made the best of a policy line about which they had grave doubts. (The manner in which they exploited the disarmament campaign raised apprehensions in the West that tended to undermine the kind of trust on which an accord would probably have to rest.) The Cominform, in its day, also worked in orchestration with various communist fronts to exploit the bomb banning proposals of Soviet diplomacy in the years before Stalin's death. Revolutionary concerns and interests seem to have diminished in the Soviet Union since the mid-1950s, though Khrushchev and his successors have often been inhibited by fear of being exposed as traitors to the revolution by reason of their arms control dealings with the West. Assuming that revolutionary concerns have subsided, however, it would seem that their potentially hawkish influence on Soviet arms policy has been more than compensated by the growth of a military-industrial complex within the Soviet Union.

Like military men everywhere, Soviet ministers and commissars of defence and their subordinates have taken a dim view of letting down moral and material defences by negotiating with the adversary. There is no evidence that Trotsky (while in power) or his successor as Commissar for Military Affairs, Mikhail Frunze, were opposed to the disarmament line espoused by Chicherin and Litvinov. That line, after all, could be rationalised as part of a one-two punch, in which Comintern propaganda followed through to underscore the futility and hypocrisy of the bourgeois disarmament position. But it is clear that Trotsky and Frunze—despite their personal and doctrinal feuding—shared a militant, revolutionary outlook concerned with keeping the entire nation and its armed forces in a high degree of readiness.¹¹ Frunze and other Soviet

⁹ Mr. Stassen has claimed that these charges are ill-founded.

¹⁰ M. Trush, 'Lenin's Foreign Policy Activity (April-July 1922)', *International Affairs* (Moscow), No. 1 (January 1970), pp. 63-66 at p. 64.

¹¹ See, e.g., L. Trotskii, *Kak vooruzhalas' revoliutsiia: na voennoi rabote* (3 vols. Moscow: Vysshii voennyi redaktionnyi sovet. 1923-25). On Trotsky's project of

military men tried to obstruct and minimise the transition of the Red Army toward a small cadre force backed by a large territorial militia. A less independent and revolutionary outlook was shown by Voroshilov, but he too talked of the need to strengthen Soviet defences in the period of the Five Year Plans before the Second World War, on premises that stressed the implacable hostility between the Soviet Union and the capitalist system.¹² The zero-sum competition between Moscow and its adversaries has continued to be emphasised in speeches by Soviet defence ministers such as Malinovsky and Grechko. In addition, however, there is much evidence since 1960 of serious dissatisfaction among the military over (a) reductions of troop strength; (b) allocation of funds to the military budget; and (c) the favouring of one branch of the armed forces over another.¹³ There have also been indirect assertions by the military that arms control efforts would be in vain, such as Frunze's admonition that chemical weapons would be used in future wars and that no convention or agreement would change the matter.¹⁴ A veritable chorus of Soviet military writers warned in 1968–69 against entering strategic arms negotiations with the United States, but their concern was muted in 1970–71, and by 1972 the military press joined with *Pravda* and *Izvestia* in asserting that 'equal security' had been enshrined in the Moscow summit agreements.

Soviet politicians, especially at moments of crisis when they felt insecure (as in 1954–55 and in 1964–65), have courted the military. It also seems likely that the links between some political leaders and the military have been further reinforced by support from heads of industries engaged in advanced research, and in the development and manufacture of military and military-related products such as space ships.¹⁵ Thus, what Joseph Schumpeter termed the 'warrior class'

'militarisation of labour', see Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Armed, Trotsky: 1879–1921* (New York; London: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 487–503. Reviewed in *International Affairs*, October 1954, p. 488. Trotsky did, however, argue for a reduction of Soviet military personnel and their transfer to civilian production in 1920. See the author's 'Soviet Disarmament Proposals and the Cadre-Territorial Army', *Orbis*, VII, No. 4 (Winter 1964), notes 14 and 15. In exile in 1935, on the other hand, Trotsky castigated the Second and Third Internationals for day-dreaming about disarmament and the League of Nations. See *Trotsky's Diary in Exile* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), pp. 113–114. Reviewed in *International Affairs*, July 1960, p. 384. For a minor spat between Trotsky and Lenin in 1921 over the liquidation of a coastguard department, see the author's 'Lenin on Disarmament', note 66.

¹² See, e.g., K. E. Voroshilov, *Oborona SSSR*, 3rd ed. (Moscow: Voennyi vestnik, 1928), pp. 28–36, 89, 160–170 and *K. E. Voroshilov: stat'i i rechi* (Moscow: Partizdat TsK VKP (b), 1937), pp. 513, 540.

¹³ See, e.g., Roman Kolkowicz, *The Soviet Military and the Communist Party* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1967), pp. 153–165. Reviewed in *International Affairs*, July 1968, p. 562. See also the materials attributed to Oleg Penkovskiy, *The Penkovskiy Papers* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965), pp. 231–260.

¹⁴ Frunze, *Sobranie sochinenii*, II, p. 134.

¹⁵ For documentation, see e.g., Walter C. Clemens, Jr., *Outer Space and Arms Control* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Center for Space Research, 1966 [processed]), pp. 44–47. For corroborating documentation, see also William R. Kintner and Harriet Fast Scott

finds itself in common cause with certain political leaders, with the secret police, and with certain industrial interests whose empires may atrophy or be otherwise threatened by a lessening of international tensions, by freer contacts with foreigners, or by decreased investments in certain sectors of the economy.

Party leaders' pragmatic approach

Ranging between the proponents and opponents of arms control and other negotiations with the West, the heads of the Soviet Communist Party and government have generally adopted a more balanced view, taking account of the arguments pro and con and weighing them according to the needs and opportunities of the moment. Lenin, though disposed to rule out disarmament talks on *a priori* ideological grounds, recognised the pragmatic utility of such talks as a means of strengthening peace sentiments as well as revolutionary movements in the West. He also anticipated the day when military technology would make war counterproductive as an instrument of policy.¹⁶ In these waverings he adumbrated considerations and policies that were later present under Stalin and the several regimes that have succeeded him. The pragmatic note was struck most vividly in Khrushchev's time by the Party statement that the 'atomic bomb does not adhere to the class principle'.¹⁷ On the other hand, since technology increasingly acquires a dynamism of its own, it is possible that it will take command over the foresight that Soviet leaders have sometimes demonstrated. (The lack of a more responsive body politic may account for the unhindered development of a supersonic transport in the Soviet Union, in contrast with the refusal by the United States Congress to provide funds for such a plane in 1971.)

Brezhnev, like his predecessors at the head of the Soviet Communist Party, has progressively widened his sphere of interest. In recent years he has educated himself in the intricacies of foreign affairs, including arms control questions. Until a few months ago, the Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko, remained a specialist, listened to for advice but left outside the Politburo where decisions are taken. Western diplomats have observed that Gromyko behaves like the foreign minister of a great power, concerned with diplomacy and *Realpolitik*. Whether he is less ideological than Brezhnev and Kosygin is not clear, since they

(Trans. and Eds.), *The Nuclear Revolution in Soviet Military Affairs* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968). Reviewed in *International Affairs*, January 1969, p. 151. See also the apparent alarm in the Soviet Defence Ministry about the consequence of any Salt accord, manifested for example in 'A Policy of Active Resistance to Aggression', *Krasnaya Zvezda*, June 1, 1971: 'Our preparedness to support real measures for disarmament must match and does match our preparedness for any turn of events.'

¹⁶ See the author's 'Lenin on Disarmament', notes 48 and 49.

¹⁷ 'Open Letter' of the CPSU Central Committee 'to All Party Organisations and All Communists of the Soviet Union', *Pravda*, July 14, 1963.

must take a broader view of Soviet interests and speak out on issues affecting morale and ideological purity.

There is, we should note, a world-wide trend for foreign ministers to meet one another frequently; to initiate and respond to proposals from one another as theoretical equals; to develop their expertise on the basis of higher education and professional diplomatic experience—usually without benefit of military training or service, even in developing countries. Within this elite, Andrei Gromyko was already in 1965 the third best-known foreign minister, ranking only after Couve de Murville and Dean Rusk among those known personally to other foreign ministers.¹⁸ It is not very strange that—more than fifty years after the revolution—the Soviet Union's foreign minister is a part of an international elite of specialists in diplomacy. It is perhaps more surprising that he is part of a tradition that Chicherin and Litvinov established in the interwar years. They, no less than Gromyko, lost no chance to speak in favour of disarmament if permitted to do so by the political directorate. They, in their day, like Gromyko in April 1971, also urged the West to listen carefully to the arms control proposals espoused by the Party leadership.

The trend towards functional representation at the highest level of foreign policy-making reached its apotheosis in April 1973, not long before Brezhnev's meeting with President Nixon in June, when Gromyko, Marshal Grechko and Yuri Andropov were all named as full members of the Politburo (replacing one foreign policy conservative and one liberal in domestic affairs). This was the first time since 1957 that a foreign minister or defence minister held Politburo rank, and the first time since Beria (1953) that it could be claimed by a head of the secret police. Only time will tell whether these three voices echo their General Secretary or whether they will exercise some independent influence on Soviet foreign policy, representative perhaps of their own institutional perspective.

Returning to our main theme, we see that Soviet policy—like Tsarist—has objective reasons for seeking limitations on East-West arms competition, but that these may be submerged by other political interests or forces working for the expansion of Russia's military power. In this regard, unfortunately, we see a partial convergence between the Soviet Union and the other super-power. Indeed, the judgments of the White House, the State Department and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency as to what risks may be taken for peace are subject to challenge

¹⁸ George Modelski, 'The Foreign Ministers as a World Elite', *Peace Research Society (International) Papers*, Vol. XIV, 1970 (The Ann Arbor Conference, 1969), pp. 31–46. See also Barry R. Farrell, 'Foreign Policies of Open and Closed Political Societies', in Farrell (Ed.), *Approaches to Comparative and International Politics* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1966), pp. 167–208. Reviewed in *International Affairs*, January 1967, p. 125.

not only from the Defense Department,¹⁹ but also from Congress and from numerous business interests who campaign more openly and vigorously than would be possible in a less pluralistic community. By late 1972 or early 1973, however, it appeared that President Nixon was aiming to reduce the influence of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency still further, cutting its grant and putting an ageing State Department officer at the head of the delegation to Salt II. (By the same token, however, public and elite pressures for detente and arms control also receive freer expression in the United States, though the dissent of intellectuals such as Sakharov, the underground chronicles of the opposition, the organised protests and sit-ins of Soviet citizens in recent years showed some increase in the possibility of free expression in the Soviet Union, despite occasional crackdowns by the agencies of control.)

Some continuities in Tsarist and Soviet policy derive from Russia's geopolitical condition (its vast size, location, technological backwardness, and so on) and perhaps from Russian culture. Other continuities are based on the ideological heritage of communism, particularly as inherited by Lenin, and from the early experiences of Bolshevik diplomacy when its initial characteristics were developed under Lenin. But let us also consider the forces that have functioned to bring on certain discontinuities from the momentum of history, certain changes that have tended to make arms control agreements between Moscow and the West not only feasible but perhaps vital to the survival of each side.

The evolution of Soviet arms control policy

In the evolution of Soviet policy we see the interaction of three factors: (1) ideas and sentiments about strategic objectives and how to achieve them; (2) actions taken to pursue these goals; and (3) the conditions, at home and abroad, that affect and are affected by Soviet policy. Does any one of these three factors have 'precedence'? Clearly, the ideas of Lenin and other Soviet leaders on disarmament did not arise in a vacuum, but reflected the culture in which they had grown up; the material problems of the Russian state; their own political experience (heavy in conspiratorial intrigue for Lenin and his contemporaries); their personal dispositions and personal interests. These ideas generated policies: actions by the foreign ministry; the war ministry; the Comintern and other agencies for dealing with revolutionary movements abroad. These actions then mingled with those of other govern-

¹⁹ During most of Robert S. McNamara's tenure as Secretary of Defense, however, his department took a more positive stand on arms control matters than the Department of State and a more influential one than the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

ments, either succeeding or failing in some degree to achieve Soviet objectives, either vindicating or eroding the expectations on which the policies had been constructed—thereby creating a new set of conditions in which the ideas of Soviet leaders could be refined or altered. Once the Bolsheviks were in power, the material problems and opportunities of managing state power came to overshadow those aspects of their ideology based on pure theory. Though ideology continued to reflect itself in Soviet disarmament policy, for example, in expectations of capitalist hostility and in the dependence of capitalist economies upon the arms industry (a point which was not discarded until 1959),²⁰ ‘ideology’ was gradually redefined to rationalise the strategic interests of the Soviet state.

The underlying conditions shaping Soviet policy (or that of any country) on arms control can be grouped under four headings: (1) military-strategic; (2) external political; (3) domestic political and socio-logical; and (4) economic. Ideology, we assume, will also be conditioned by these four factors, no less than by government or Party words and deeds on arms and arms control. The weight of history suggests that the most important conditions shaping Soviet arms control policy have been military-strategic in character, though the other forces have also played a significant role, particularly at moments of instability within the Soviet ruling circles or at times of great economic difficulty.²¹

We should emphasise, however, that the conditions in which Soviet ideas on arms control take shape are not the product only of Soviet policy. This milieu results rather from the interaction of Soviet actions and those of other states, not least the United States and China. Soviet views on arms competition will naturally reflect a learning experience the nature of which can be shaped by Washington no less than by Peking or other centres of power. To the extent that Soviet leaders feel that their experiences in arms control matters have been conducive to the promotion of their interests, they will be inclined to pursue these negotiations more seriously, and vice versa.²²

There is a tendency in Western writing on the Soviet Union to

²⁰ See references in the author's *Soviet Disarmament Policy, 1917-1963: An Annotated Bibliography of Soviet and Western Sources* (Stanford, Cal.: Hoover Institution, 1965), pp. 78-86, 104, 125.

²¹ Domestic factors in Soviet policy are emphasised, probably overemphasised, in Michel Tatu, *Power in the Kremlin* (London: Collins, 1968; New York: Viking, 1969). Reviewed in *International Affairs*, July 1969, p. 530; and Robert Slusser, ‘America, China and the Hydra-Headed Opposition: The Dynamics of Soviet Foreign Policy’, in Peter H. Juviler and Henry W. Morton (Eds.), *Soviet Policy-Making* (New York: Praeger; London: Pall Mall, 1967), pp. 183-269. Reviewed in *International Affairs*, January 1968, p. 118.

²² For a study of the manner in which the Kennedy and Khrushchev Administrations seemed to pursue a strategy of reciprocal tension reduction in 1963, see Amitai Etzioni, ‘The Kennedy Experiment’, *Western Political Quarterly*, XX, No. 2. Part 1 (June 1967), pp. 361-380.

understate the degree to which Soviet policy has been reactive rather than initiating. Much Western analysis assumes that Moscow has embarked on some coherent strategy for reasons of ideology or internal compulsions of Soviet power, and that the job of Western governments is to ascertain the true character of this strategy and react accordingly. One of the leading American arms control negotiators once began a lecture by saying: 'My subject is what the Russians have been doing; why they behave that way; and what we ought to do about it'. What this negotiator and many Sovietologists minimise is the impact of the West upon Soviet policy. Thus, one Soviet diplomat told the author of the profound shock and disillusionment experienced by some in the Soviet Foreign Ministry in 1955 when the three Western heads of government ignored, at Geneva, the Russian disarmament proposals of May 10. These proposals specifically incorporated much of the Western position up to that time, and by September of that year had led Washington to 'place a reservation upon all of its pre-Geneva substantive positions . . . [on] levels of armaments. . .'.²³ This incident may or may not be apocryphal, recounted to impress the sympathetic Westerner, but the principle implicit in the Soviet diplomat's story seems indisputable: Soviet ideas and actions—no less than the West's—will be based upon perceptions and experiences that reflect international as well as domestic and purely ideological inputs.

We should note, in passing, that Western policy toward the East-West arms race has also displayed aspects of continuity, some of them not conducive to restraining this competition. One aspect of Western policy is the mirror image of a vital facet in the Soviet outlook as well: a profound distrust of the other side as a reliable negotiating partner. Western policy-makers have considered the Soviet regime to be unstable, immoral or amoral, unable to maintain itself except by force, and prone to cheating or violence to achieve its foreign objectives. One negative result of this outlook has been a disposition to look with extreme scepticism at any Soviet proposal, expecting that it must be loaded to favour only one side. If the Russians accept some Western proposals, the West may renege on these (as it did for example in 1955 and 1959), in part from a fear that there must be some hidden reason that makes these measures good for Russia but bad for the West. As recently as 1970 Washington undercut its Salt delegation by withdrawing support for an American proposal limiting ABM defence to capital cities after it was accepted by Moscow. Though a time-lag intervened between the American offer and the Soviet response, the Soviet leaders must have questioned American motives.²⁴ We must note also that the West has

²³ *Documents on Disarmament, 1945-1959*. 2 vols. (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office. 1960). Vol. I, p. 513.

²⁴ For details, see John Newhouse, *Cold Dawn: The Story of SALT* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973).

itself looked with a jaundiced eye on East European initiatives such as the Rapacki Plan, which its Polish author hoped would give his country an element of independence, partly because the Western governments assumed some dark Soviet design behind the scenes.²⁵

Second, following from this distrust of the Russians, Western policy—particularly American policy—has been marked by a high degree of self-righteousness. In Washington, no less than in Moscow, a semi-official line has stressed the country's steady dedication to the quest for peace and arms limitation: the United States citing the Washington Naval Conference of 1921–22 or, later, the magnanimity of the Baruch proposals for the international control of atomic energy in 1946, just as the Soviet Union can refer to its disarmament campaign in 1922; its 'principled stand' at the League of Nations; and its efforts to 'ban the bomb' after the Second World War. What most officials and citizens of each country have often failed to do is to consider their own policies as others perceive them. The self-righteousness of Washington and Moscow has been compounded as the two super-powers retain or increase their own arms while putting pressure on Israel, India, Japan, and other countries to forswear the nuclear option.

Third, Washington has tended to operate on the assumption that American and Western economic and technological prowess will permit the United States and its allies to achieve and maintain military superiority if the communist bloc persists in continuing the arms race. Just as the British navy was once pledged to superiority over any two competing fleets, in the 1960s Washington tried to maintain nuclear and general purpose forces able to fight two and a half major wars. As the British sights were lowered, however, so, under President Nixon, the United States has altered its target to an ability to fight only one and a half major wars, and to maintain a posture of strategic 'sufficiency' rather than superiority.²⁶

From Lenin to Brezhnev

Perhaps the most important change in factors affecting Soviet arms control policy has been the achievement in the late 1960s of a rough parity in strategic relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. For the first time the strategic balance could facilitate a nego-

²⁵ Poland's motives in this matter have been discussed with a number of East European scholars and diplomats, who agree with this interpretation. For a historical analysis of disengagement proposals, see Lincoln P. Bloomfield, Walter C. Clemens, Jr., Franklyn Griffiths, *Khrushchev and the Arms Race: Soviet Interests in Arms Control and Disarmament, 1954–1964* (Cambridge, Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 1966), pp. 147–151.

²⁶ These changes may be traced in the annual posture statements of Defense Secretaries McNamara and Laird, and in statements by the White House. For a summary and analysis of those developments, see Morton H. Halperin, *Defense Strategies for the Seventies* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971), esp. pp. 51–53 and pp. 72–86.

tiated freeze. Washington's earlier determination to maintain strategic superiority had served as a red flag goading Soviet decision-makers to pursue the arms race in order to nullify the American lead.²⁷ Only time will tell whether the super-powers will be content with a position of approximate parity. Parity, of course, does not denote equality, and each super-power has unique advantages, the American lead in numbers of deliverable warheads being especially important. Nevertheless, the strategic background to the Salt negotiations is one in which either super-power can assume an 'assured destruction capability' *vis-à-vis* the other, even if one of them launched a surprise attack.

The attainment of a rough parity in the late 1960s has been only one of several developments that have improved Russia's position militarily and strategically since the end of the Second World War. One consequence of the war, of course, was the establishment of regimes friendly to Moscow, or even subordinate to Kremlin control, throughout Eastern Europe. This gain for Soviet power was undermined, however, by changes in military technology that left the Soviet Union vulnerable to airborne attack with nuclear weapons even though Soviet troops stood athwart the historic invasion routes of the East European plains and mountains. Though Russian scientists tested their first atomic bomb in 1949, it was not until 1954–55 that the Soviet government amassed numbers of long-range bombers capable of striking the territory of the United States. Thus, though the Soviet Union did not possess numerical equality with American strategic forces, by the mid- and later 1950s it had acquired—for the first time in Russian history—a minimum deterrent capable of dissuading any rational opponent from an attack. This important fact enabled the Soviet Union for the first time to negotiate with the West on the basis of relative equality, both sides considering measures that could be to their mutual benefit.

Other changes accumulated in rapid succession. The first summit conference since Potsdam and the opening rounds of the cold war brought the British, French, Soviet and American heads of government together in 1955. Although these meetings had some negative results, Western and Soviet leaders left Geneva persuaded that both sides acknowledged the futility of nuclear war as an instrument of policy. By 1958 the first conference of 'experts' was held, thereby acknowledging the role of technological expertise in resolving problems of arms control, for example, in the matter of nuclear test detection and identification. The years 1958–61 witnessed a three-power moratorium

²⁷ On Stalin's personal participation and oversight of programmes during the Second World War aimed at improving Soviet technology in ways that would overtake the West, e.g., in range of fighter planes, see the memoirs of a leading Soviet engineer and designer: A. Iakovlev, *Tsel' zhizni (zapiski aviakonstruktora)*, 2nd and enlarged edition. (Moscow: Politizdat, 1969), esp. pp. 336–351.

on nuclear tests, though France entered the atomic club in 1960. The first arms control treaty involving the super-powers (on Antarctica, in 1959) was followed by others in 1963, and then by a succession of accords leading toward the Salt agreements of 1972.

The limited accords of the early 1960s demonstrated that arms control was possible between communist and non-communist powers. They also showed—for all to see—that world communism was not monolithic, nor was the Western alliance. The nuclear test ban treaty of 1963 helped to expose and to confirm the rift between Moscow and Peking; it increased tension between Adenauer's Germany and the leaders of Britain and the United States; France, like China, also refused to sign the treaty and separated itself still further from its alliance partners.

These agreements of the 1960s and, still more, those reached in Salt, suggest how far Soviet arms control policy has travelled since Lenin's initial view of disarmament as a pacifist myth. The first positive Soviet policy towards arms control can be observed in 1918–22 in the treaties terminating hostilities along Russia's western front (demilitarised zones and so on); next, in 1921, as a means of obtaining Soviet participation in the Washington Naval Conference, where Moscow wanted particularly to take part in negotiations about the Far East; in 1922 as a means of dividing the bourgeois governments facing Soviet Russia at Genoa and generating support from the working classes and pacifist bourgeoisie of Europe; later in 1922, as a means of putting pressure on Russia's East European neighbours to make the same kinds of manpower reductions as those already planned for the Red Army²⁸; beginning with Litvinov's first presentations to the League of Nations in 1927, as a way of enhancing Moscow's international position and mobilising world opinion by exposing the hypocrisy of bourgeois diplomacy; in the years 1946–53, as a tool with which to hamstring America's nuclear weapon monopoly and to undermine the West's moral position in the Korean War (by accusations of bacteriological warfare). Only in the mid-1950s and the 1960s did Kremlin policy-makers begin to approach arms control negotiations in a manner that might promote the strategic interests of the parties concerned—by helping to economise on scarce resources, by reducing the danger of war, and by reducing the destructiveness of war if it should occur.²⁹ In these years Moscow, like

²⁸ See the author's, 'Lenin on Disarmament', notes 41–43.

²⁹ Even in the 1920s and 1930s, however, there were Soviet writers and diplomats who took an 'analytical middle marginalist' or 'marginalist anti-war' approach to disarmament talks. Some of them, such as E. A. Korovin, continued this line despite criticism from powerful foes. Litvinov and his secretary at the League negotiations, Boris Shtein (the present author's mentor at Moscow University in 1958), seemed also to belong to this non-ideological grouping. For references, see Griffiths, 'Inner Tensions in the Soviet Approach to "Disarmament"', *International Journal* XXII, No. 4 (Autumn 1967), pp. 593–617, esp. pp. 600–602.

the Western governments, also came to appreciate the extent to which arms control negotiations can alienate as well as win support from allies and uncommitted nations.

Virtually the entire evolution of communist thinking on arms limitation from before the Bolshevik Revolution to the 1970s was anticipated by shifts in Lenin's views on this subject. His attitude towards disarmament passed through two fairly well-defined stages, but contained the seeds of a third stage that seems to have become increasingly influential in Soviet thinking in recent years.³⁰ First, from before the 1905 Revolution until after the October 1917 Revolution, Lenin opposed disarmament negotiations because they engendered pacifist illusions harmful to a revolutionary mentality. The task of the proletariat, he urged, was rather to 'disarm' the bourgeoisie and to end war by terminating the class struggle. While maintaining his theoretical opposition to such schemes as the 'plague of nations', however, in 1919-20 Lenin presided over the conclusion of many arms control arrangements embodied in peace treaties with Russia's western neighbours. By 1921-22 a second stage emerged as Lenin endorsed disarmament negotiations as a way to buy time and exploit contradictions in the enemy camp. This second stage in Lenin's thought, however, contained elements of another, less revolutionary, orientation which treated disarmament not only as a tactic but as a possible long-range objective of Soviet policy. Not only did he foresee a period when military technology would make war unthinkable, but he called it one of the main tasks of Soviet diplomacy to support the pacifist wing of the bourgeois camp 'as one of the few chances for the peaceful evolution of capitalism to a new structure. . . .'³¹

These three stages continue to be manifest in the outlook and policies of the Soviet, Chinese and other governments claiming to follow the precepts of Marxism-Leninism. Stage I of Lenin's thinking on disarmament has provided the model for Mao Tse-tung and other revolutionaries sceptical about the prospects of peace so long as capitalism remains a world force; the instrumental view of disarmament implicit in Stage II Leninism provided the basic model for Soviet policy at the League of Nations and the United Nations until Stalin's death in 1953; the inchoate aspects of Stage III were developed under Khrushchev who tried to make disarmament and arms limitation a strategic goal of Soviet policy. Even when model III came to the fore under Khrushchev, however, the influence of model II continued to be marked: profound doubts about the willingness or ability of bourgeois governments to enter into balanced, long-term agreements with com-

³⁰ See Griffiths, 'Inner Tensions in the Soviet Approach to "Disarmament"'.

³¹ See the author's 'Lenin on Disarmament', notes 26 and 28.

munist regimes; a kind of Bolshevik (or Russian) proclivity for all-out solutions such as GCD (general and complete disarmament) instead of 'mere' arms control; and as a corollary to these points, the rejection of the view that 'security' assurances and on-site inspection procedures need to precede disarmament.³² Nonetheless, Malenkov and then Khrushchev turned Soviet policy away from exposure tactics and towards a line that would strengthen 'sober forces' in the West and make it feasible for both sides to agree to 'partial measures of disarmament' (which the West termed 'arms control').

Under Brezhnev and Kosygin, Soviet Policy has steadily gravitated towards the third stage of Lenin's thought. The first years of their regime, coinciding with tensions over Vietnam and Czechoslovakia, saw a certain reluctance to give the same weight that Khrushchev had assigned to peaceful co-existence and arms limitation as goals of Soviet foreign policy. While Brezhnev has attempted to maintain a certain centrist position, however, he joined Gromyko at the 24th Congress of the CPSU in April 1971 in making sober proposals for arms limitation addressed to attentive Western audiences as well as endorsing statements designed to maintain Moscow's chosen posture in propaganda bouts with Peking. More significantly, the ABM treaty signed in 1972 signifies not only that technology has made nuclear war counter-productive as an instrument of policy but that defence has become impossible. Soviet propaganda has justified the ABM treaty and the interim agreement on strategic offensive weapons on pragmatic as well as ideological grounds. By 1972-73 it appeared that Brezhnev, no less than Khrushchev in earlier years, had staked his reputation on the desirability and feasibility of establishing long-term agreements with the Western governments to contain the arms race and enhance economic and technological co-operation.

The third model of arms limitation has come to exist not only in theory but in practice. This development has been favoured by a series of shifts in the underlying factors shaping Soviet policy. Some of these factors, such as the relative strength of moderates in the Politburo, can be affected only indirectly by the United States. But Western decisions on military deployment, including restraints adopted without formal agreements, can serve to strengthen the hand of those who argue that the time is ripe to damp down international competition so as to focus on the internal needs of Soviet society. A climate conducive to East-West trade (which Lenin in his time hoped would result from the Genoa Conference) would reinforce these tendencies.

To make the most of these possibilities, diplomacy must rise like a

³² See the author's 'Ideology in Soviet Arms Control Policy', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, VII, No 1 (March 1964), pp. 74-81.

phoenix from the doldrums of cold war confrontation. The art of compromise, an important ingredient in the 1972 agreements of the Moscow summit, will be put to still sharper tests as both sides move to more complex negotiations to limit the characteristics as well as the numbers of their arsenals, expanding also the scope of their agreements to include other centres of nuclear power. As in 1899, so also in the 1970s, diplomacy can be spiked by powerful factions within the country or by external allies opposed to a broad agreement. Technology proceeds with its own mad momentum. Where there is a will to succeed, however, diplomacy may find a way. This is the lesson—until now at least—of the limited test ban, the non-proliferation treaty and the Moscow agreements of 1972.