

# **Soviet Foreign Policy Toward Japan: Linkages between Domestic and International Determinants**

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## **(CONTENTS)**

### **I. Introduction**

### **II. Domestic Determinants**

1. Historical, Cultural, Psychological Roots: From Antagonism to Gradually Correct Perception
2. Military Determinants: Major Cause of Conflict
3. Economic Determinants: Major Source of Improvement in Bilateral Relations, and Yet . . .

### **III. External Determinants**

### **IV. Prospects in the 1980s**

## **I. Introduction**

In this brief paper, I have decided not to provide just another chronological description of the foreign policy of the USSR toward Japan. First, if one wants to get basic historical facts, data, and information on this theme, one can rather easily obtain them in periodical or reference rooms of libraries. Second, I must confess that, being neither historian nor correspondent but a political scientist, I am more interested in theoretical analysis of, rather than in confirmation of, what has been happening in the Soviet Union. Thus, what I want to do in the paper is to identify and introduce the main factors which must influence or even shape Soviet policy-

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making toward Japan.<sup>(1)</sup> It is my basic assumption that the foreign policy of the USSR cannot be ascribed merely to a single determinant, say, Marxist-Leninist ideology or a Stalinist dictatorship, but rather to a product or compound of several independent variables. I would like to classify these variables into two categories: the internal and the external.<sup>(2)</sup>

Needless to say, the question as to how and to what extent they exert an influence on Soviet foreign policy-making is a difficult one to raise. A simple explanation of cause and effect is not valid, for the interrelationships are more complicated. The search for an answer to this hard question cannot but lead me to the role of the Soviet leadership. It is, in my opinion, the Soviet leadership which perceives and assesses internal and external factors and makes policy decisions based on them.

Finally, it will be my task to make some speculation about the future based upon the previous analysis of the linkage between domestic and international factors.<sup>(3)</sup>

## II. Domestic Determinants

The determinants of Soviet foreign policy<sup>(4)</sup> are numerous. Any

(1) In this regard I owe a great deal to excellent masterpiece of Professor Y. C. Kim, which deals with three, closely interrelating, aspects of Japanese-Soviet relations: security, politics, and economics. Young C. Kim, *Japanese-Soviet Relations: Interaction of Politics, Economics and National Security* (Beverly Hills, California: SAGE Publications, 1974).

(2) K.J. Holsti classifies determinants of foreign policy into three general categories: (1) external conditions, (2) national attributes, and (3) ideological or attitudinal attributes. K.J. Holsti, *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis* (third edition) (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977), pp. 362-363.

(3) James N. Rosenau, (ed.), *Linkage Politics* (New York: The Free Press, 1969).

(4) Richard F. Rosser, *An Introduction to Soviet Foreign Policy* (Englewood Cliffs N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), esp. Part One "The Bases of Soviet Foreign Policy," pp. 15-85; Morton Schwartz, *The "Motive Forces" of Soviet Foreign Policy, A Reappraisal* (Denver, Colorado: University of Denver, 1971).

For domestic determinants of Soviet foreign policy, see Morton Schwartz, *The Foreign Policy of the USSR: Domestic Factors* (Encino, California: Dickenson Publishing Company, 1975); Veron V. Aspaturian, *Process and Power in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971), esp. Chap. V, "Domestic Inputs and Instruments of Soviet Foreign Policy," pp. 429-551; Erik P. Hoffmann and Frederic J. Fleron, Jr. (eds.), *The Conduct of Soviet*

factor that exerts influence in one way or another on the making of Soviet foreign policy decisions can be regarded as one of its determinants. In this brief paper, however, there is no space, perhaps no need, to discuss all factors. Even such important shapes of Soviet foreign policy as geographic, demographic, topographical and resource features of the USSR<sup>(5)</sup> are omitted. They are "given" or "*a priori*" factors, which cannot easily be changed by human efforts. Instead, such "derivative" or human factors as political, military, economic and psychological variables will be singled out for discussion. Precisely because they are constantly changing, it is difficult but necessary to examine them.

### 1. Historical, Cultural, Psychological Roots: From Antagonism to Gradually Correct Perception

It can be quite safely assumed that historical and psychological traditions play the major role in Soviet policy-making in general.<sup>(6)</sup> Robert Conquest, British specialist on Soviet affairs, states:

"The Soviet leaders . . . are the products of history very different from our own, of a long-standing political psychology alien to ours in its motives, its judgments and its intentions . . . The basic point . . . is that it isn't a matter of their having "opinions." . . . They are simply soaked in their tradition . . ."<sup>(7)</sup>

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*Foreign Policy* (New York: Aldine. Atherton, Inc., 1971), esp. Part II, "Domestic Politics and the Formation of Soviet Foreign Policy," pp. 31-75; Richard E. Pipes, "Domestic Politics and Foreign Affairs," in Ivo J. Lederer (ed.) *Russian Foreign Policy: Essays in Historical Perspective* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), pp. 145-169.

(5) Holsti, *op. cit.*, pp. 384-385.

(6) For cultural determinants of Soviet foreign policy, see John S. Reshetar, Jr., *Problems of Analyzing and Predicting Soviet Behavior* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1955), esp. Chap. Three "The Cultural Approach to Soviet Behavior," pp. 14-30.

(7) Robert Conquest, "The Soviet Union: Internal Dynamics of Foreign Policy, Present and Future," in *Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the Committee on International Relations. House of Representatives, 95 Cong., 1st sess., September-October 1977* (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O. 1978), pp. 191-192.

The same must hold true for Soviet policy-making towards Japan. Then what are the elements of this cultural heritage of the Russians which are relevant to their policy-making vis-à-vis Japan?

The first characteristic of this heritage is Russians' deep-rooted feeling of *distrust* of their Eastern neighbor, the Japanese. The Russians and the Japanese dislike each other to such an extent that one Western observer was tempted to write that "it would be hard to name any pair of peoples less well suited by temperament and culture to get along with each other."<sup>(8)</sup> They fought against each other for territories of Sakhalin, the Kurils, and elsewhere. Whereas on the Japanese side there are memories to the Soviet surprise attack at the very end of W.W. II, on the Russian side there are memories of the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05), the Japanese military intervention in the Soviet Far East and Eastern Siberia (1918-22), and occasional aggressive acts by the Imperial Japanese Army in the 1930s.<sup>(9)</sup> To his people Stalin depicted Japan's surrender in August 1945 as Russia's revenge for 1904-5:

"The defeat of Russian troops in 1904 . . . left bitter memories in the minds of the people. It lay like a black spot on our country. Our people believed and hoped that blot effaced. Forty years have we, the people of the old generation, waited for this day."<sup>(10)</sup>

A Canadian sociologist at the University of Caligari, who had recently immigrated from the USSR, told the author of this paper in the summer of 1978 that it seemed to him that the general public in the Soviet Union had been supporting their Government in its policy not to return the "Northern Territories" to Japan. It seems to me,

(8) Harold C. Hinton, *Three and A Half Powers: The New Balance in Asia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975), p. 220.

(9) *Ibid.*; D.V. Petrov et al, *Istoriia mezhdunarodnykh otnoshenii na dal'nem vostoke 1945-1977* (Khabarovsk: Khabarovskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1978), pp. 230-231; V.N. Berezin, *Kurs na dobrososegstvo i sotrudnichestvo i ego protivniki: iz istorii normalizatsii otnoshenii c poslevoennoi iaponiei* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo [Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia], 1977), pp. 5-16.

(10) Quoted in Isaac Deutscher, *Stalin: A Political Biography* (New York: Vintage Books, 1949), p. 528.



of course, that one can argue against this kind of observation, saying that, once the top leadership in the Kremlin decides to return these islands the Soviet general public most probably will support such a decision, as it faithfully followed the about-face of official policy with regard to China.

Secondly, it can be noted that, in the opinion of many Japanese observers of Soviet-Japanese relations, the Soviets have been *underestimating* Japan. No need to repeat here that, generally speaking, the Soviets are very rank-and-hierarchy conscious people—strange as that may seem for a state that prides itself as the protagonist of the proletariat. Along these lines, it is a generally accepted theory, subscribed to by almost all Western Soviet-watchers, that the Soviet's tendency of the cult of power and the belief in bigness. Recent excellent reportage on contemporary Soviet Russia in works such as *The Russians* by Hedrick Smith and *Russia: The People and the Power* by Robert G. Kaiser (both 1976)—have abundantly corroborated this view.<sup>(11)</sup> Smith, for example conveys his surprise, when hearing a Swedish diplomat talk about this Russian character trait and vent his bitter frustration at the short shrift given Sweden and other small nations by Moscow: "The Russians respect power, because there is something behind your words. But they don't deal with us that way. We're not powerful. We're a 'little' country."<sup>(12)</sup>

In the Soviet image of Japan, Japan is not only a small country without any raw materials, but also dependent on the American nuclear umbrella. Dmitri Petrov, a Soviet Japanologist observes: ". . . extraordinary poverty in natural resources makes the Japanese economy exclusively dependent upon foreign trade . . . Here lies one of the situation of Japan."<sup>(13)</sup> He points out as well the military weakness of Japan: "Japan, in the number of its armed forces,

(11) Hedrick Smith, *The Russians* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1976); Robert G. Kaiser, *Russia: The People and the Power* (London: Secker & Warburg Ltd., 1976).

(12) Smith, *op.cit.*, p. 264.

(13) D.V. Petrov, *Iaponiia v mirovoi politike* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo < Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia >, 1973), pp. 39-40.

quality of military techniques, size of military budget and all other indexes, cannot be compared to the USA and countries of the 'Common Market.' Japan does not have her own atomic weapons nor independently decides strategic problems."<sup>(14)</sup>

Based on this perception of a small and powerless Japan, Soviet policy and behavior have been predicated on acting from a position of strength. For example, in sharp contrast with the fact that Japanese prime ministers Hatoyama and Tanaka have visited Moscow, none of the top-ranking Soviet politicians (such as Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Kosygin) has ever visited Tokyo, Mikoyan being the highest official to visit Japan. No better illustration can be provided to confirm the Soviet contempt and high-handedness toward Japan than Soviet behavior during fishing negotiations in general, and in the spring of 1977 in particular. In the most protracted and heated fishing negotiation of 1977 (90 days), the Soviets quite one-sidedly decided at their own convenience, to postpone and reschedule the date and place of the talks between Suzuki, head of the Japanese negotiators, and Ishikov, his Soviet counterpart. As a result, "poor Suzuki"—according to a Japanese newspaper, the *Sankei Shimbun*, "was waiting patiently for days to meet with Ishikov in the Japanese Embassy at Moscow, very often in vain."<sup>(15)</sup>

Final evidence to show that Moscow has been regarding Tokyo as neither very powerful nor independent country can be found in the Soviet draft proposal to Japan of the "Treaty of Good Neighborliness and Cooperation between the USSR and Japan." This draft which was announced on February 23, 1978, contains an article, which stipulates that "Should a situation arise which, in the opinion of both sides, is dangerous to the maintenance of peace, or if peace is violated, the sides shall immediately contact each other with the aim of exchanging views on the question of what can be done for improving the situation."<sup>(16)</sup> Particularly with such "security-coopera-

(14) *Ibid.*, p. 41.

(15) *Sankei Shimbun*, May 18, 1977.

(16) *Izvestiia*, Feb., 23, 1978.

tion-in-an-emergency-case" clause in article 5, Moscow's proposal gave rise to indignation on the part of the Japanese, who found that treaties of similar content were concluded by Moscow only with Soviet "satellite" states or close allies in Eastern Europe or with "developing" countries like India, Iraq, Bangladesh, Somalia, Afghanistan, Mozambique. For instance, Mr. Haruo Okada, one of the senior members of the Japanese Socialist Party and currently Vice-Chairman of the House of Representatives, was angered at this proposal, in which he detected a Soviet intention to "Finlandize" Japan.<sup>(17)</sup>

Thirdly, there is a good reason to doubt that the Soviets have a correct perception of Japan and the Japanese. The fact that the Soviets have tended to distrust and underestimate the Japanese can be ascribed, at least partially, to the inaccurate Soviet view of Japan's position.

Generally, it is well known that Soviet information activities are quite unbalanced and "compartmentalized" (H. Smith).<sup>(18)</sup> Whereas their knowledge about such hard facts as the numbers of factories, tanks, unemployed, or catch of fish of a given country is more complete than we anticipate, the Soviets demonstrate astonishing ignorance of such intangible matters as national feeling, mood and atmosphere of that same country. Besides, since Soviet diplomats, military leaders, bureaucrats, and scholars are allowed, and encouraged to become informed only on those matters which concern their own professions,<sup>(19)</sup> they are unable to gain a well-balanced overview of a country or a subject.

(17) Haruo Okada, "What is the Soviet aim of the Treaty of Goodneighbourhood and Cooperation between the USSR and Japan," *Chuō-kōron* (May 1978), pp. 130-133.

(18) Smith, *op.cit.*, p. 360.

(19) With regard to little exchange in information between various groups in the Soviet Union, Kaiser, based on John Newhouse's *Cold Dawn*, provides us with the following interesting episode: Kaiser, *op. cit.*, p. 103; John Newhouse, *Cold Dawn: The Story of SALT* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), pp. 104-105.

During the early negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United

Soviet perception of Japanese affairs does not make any exception to this general rule. It can even be argued that the Soviets have special difficulty in appreciating the delicate feeling of this Oriental nation. (This is in marked contrast with the Chinese, who as Orientals are far better informed about the psychology of the Japanese public and the domestic politics of Japan.) If the Soviets could modestly recognize that as Europeans they are heavily handicapped in this respect, there would still be hope and means for them to overcome these deficiencies: unfortunately however, both for them and for us, they have not yet reached the state where they can candidly admit their handicap. The time has already come, for instance, when Moscow should realize that military build-ups or other demonstrations of force do not work well or may even turn out to be counterproductive in the case of the Japanese, who have been sensitive to any manifestations of military power since W.W. II. Knowingly or unknowingly, however, Moscow has continually resorted to the same old bluff, without attempting to devise other, more sophisticated approaches. Let me give you another example. The Soviets have never tried to understand, or have pretended not to understand, that almost *all* Japanese want the Soviet Union to return the Soviet-occupied islands north of Hokkaido. The Soviet misconception of the problem is demonstrated by statements such as "the propagandist ballyhoo in the press and in certain Tokyo political circles over the islands reflects neither the true interests of the Japanese people nor the real feeling of the broad strata of the Japanese public."<sup>(20)</sup>

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States on control of strategic weapons, the American negotiators made a curious discovery. When they initiated a discussion of the Soviet Union's missiles and weapons, the Americans found that they knew more about them than some of the Russians. The civilians in the Soviet delegation, including a Deputy Foreign Minister, did not know details of their own country's strategic weaponry. The military men, however, were well informed. One day the senior military officer on the Soviet delegation, Colonel General Nikolai V. Ogarkov, took an American delegate aside and reproached him: there was no reason, the General said, for the Americans to reveal their knowledge of Soviet military matters to the civilian members of his delegation. That sort of information, the General said, was strictly the military's business.

(20) *Pravda*, April 1, 1977.

I hope that thus I have stressed convincingly enough the Russian psychological attitudes of distrust, underestimation, and misperception of Japan and the Japanese. However, it may be well to recall the words of a famous Greek philosopher, "All things are in flux and flow" as a reminder that human psychology also changes over time. With more flow of information on Japan available through tourists, foreign magazines and goods, the Soviet image of Japan has recently been less biased.

The most recent book by D. Petrov, *Japan of our days* (1979) reveals a relatively more accurate picture of Japan, compared with his former works. For instance, Petrov notes for the benefit of Soviet readers the intentions of the Tokyo Government, which, in concluding a Treaty of Peace and Friendship with the People's Republic of China, avoided tying its hands with specific commitments and succeeded in obtaining the agreement of Beijing (Peking) to include in the Treaty article 4, which stipulates that "the present treaty shall not affect the position of either contracting party regarding its relations with third countries."<sup>(21)</sup> Furthermore, it goes without saying that the remarkable development of the Japanese economy has greatly contributed to rectify the Soviet image of small, powerless Japan. During my 2-year stay in Moscow in 1973-75 and 35-day trip to the Soviet Far East in 1979, I had several occasions to notice that Soviet citizens, especially young people, did not hide their admiration for the superior quality of Japanese products. A Soviet-Japanese survey conducted jointly in the spring of 1977 by the *Sankei Shimbun* and the Soviet Academy of Sciences, revealed very interesting and contrasting answers by Japanese and Soviet students to the question as to what they thought of the USSR or Japan. As the following table shows, 61.4% of Japanese students replied that they disliked the USSR, whereas the great majority (i.e. 85%) of the Soviet students answered that they did like Japan.<sup>(22)</sup>

(21) D.V. Petrov, *Iaponiia nashei gnei* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo <Znanie>, 1979), p. 54.

(22) *The Sankei Shimbun*, Aug. 25, 1977, p. 9.

	Japanese Students (%)	Soviet Students (%)
like unconditionally	0.8	20.7
like but occasionally dislike	25.4	46.1
rather like	9.3	29.7
rather dislike	61.4	1.6
do not know	3.0	1.9

Unfortunately, it may be correct to say that by now the Russian attitudes of the past, on balance, still prevail in Soviet society. But it is also true to observe that they are being increasingly changed by the new psychological environment, which the Kremlin leadership will no longer be able to ignore in its policy-making toward Japan and will accept as a sort of inevitable trend.

## 2. Military Determinants: Major Cause of Conflict

There is no doubt that in general military capabilities have an important bearing on the formulation of foreign policies and the pursuit of policy goals by the political decision-makers. The relationship between the political leaders and the military is also a significant domestic factor which exerts a great influence on foreign policy-decision. Let us examine the latter problem in the Soviet context first and discuss the former afterwards.

The increase in military status in the Brezhnev era has been evident and remarkable, particularly since the late 1960's and early 1970s. Traditionally, the Bolsheviks had been noted for their special pains to underscore the importance of Party control over the military. Knowing well the effective and incisive power of the armed forces and keeping in mind the danger of "Bonapartism", the Bolshevik party followed a policy of attaching people's commissars to the Red Army, despite the inevitable byproduct of frequent conflicts between commissars and army commanders. Harsh measures were taken to prevent some generals from getting too powerful or popular, as illustrated by the execution of Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevich, and

others under Stalin and the demotion of Zhukov under Khrushchev. Against this background there is something new in the relations between the political leadership and the military under Brezhnev.

It appears that it has been necessary and even unavoidable for Brezhnev, who would like to pursue vigorously a foreign policy of détente and arms control negotiations (SALT I and II) with the U.S., to placate the complaints of, and counterbalance the resistance, from the military, by taking some conciliatory measures vis-à-vis the generals. Brezhnev promoted the Minister of Defense Marshal A. A. Grechko (1973) and later his successor Marshal D. F. Ustinov (1976) to full members of the Politburo. When Brezhnev had himself promoted to the rank of Marshal of the Soviet Union (1976), then it was also revealed that Brezhnev also occupied the position of Chairman of the Council of Defense. The coalition or even amalgamation of the Brezhnev leadership with the military culminated in the appointment to Minister of Defense of Ustinov, who, though he may be considered a civilian, has had a long career in charge of weapons procurement, is a representative of the military-industrial complex in the Soviet Union. At any rate from this personal union of political leaders and generals one must assume that the military under Brezhnev have been enjoying a position which enables them to exert a strong influence upon the foreign policy-making of the political leadership.

It is common knowledge that since the late 1960s the Soviet Union has continuously built up her military strength on a global scale. This rapid and immense build-up may have been prompted by the lessons drawn from the Cuba experience, by fears which resulted from the actual border-clash with China, or by the intention to achieve a favorable political bargaining position. Be that as it may, what seems interesting for us to note is that, even after achieving "rough parity" with the USA approximately around 1970,<sup>(23)</sup> the Soviet Union has demonstrated no intention whatever to stop her

(23) William B. Husband, "Soviet Perceptions of U.S. 'Positions-of-Strength'," *World Politics* (July 1979), pp. 497-499; see also B. Zanegin, "Aziatskaia bezopasnost': dva podkhoda," *Aziia i Afrika segodnia* (March 3, 1978), p. 2.

military build-up. Consequently, we ought to prepare for the day when the Soviet Union will have the military capability which will enable her to interfere in any conflicts or troubles on the globe—the realization of what the late Grechko, the Soviet Minister of Defense boasted in 1975:

“At the present stage the historic function of the Soviet Armed Forces is not restricted merely to their function in defending our Motherland and the other socialist countries. In its foreign policy activity the Soviet state actively purposefully opposes the export of counter revolution and the policy of oppression, supports the national-liberation struggle, and resolutely resists imperialist aggression in whatever distant region of our planet it may appear.”<sup>(24)</sup>

The recent build-up of the Soviet military capabilities in the Far Eastern areas, surrounding Japan has been also remarkable. Particularly the year of 1978 and 1979—that is to say, the period before and after the Japanese conclusion of the Peace Treaty with China in 1979, have witnessed a visible build-up. To begin with, the military equipment has not only grown in numbers but its quality has been significantly improved: The *Minsk*, a Kiev-class aircraft carrier, the *Petropavlovsk*, a Kara-class anti-submarine warfare cruiser, and the *Ivan Rogov*, an amphibious assault ship, were dispatched to the Far East: T-20 Backfire aircrafts are said to be stationed and even SS-20 IRBM are reported to have been deployed in the Far East.<sup>(25)</sup>

The number of military personnel was increased as well around areas of the Soviet occupied Northern Islands. When the Second World War ended, an army regiment (brigade) was deployed over there, but withdrawn later in 1960, and replaced by border guards. In 1979, however, the Japan Defense Agency disclosed that the Soviet Union had very recently re-deployed her military brigades not only

(24) A.A. Grechko, “Rukovoditschaia rol’ KPSS v stroitel’stve armii razvitogo sotsialisticheskogo obschestve,” *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, (No. 5, 1970), p. 39.

(25) For information on this subject, I am relying on *Asian Security 1979* (Tokyo: Research Institute for Peace and Security, 1979).



on the islands of Etorofu and Kunashiri, but even on Shikotan island, which Japan regards as a part of Hokkaido. According to information U.S. authorities provided to Japan, a Soviet troop unit on the Northern Islands is estimated to be approximately 6,000 strong and equipped tanks and artillery.

For long it has been pointed out by Western observers that the Soviet effort to build up her military power has proved not infrequently counterproductive, with the result of provoking and reinforcing the perceived necessity of coping with "the Soviet threat". In this regard the East Asian region has recently been caught up in "a vicious circle".<sup>(26)</sup> The USSR maneuvered militarily to deter Japan from entering into an alliance with China. Yet, it was exactly these military maneuvers which at least partially reinforced Tokyo's rationale for seeking such an alliance since it perceived an increased Soviet threat. The conclusion or prospect of conclusion of a Sino-Japanese Treaty has led, in return, to an intensification of the Soviet military build-up, especially on the Northern Islands.

It is thus correct to say that so far the Soviets have not yet appeared to recognize the difficulty of translating military strength into political gains, judging from their recent actions. No matter how small this indication may be, it is worthwhile noting that even in the Soviet Union it has been recognized that the growth of military power does not necessarily yield a corresponding measure of political benefits.<sup>(27)</sup> G. A. Arbatov, Director of the Institute of the USA and Canada in Moscow, for example, observes in the Party organ *Kommunist* that a situation now exists in which "the further accumulation of military power is not accompanied by an increase in political power."<sup>(28)</sup> Unfortunately, it is not clear whether Arbatov has in mind a universal phenomenon which also applies to the Soviet Union, because he made this reference in connection with his criti-

(26) Avigdor Haselkorn, "Impact of Sino-Japanese Treaty on the Soviet Security Strategy," *Asian Survey*, vol. 19, No. 6 (June 1979), p. 563.

(27) Thomas W. Wolfe, *Military Power and Soviet Policy* (Scanta Monica, California: The Rand Corporation, 1975), p. 12.

(28) G.A. Arbatov, "O sovetsko-amerikanskikh otnosheniakh," *Kommunist*, No. 3 (Feb. 1973), p. 105.

cism of the military ability of the USA. What is more unfortunate for us is that the wisdom expounded by Arbatov does not seem to be shared by the majority at Kremlin leaders.

### 3. Economic Determinants: Major Source of Improvement in Bilateral Relations, and Yet . . .

One of the most serious problems facing the Soviet leadership now is the slowdown of the economic growth and the continued inefficiency in the field of production and management. The economic reform initiated around 1965 only proved to be a half-measure to overcome such chronic economic deficiencies, mainly because it entailed the possibility of endangering the "Socialist" economic system if it were implemented. Another way of alleviating the difficulties of the Soviet economy is to import foreign grain, consumer goods, technology, and expertise from Western advanced capitalist countries. Since from an ideological point of view this alternative is much safer than Economic Reform, this policy of "economic cooperation", as the Soviets conveniently call it, has become an integral part of détente strategy of the Brezhnev leadership since the early 1970's. Moscow has made sustained efforts to the applicability of concept of "division of labor" from the "Socialist" countries also to other countries in the world, so that it can justify trade with capitalist nations.

From the perspective of such a broadened notion of "division of labor", Japan appears an ideal partner for the USSR, because the economics of these two countries are complementary. While the Soviet Union needs what Japan has, i. e., capital, technology, consumer goods, Japan needs what the USSR has, i. e., natural resources such as oil, gas, iron ores, timber etc. In addition, Japan among the major capitalist countries, is geographically most convenient to the Soviet Union, particularly to Siberia and the Soviet Far East, the part of the USSR which requires more than any other area advanced financial technology, consumer goods and financial assistance from outside suppliers. Already, between these two countries there have been undertaken five joint economic development projects—development of industrial chip and pulp resources, the production of coking

coal mines in southern Yakutsk, the development of forestry resources, exploration of natural gas deposits in Yakutsk and of oil and gas of Sakhalin. No wonder, therefore, Japan has become the Soviet Union's second most important "non-Socialist" trading partner with her exports amounting to \$2.5 billion and imports to \$1.4 billion in 1978.

On the other hand, there are certain limitations to economic cooperation between the West and Soviet Union. First, some disagreements seem to exist on the Soviet side as to how to pay the West for imports to the Soviet Union. Some circles in the Soviet Union are somewhat adverse to pay for Western technology by supplying Russian natural resources, which, they consider, belong not to the present future generations of the USSR. Besides, it may be embarrassing for the Soviet Government to continue the traditional pattern of commerce followed by Russia since Peter the Great, i. e., supplying raw material for Western advanced technology. Perhaps taking such voices into consideration, Soviet authorities have proposed to base economic cooperation on the so-called "compensation" or "production-sharing" formula, under which Western countries are repaid from the output of the plants they provides. This principle, however, makes the economic ventures with the Soviet Union less attractive to Western countries and, particularly, to Japan, which have an over-production of many industrial products, for instance, steel. It is thus particularly interesting to note in this context that in the communiqué adopted by the VIII Conference of the Soviet-Japanese Economic Cooperation Committee held in Moscow on Sep. 24-27, 1979, the Soviet side compromised with Japan and agreed that "both sides will continue to discuss the possibility of a mutually acceptable production-sharing formula and of cooperation based on reciprocity." To be sure, Japan had made it clear that it did not agree to accept steel output from the proposed steel mill plant on the Soviet east coast but would like to receive oil instead.

Another factor which has not encouraged closer economic cooperation and trade between Japan and the Soviet Union is attributable to a wide range of psychological frustrations caused by Soviet

secretiveness, arrogance and bureaucracy. It is said that Japanese businessmen, who attempt to trade with the Soviet Union, have to be prepared to endure long uncertainty as to time, price or volume of deliveries. Neither the Tyumen oil development scheme nor the Sakhalin natural gas pipeline project was materialized due to Soviet constantly changing conditions. The author of this paper witnessed last September on Sakhalin that eight Japanese engineers, assigned to participate “jointly” in a Soviet-Japanese oil drilling venture on the continental shelf off the northern coast of Sakhalin, had to lead a rather humiliating and idle life in Iuzhno-Sakhalinsk. They told me that, only when the Soviet engineers had questions on technical matters to ask of the Japanese, the Japanese engineers were requested to fly by a helicopter to the site of oil drilling. Otherwise, the Japanese were confined in a hotel room of the capital, Iuzhno-Sakhalinsk, and were not even allowed to go to an airport. This is the real picture of the Soviet-Japanese “joint” economic venture. And this is one of the reasons why the Japanese side is reluctant to promote economic relations with the Soviets unless it has no other alternative to do so, e.g., because of an economic depression or extreme difficulties at home or abroad.

Third, the difficulty of separating economic from political questions can be illustrated by the example of the “Northern Territories.” Basically it is quite correct to observe that both the Soviet Union and Japan have decided to separate these two spheres of human activities. Despite the deterioration of the political-diplomatic relations between Japan and the USSR—for example, by the Mig-25 incident or the conclusion of Sino-Japanese Peace Treaty—it did not take long for these two pragmatic or economy-minded nations to go back to the negotiation table on economic matters. Nevertheless, it has proved very difficult for either of them to separate economic considerations from political objectives. Moscow makes use of the lure of trade and fishing advantages in an attempt to offset the adverse effect of its unyielding position on the question on the “Northern Territories.” The Tokyo Government has been too cautious to conclude a long-term economic cooperation agreement on the governmental level with the Soviet

Union. The Bonn Government for example, has concluded such an agreement with the Soviet Union, which, at least partially, must have helped West Germany become the top non-communist trading partner. In contrast, it seems that the Tokyo Government wants to hold in reserve the conclusion of such an agreement as one of the few bargaining chips it can enjoy vis-à-vis Moscow—even at the cost of lagging behind West Germany in the field of trade with the Soviet Union.

### III. External Determinants:

#### Soviet Perception of Global and North-Eastern Factors

Thus far I have dealt with exclusively domestic factors which are, in my mind, of great weight in determining Soviet behavior and policies<sup>(29)</sup> toward Japan. Now let me turn to the external side of the picture. It is often stated that Moscow has no clearly conceived policies in its relationship with Japan. Moscow's Japan policy consists simply of "spin-offs of its policy towards the US and/or China."<sup>(30)</sup> This statement seems to me to exaggerate matters a bit, and yet does contain some truth. Namely, it reminds us of the need to look at Soviet behavior and policy toward Japan not simply in bilateral but rather in much broader, global and Asian, contexts.<sup>(31)</sup> To provide an example, it would be very hard to detect the reason which led to the sudden visit of Soviet Foreign Minister Andrey Gromyko to Tokyo in early January 1972, without considering what was then taking place on the globe in the wake of the announcement of Nixon's visit to Peking.

Furthermore, in contrast with a Western traditional view that Soviet behavior on the international scene is always governed by

(29) For external influences on the internal behavior of states, see Karl W. Deutsch, "External Influences on the Internal Behavior of States," in R. Barry Farrell (ed.), *Approaches to Comparative and International Politics* (Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1966), pp. 5-26.

(30) Basil Dmytryshyn, "Current Trends in Soviet Foreign Policy," (unpublished paper prepared for the U.S.-Japan Society, Sapporo in March 1979).

(31) Joseph M. Ha. "Moscow's Policy Toward Japan," *Problems of Communism*, vol. 26, No. 5 (Sept.-Oct. 1977), p. 61.

Marxist-Lenist doctrine or by strategical objectives, Soviet foreign policy moves can often be extraordinarily flexible and undogmatic in responding to what Soviet policy-makers perceive the given world situation to be.

Then, what is the Soviet leaders' image of the world in general?<sup>(32)</sup> The Soviets perceive that "the correlation of world forces"<sup>(33)</sup> has been continually shifting in favor of the Soviet Union. In the Soviet view it is nothing but an acknowledgement by U.S. political leaders of this general historical trend and particularly of the Soviet achievement of strategic parity with the U.S. that made détente possible. This recent change is expected to bring benefit to Soviet foreign policy. It is such an expectation that led Brezhnev to state in 1970 "at the present time no question of any importance in the world can be solved without our participation."<sup>(34)</sup>

Next, Soviet leaders believe that the contradictions between the United States, Western Europe and Japan have continued to intensify. For instance, N. N. Inozentsev, director of I.M.E.M.O. writes that

"the real correlation of forces in the capitalist world is characterized by the relative weakening of the U. S. position, the growth of economic and financial power of Western Europe and Japan."<sup>(35)</sup>

Specifically, the Soviets have stressed the atmosphere of increased tension and uneasiness permeating all areas of US-Japanese relations. American economic difficulties such as a negative trade balance and currency problems are thought to lead the US to demand that Japan

(32) For both writing and materials in this part, I owe a great deal to Stephan P. Gibert, *Soviet Images of America* (New York: Crane, Russak & Company, Inc., 1977), pp. 24-45.

(33) A. Sergiev, "Leninizm o sootnoschenii sil kak faktore mezhdunarodnykh otnoshenii," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn*, No. 4 (April 1975), p. 104; G. Shakhnazrov, "K probleme sootnosheniia sil v mire," *Kommunist*, No. 3 (Feb. 1974), p. 86.

(34) Quoted in *Dvina: voiskovye manevry, provedennye na territorii Belorussii v marte 1970 goda* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1970), p. 8.

(35) *Pravda*, Aug. 20, 1974.

take a more responsible share in the "mutual defense" in Asia.<sup>(36)</sup> The Soviets appear to regard these trends of widening contradictions as favoring the Soviet Union.

Of course, the above is not to say that the Soviets consider everything in the World to be going in their favor. As students of dialectics, they know that society develops neither straight-forward nor logically, but with some zigzags and setbacks. Above all, two recent developments in Northeast Asia (1978) are from Soviet perspectives neither favorable nor desirable: the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese Peace Treaty and the normalization of relations between the U.S.A. and the P.R.C.

Let's summarize the Soviet evaluation of the P.P.R. Peace Treaty, mainly according to Dimitri V. Petrov's recent book *Japan of Our Days* (1979). In Petrov's assessment, the rapprochement between Japan and P.R.C. resulting from the Peace Treaty has brought forth a "serious destabilized element" in the international-political situation in Asia, creating "danger" of involving Japan in the direction of China's aggressive, chauvinistic policy.<sup>(37)</sup> Petrov further claims that the conclusion of the Treaty has created a serious "danger" of involving Japan in the anti-Soviet strategy of the Peking leadership.<sup>(38)</sup> It is interesting to note, however, that Petrov carefully used the term "danger," indicating that the Soviets do not automatically regard the conclusion of the Treaty in itself as involving Japan into Peking's policy of anti-Sovietism. In other words, the Soviet policy in this regards is that of "wait and see," whether or not Japan will in fact support Peking's anti-Soviet policy. The Soviets must have been rather relieved from the nightmare of seeing this danger materialized, by some developments which occurred between Japan and China, after the conclusion of the Treaty—such as Japan's clear rejection of turning this Treaty into a Sino-Japanese military alliance, her neutral position in Sino-Vietnamese War, some

(36) G.A. Orionova, " 'Krizis doveriia' v Amerikano-iaponskikh otnosheniakh," *SShA*, No. 11 (Nov. 1973), p. 42.

(37) Petrov, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

(38) *Ibid.*, p. 50.

measure of a cooling down of the "Chinese fever" among Japanese, as reflected in the freezing or cancellation of huge trade contacts with Peking. For example, Moscow broadcast noticed "Japan's unwillingness to support unconditionally their (Chinese) hegemonist foreign policy and its refusal to conduct trade with China on unequal and disadvantageous terms."<sup>(39)</sup> A correspondent of *Izvestiia* in Tokyo also reported on "the waning of the tempestuous but shortlived 'China fever'."<sup>(40)</sup>

#### IV. Prospects in the 1980s:

##### From the Perspective of the Leadership Change

One might summarize what has been said thus far as follows: Two forces have been operating with regards to the foreign policy-making of the USSR toward Japan. On the one hand, the historical tradition of distrust of the USSR toward the Japan has been gradually waning, as a result of the irreversible trend of a flow to the Soviet Union of more accurate information on Japan. Soviet needs for economic cooperation with Japan in Siberia and the Far East are expected to increase against the background of rising economic and energy difficulties experienced by the USSR. In the international arena, whether or not the Soviets admit it officially, some developments unfavorable to the Soviet Union, such as the Sino-Japanese Peace Treaty and the Sino-U.S. Normalization have taken place. These events may prompt the foreign decision-makers to re-think their intransigent policies versus Japan. On the other hand, the majority of the Soviets have remained very nationalistic and are still opposed to conciliatory policies toward a smaller country such as Japan. Détente and economic cooperation with the West have given a stronger voice to the military. Some recent international developments, such as the U.S. disengagement from Asia, have provided a good opportunity for the U.S.S.R. to expand more vigorously in

(39) *Foreign Broadcast Information Service* (Soviet Union) Vol. III, No. 060 (April 6, 1979), p.cl.

(40) *Izvestiia*, April 12, 1979.



the Asian Pacific region. These are the forces which contribute to enable the Kremlin leadership to pursue not only uncompromising but also aggressive policies toward Japan. If the above classification and analysis is correct, Japan can expect a favorable change in Soviet policy toward her only if the aforementioned positive trends prevail over the negative ones. Unfortunately for Japan, however, it can be assumed that the opposite is the case. What are then the future prospects? Before discussing this question, it is desirable, and even necessary to examine briefly the role of the Kremlin leadership as a key determinant of Soviet foreign policy.

No need to explain that no abstract entities such as "the U.S.S.R." or "Moscow" but men in the Kremlin make ultimately Soviet policy decisions. It is quite correct, therefore, to regard the individual Kremlin leaders as another determinant of Soviet foreign policy. They play an active role in shaping policies in a variety of ways and considerations: They perceive, weigh, consolidate and integrate all the diverse elements underlying policy formulation. Precisely because they are living human beings, the Kremlin leaders cannot operate like accurate and automatic machines. They are men with differing personal dispositions, prejudices, interests, priorities, styles, and other all kinds of human traits and backgrounds. Because of shortage of space and time, I will limit myself to discussing only two aspects: power situations and political orientation of Soviet political leaders.

We cannot necessarily assume correctly that only domestically strong leaders can initiate innovative foreign policies. The linkage between the domestic power position of a leader and his role in the international field is not that simple. In a desperate attempt to divert the attention of the ruled from domestic problems, the political leaders with a weak power basis may not infrequently be tempted to resort to external adventure. Nevertheless, it is still correct to assume that only a domestically stable and even powerful leadership in the Kremlin can make an attempt to improve Soviet relations with Japan, because the main obstacle between the two countries lies in territorial problems, the solution of which requires a bold initiative on the

Soviet side. The study of Peggy Falkenheim indicates that Khrushchev, as long as he was in firmer command of power, favored a more conciliatory posture towards Japan, while, as his power declined, he hardened his stance on the territorial dispute with Japan.<sup>(41)</sup>

Furthermore, political orientation and style of top decision-makers are no less important. Khrushchev was indeed subjective, flamboyant, reckless, yet innovative and even adventuresome. In sharp contrast, Brezhnev's political style is a quiet but very cautious one. His main concern is to act as a coordinator-mediator for the various vested interests of important institutions in Soviet society. Too much concern for maintaining a balance among them has caused Brezhnev to become stalled in his policies, a situation which is characterized by the lack of any attempts at instituting domestic reforms or taking significant international initiatives.

Finally, can we expect any significant change in Soviet policy toward Japan after Brezhnev's departure from the political scene? As to the future of Soviet policy toward Japan, much will depend not only on internal and external factors but also on international circumstances and contingencies—which any serious scholar would hesitate to predict. I would venturously, in conclusion, to say a few words on the future policy of the U.S.S.R. towards Japan, limiting myself strictly to the leadership question.

I would expect that the Soviet political leadership, at least in the first half of the 1980's, will not be very different in character and policy from Brezhnev's. Consequently, considering the question from this angle only, one could suggest that, unfortunately for Japan, prospects for an improvement of Soviet policies towards Japan are very slim.

My surmise is based on the observation that build-in constraints are so deeply entrenched in the Soviet society that any drastic change or departure from the present status-quo-oriented policy seems hard

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(41) Peggy L. Falkenheim, *Continuity and Change in Soviet Policy Toward Japan* (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation) (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Xerox University Microfilms, 1975), pp. 13-15.

to visualize, at least during the initial consolidating period of a new incumbency, a period of which may last for a number of years.

First of all, I do not think that Brezhnev's immediate successors will be of a make-up different from that of Brezhnev. It is true as Marshall Shulman has often pointed out, that the younger generation of people, who are much better educated and know the outside world better than the present ruling group, will be shortly coming up in the Soviet Union.<sup>(42)</sup> Unfortunately, especially for us, this does not mean or guarantee that the younger generation will necessarily take over the levers of power. In other words, who will be the actual ruler of the Kremlin is a different matter, because a generation is large enough to produce more than an adequate number of conformists. The incumbent leaders tend to handpick the pool of potential successors "in their own image,"<sup>(43)</sup> namely those who do not greatly differ from them in their attitudes, operational codes and political philosophy. This built-in barriers of the "self-replication"<sup>(44)</sup> of the leading echelon is common to selection processes everywhere, but particularly pronounced in totalitarian countries, such as the Soviet Union.

Furthermore, no matter who will be the next top political leader in the Kremlin—he will certainly be selected from the present Politburo members<sup>(45)</sup>—and it is hard to expect that he will hold a more powerful position than Brezhnev currently does. Brezhnev has made systematic efforts not to cultivate his potential rivals and to deprive potential contenders for succession of the opportunity of building personal political machine, comparable to his own. As a result, both at home and abroad the post-Brezhnev leadership probably will have no new policy-line but continue the conservative, status-quo-oriented,

(42) Marshall D. Shulman, "SALT Conference for Women," (Dec. 5, 1978), pp. 9-11.

(43) Vladimir Kusin, "After Brezhnev, What?," a special paper prepared for a seminar at the Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University, June 1979, p. 4.

(44) Seweryn Bialer, "The Soviet Political Elite and Internal Developments in the USSR," in *The Soviet Empire: Expansion & Détente*, edited by William E. Griffith (Lexington, Mass: Lexington Books, 1976), p. 27.

(45) Seweryn Bialer, "Succession and Turnover of Soviet Elites," *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (Fall/Winter 1978), p. 187.

# Soviet Policy Toward Korea

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## CONTENTS

- I. Introduction**
- II. Recent Soviet Policy toward Korea**
- III. Soviet Policy toward Korea for 1980-1985**
  - 1. The Nature of External Factors Shaping Soviet Policy
  - 2. Trends in the External Setting for Soviet Policy
  - 3. Likely Soviet Policy
- IV. Internal Setting Factors Shaping Soviet Foreign Policy**
  - 1. Major Policymakers and Their Orientations
  - 2. Political Succession
  - 3. Ideology and System Maintenance
  - 4. Conclusion

## I. Introduction

This paper consists of two parts. Part I is devoted to a brief analysis of the major considerations that have shaped Soviet policy toward Korea in recent years.\*\* Part II is a “thinkpiece,” designed to identify the conditions and circumstances under which a significant change might occur in Soviet policy and to assess the likelihood of such a change. To understand possible changes in Soviet policy, the following analyses were performed:

1) identification of those aspects or segments of the external environment that are relevant in my judgment, and to which I believe the Soviets also attach significance;

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\*\* Part I draws on my earlier work, “Pyongyang, Moscow, and Peking,” *Problems of Communism*, November-December 1978.

almost immobile one, with the same or an even more intensive degree as its predecessor.

Without incurring the risk of being blamed for projecting one's own personal wishful thinking into the objective analysis of the subject, one can hardly anticipate that the next Soviet leadership will be likely to take any initiative in a bold attempt to break the ice, say, in the form of a sudden return of the Northern Islands to Japan. Should such a thing take place in the future, it would be not under Brezhnev's successor, but under Brezhnev's successor's successors in the 1990s.

2) discernment of the major trends in each segment of the external setting for the period 1980-85;

3) assessment of the degree of Soviet flexibility toward South Korea. The term flexibility is used in this paper to refer to the tendency to pursue a policy favorable to or consistent with South Korean interests.

## II. Recent Soviet Policy toward Korea

From the Soviet perspective, national interest is best served by preventing the establishment of hegemonic influence in East Asia by other powers. This general conception underlies, and fundamentally shapes, Soviet policy toward Korea.

At a more concrete level, Soviet policy toward Korea seems to reflect the following characteristics:

1) No development in or around Korea should be allowed to bring about a major deterioration in Soviet-U.S. relations which might adversely affect Soviet interests elsewhere. In particular, a severe confrontation carrying the risk of military action should be avoided.

2) The course of Japan's domestic or foreign policies should not be affected in a way injurious to Soviet interests. In Moscow's eyes, it would be prudent not to encourage or provide a pretext for Japan to increase her military capabilities sharply, and especially to develop nuclear weapons. Nor should Japan be stimulated to move toward closer alignment with China or to undertake more intimate defense cooperation with the U.S. Finally, Japan's economic cooperation with the Soviet Union should not be jeopardized.

3) No development regarding Korea should lend support to China's anti-Soviet programs, domestic or foreign. More specific, Chinese influence in Korea should not be enhanced. Above all, Peking should not be allowed to establish predominant influence over North Korea.

A number of Western analysts claim to see some indications that the Soviet Union may be contemplating application of the German formula to the Korean peninsula. The evidence cited in-

cludes private comments of Soviet scholars and Soviet grants of entry visas for South Korean nationals to participate in international conferences held in the Soviet Union.

While the Soviet Union may consider the North Korean formula for unification unrealistic and while Soviet analysts may accept the division of Korea as a fact and expect the division to continue for an indefinite period, it is important to point out that the Soviet government has never advocated a German formula. Nor has it made any serious diplomatic effort to promote the formula in regard to Korea. Moscow remains unresponsive, for example, to a call for direct talks with South Korean governmental representatives.

Whatever one's judgment about the alleged Soviet inclination to adopt the German formula, it is not difficult to discern the existence of powerful constraints on Soviet flexibility. One is North Korea's persistent admonitions. The Soviet government does not want to antagonize Pyongyang by taking actions which might undermine North Korea's position on a matter the latter considers vital.

Another constraint is the PRC, which would undoubtedly seek to exploit the situation to the USSR's disadvantage by accusing it of "betrayal." Moscow is highly sensitive to North Korea's ties with the Chinese and feels inhibited from taking actions that might result in increased intimacy between these two countries.

A final constraint is Soviet perceptions of U.S. intentions toward Korea: notably, the degree of U.S. support for South Korea and America's evolving relations with North Korea. Here the troop withdrawal issue weighs heavily. The initial announcement in the spring of 1977 of President Jimmy Carter's decision to pull out American ground forces apparently came as a surprise to Soviet analysts. Despite Carter's campaign promises, they seem to have believed that the international ramifications involved would prevent any new administration from significantly reducing U.S. forces, at least without a quid pro quo. Moreover, they found it incomprehensible that the U.S. would unilaterally give up the powerful leverage it enjoys with respect to both Koreas and to other powers because of its military presence. For these reasons, they have remained skeptical

that the Carter Administration would actually implement the force withdrawal plan as initially announced, and they have argued that if the U.S. does so, it would not carry out withdrawal in such a manner as to jeopardize South Korea's security or to bring about a disequilibrium in the balance of power in the region. At the same time, what Moscow sees as instability and uncertainty in U.S. policy toward South Korea during the past several years has contributed to Soviet caution in considering the German formula. Paradoxically, the following proposition generally appears to hold: the greater the perceived degree and steadiness of American support for South Korea, the easier it would be for the Soviet Union to pursue a policy of improving relations with South Korea. Only a perception that U.S. abandonment of South Korea was imminent might provide the Soviet Union with more incentive to enter into negotiations with South Korea and to establish its presence in South Korea.

The Soviet government's caution or "inflexibility," however, is not merely the product of these various constraints. It derives at least as much, and probably more, from the fact that Moscow perceives no clear advantages that would accrue from behaving otherwise and that would offset the possible disadvantages entailed. Whatever Soviet analysts may say in private conversations, the Soviet government's public stance effectively sets the limits of permissible Soviet actions.

However, while Moscow is unshakably determined to ensure the survival of North Korea as an independent socialist country, the Soviet Union also has a major stake in preventing a war in Korea. Consequently, the Soviet Union has sought in recent years a relaxation of tension and, above all, tranquility on the Korean peninsula.

### **III. Soviet Policy toward Korea for 1980-1985**

#### **1. The Nature of External Factors Shaping Soviet Policy**

In the pages to follow a number of "bivariate" propositions will be presented. Each proposition is an oversimplification of reality. Each is considered by a policy maker along with other relevant



propositions in the context of a situational exigency occasioning a decision. Each proposition here is assumed to operate only under a set of contingent conditions, some of which are specified in an explanatory note accompanying the proposition. All these propositions—at least those which the policy makers consider pertinent in a given situation—are inter-related. It is only for analytic purposes that they are presented in the form of a simple bivariate relationship.

#### 1) North Korea-South Korea Relations

The closer the two Koreas move toward accepting a *modus vivendi*, the greater Soviet flexibility becomes toward South Korea.

If North Korea itself moves closer to recognizing a divided Korea, the Soviet Union will feel less constrained in her dealings with South Korea. One major condition here is that rapprochement between South and North Korea will not occur in the framework of, or as part of, U.S.-PRC-Japan cooperation. Any arrangement between the two Koreas that might be perceived as signifying North Korea's increasing intimacy with an anti-Soviet coalition would not lead to a Soviet policy friendly to either Korea.

#### 2) U.S.-PRC-Japan Relations

The greater the perceived threat from any one, two, or all three countries, the greater the Soviet support for North Korea becomes, reducing Soviet flexibility toward South Korea.

This consideration is of vital importance to the Soviet Union. Any developments that might strengthen the cooperative relationship, whether economic, political, or military, between any two and especially among the three would be viewed as a threat to the Soviet Union. The Soviets have shown keen sensitivity to the possibility of military cooperation among the three countries and would view a significant movement toward such cooperation as constituting a grave threat to Soviet interests. For some time they have been voicing anxiety over this matter. For example, the Soviet press for the period April-September 1979 indicated a high level of Soviet concern. This concern was intensified by Secretary Brown's recent "consultations" with Chinese officials in Peking and the subsequent U.S. position on the question of transfer of military technology and equipment.

A review of Soviet policy during the period August 1978-December 1979 generally indicates a higher level of Soviet support for North Korea than for the preceding year. One can recall several events during this period which were not in the Soviet interest: the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Peace and Amity came in mid-1978, followed by the announcement of U.S.-PRC normalization at the end of the year. We can also recall that the beginning of the year 1979 saw Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia, Teng's visit to the U.S., and Chinese military action against Vietnam.

As military cooperation between the U.S. and Japan becomes closer, the Soviet Union will give North Korea a greater level of support. Soviet considerations in this case might not be just to alleviate North Korea's concern, but to increase its influence over North Korea, thereby acquiring greater leverage vis-à-vis the U.S. and Japan.

### 3) U.S.-North Korea Relations

The closer U.S.-North Korea relations become, the greater becomes Soviet flexibility and incentive for developing ties with South Korea.

Close U.S.-North Korea relations could come about in two alternative contexts: estrangement between the U.S. and South Korea, or friendly relations between the two countries. A major stipulation here is that such a movement toward close relations between the U.S. and North Korea be perceived to have occurred as a coordinated effort between the U.S. and South Korea.

Soviet analysts have shown sensitivity to any signs of potential relations between the U.S. and North Korea. Their scenarios involving gradual but steady development of ties between the two countries are intriguing and remarkably similar to those entertained by Western analysts.

### 4) U.S.-South Korean Relations

The greater the tensions or estrangement between the U.S. and South Korea, the greater becomes Soviet flexibility towards South Korea.

The Soviets perceive U.S.-South Korean ties to be very close, and

feel that any ties with South Korea would not appreciably weaken U.S. influence in South Korea. Hence, there is no incentive for the Soviet Union to antagonize the North Koreans. In their estimate the advantages to be derived do not outweigh the costs, especially that of alienating North Korea.

A high level of tensions between the U.S. and South Korea provides the Soviet Union with the opportunity and incentive to attempt to establish a foothold in South Korea and to extend its influence. The cost of alienating North Korea may be perceived to outweigh anticipated advantages.

#### 5) PRC-North Korea Relations

Soviet flexibility toward South Korea varies inversely with the degree of equidistance which North Korean policy represents in relations with the Soviet Union and the PRC.

The Soviet Union wants to maintain its influence over North Korea in order to prevent North Korea from aligning herself with the PRC. This would serve Soviet interests in many ways. Soviet influence over North Korea provides the Soviet Union with leverage in her relations with the U.S., Japan, and the PRC. It is consistent with her policy of isolating the PRC. North Korea would be prevented from being drawn into an anti-Soviet alliance and from providing strategic advantages for such an alliance.

If North Korea appears to move closer to the PRC, the Soviet Union will feel compelled to increase its efforts for North Korea, with her flexibility toward South Korea reduced. However, there is a limit to how close North Korea could safely lean toward the PRC. If the movement toward closer relations between the PRC and North Korea is perceived to pass a point of no return, the Soviets might use their South Korean card to North Korea's disadvantage. The Soviet Union's flexibility toward South Korea is constrained by other factors as well, e.g., the notion of proletarian internationalism and socialist solidarity, and adverse reactions among the Third World countries.

Soviet specialists both inside and outside the government profess not to be concerned with a possible development of closer Chinese-North Korean relations. They see North Korea attempting conscien-

tiously to maintain equidistance—with considerable success. The grounds for the Soviets' optimism in this regard are as follows: North Korea is dependent on the Soviet Union for sophisticated weapons and for economic assistance. Secondly, the effectiveness of North Korea's diplomatic activities around the world depends on Soviet support. Third, the North Koreans do not trust the Chinese, and they do not want to rely entirely on one country.

#### 6) PRC-South Korea Relations

Soviet flexibility toward South Korea varies directly with the degree of Chinese flexibility vis-à-vis South Korea.

This proposition presupposes substantial improvement in the relations between the two Koreas. Otherwise, Chinese flexibility would not be forthcoming. The Soviets are sensitive to any signs of contact between the PRC and South Korea and assume secret contacts are underway. They have gone so far as to issue a warning that South Korean ties with the PRC would be detrimental to South Korean interests and would adversely affect potential Soviet-South Korean ties. It is evident that the Soviets are discouraging the South Koreans from developing ties with the PRC. However, Chinese flexibility toward South Korea, if it occurs, is likely to bring about the corresponding Soviet flexibility. The Soviet desire to contain Chinese influence would be operative, but at the same time the Soviet Union would feel free to demonstrate its flexibility toward South Korea, for it would no longer need to fear Chinese charges of Soviet betrayal of socialist North Korea.

The Chinese have been swift in publicly condemning the Soviets for a series of decisions like allowing the entry of South Korean nationals into the Soviet Union.

Under the condition envisaged in Proposition 1, signs of Chinese flexibility—if it ever occurs—would likely provoke public Soviet condemnation of Chinese actions. It is instructive to recall the charges that the Soviet media made last year. While voicing their opposition to the proposal for a tripartite conference, the Soviet media contended that the PRC was supporting the proposal. The PRC was also portrayed in the Soviet media as being in favor of the

U.S. military presence in South Korea.

#### 7) Japanese-South Korea Relations

Soviet flexibility toward South Korea varies inversely with the degree of defense cooperation between Japan and South Korea.

From the Soviet perspective any developments which might stimulate or facilitate increments in Japan's military capabilities would not be in the Soviets' interest. The Soviets are concerned with the implications of Japan's role in expanding South Korea's defense industry and particularly with the perceived American and Japanese attempts to draw South Korea deeply into the anti-Soviet military strategy. Soviet analysts are, of course, aware of the constitutional and political constraints operating on Japan's defense establishment, but are extraordinarily sensitive to recent trends in Japanese defense debates and to the growing signs of active U.S.-Japanese military cooperation. Soviet analysts have followed with concern the growing exchange of defense officials (both civilian and uniformed personnel) between South Korea and Japan. Soviet sensitivity in this regard is more acute than otherwise because of growing U.S.-Japanese military cooperation and the continued presence of U.S. military forces in South Korea. From their perspective, anything that might enhance the military capability of Japan and particularly the U.S. vis-à-vis the Soviet Union would be a matter of great concern.

#### 8) Japan-North Korea Relations

Soviet flexibility toward South Korea varies directly with the strength of politico-economic ties between Japan and North Korea.

The condition here is that closer relations between Japan and North Korea do not occur at the expense of close Japan-South Korean relations. When accompanied by a significant deterioration in Japan's relations with South Korea, Japan's pursuit of closer relations with North Korea would not be conducive to Soviet flexibility.

As Soviet analysts see it, the Japanese government is not about to jeopardize its close relation with South Korea. At best, Japan will move gradually toward a more equidistant policy.

#### 9) Japan-Soviet Union Relations

Soviet flexibility toward South Korea varies with developments

in political and economic relations between the Soviet Union and Japan.

Close relations between the Soviet Union and Japan would lessen the level of Soviet concern with Japan's relations with other countries and could conceivably result in greater flexibility toward South Korea.

#### 10) PRC-Soviet Union Relations

The higher the degree of antagonism between the Soviet Union and the PRC, the greater the Soviet sensitivity of North Korean interests, reducing Soviet flexibility toward South Korea.

A significant rapprochement between the Soviet Union and the PRC might not necessarily result in flexibility on the part of either power towards South Korea.

#### 11) U.S.-Soviet Union Relations

Soviet flexibility toward South Korea varies inversely with the degree of antagonism between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

An antagonism grows, the Soviet desire to increase its influence over North Korea will grow. This in turn results in greater Soviet sensitivity to North Korean interests. The Soviets might seek greater influence over North Korea under the circumstances so as to insure and demonstrate their capacity to cause certain developments in Korea detrimental to the U.S. and to actually exercise such an influence in the event of war in Europe. The opening of a second front would pin down U.S. forces in Asia.

Friendly relations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union would not necessarily bring about Soviet flexibility toward South Korea, though the Soviet Union would be inhibited from undertaking overly hostile actions against South Korea either directly or through a proxy.

The extent to which Soviet relations with the U.S. function as a constraint on Soviet hostile action against South Korea varies inversely with the degree of the perceived superiority vis-à-vis the U.S. in correlation of forces.

#### 12) Soviet Union-Eastern Europe Relations

The greater the perceived threat to Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe, the greater Soviet interest becomes in maintaining stability

in the Korean peninsula. This would not result in Soviet flexibility toward South Korea as Soviet sensitivity to North Korean interests would increase.

### 13) Soviet Union-Western Europe Relations

The greater the level of tensions between the Soviet Union and Western Europe, the greater become Soviet incentives to maintain stability in the Korean peninsula.

This proposition holds true provided that a war with the U.S. is not considered imminent.

### 14)) U.S.-Western Europe Relations

Soviet flexibility toward South Korea varies inversely with the degree of solidarity and friendship in U.S.-Western Europe relations.

The Soviets are extremely sensitive to developments that might affect U.S.-Western Europe relations and would encourage any development that would weaken the strength of U.S.-Western Europe relations.

### 15) North Korea-Soviet Union Relations

A. Soviet flexibility toward South Korea varies with the perceived degree of North Korea's dependence on the Soviet Union.

B. Soviet flexibility toward South Korea varies with the level of estrangement between the Soviet Union and North Korea.

Propositions A and B assert that Soviet flexibility would become greater in either of two circumstances: severe deterioration of her relations with North Korea *or* heavy dependence of North Korea on the Soviet Union. The Soviets are not pleased with North Korean attitudes toward the Indochina conflict, the Afghan crisis, or North Korea's stance on "dominationism." The more clearcut acts of deviation, particularly those indicating alignment with the PRC, would test Soviet tolerance and bring about Soviet counter-measures including Soviet dealings with South Korea.

A sharp rise in North Korea's dependence on the Soviet Union following a domestic crisis would lessen the Soviets' sensitivity to North Korea's wishes, e.g., severe economic difficulties or major political instability caused by President Kim's demise.

### 16) Soviet Perception of South Korea's Domestic Situation and

### Foreign Policy Orientations

The greater political instability becomes in South Korea, the less flexibility the Soviets show toward South Korea.

Soviet analysts speak of the difficulty and risks involved in dealing with an unstable or illegitimate government. They seem particularly concerned with the durability of the government with which they are dealing.

Soviet analysts generally made a positive evaluation of South Korean economic development under President Park and assessed the political stability to be rather high. At this writing, political stability is rated low.

The greater the degree of independence that South Korean foreign policy represents, the greater Soviet flexibility becomes.

As indicated in connection with U.S.-Korean relations, Soviet incentives for flexibility would grow as South Korea showed a willingness to pursue a policy at variance with U.S. strategic interests.\*

### 2. Trends in the External Setting for Soviet Policy

Table I indicates the author's judgment on the external setting for Soviet Korean policy in the midrange with specific reference to five dimensions:

- 1) the likelihood of a significant change in a particular bilateral relationship which has obtained in recent years;
- 2) the major trends which would characterize a relationship, particularly in terms of the cooperation-antagonism dimension;
- 3) recent developments or conditions heightening Soviet concern;
- 4) the major trends which are likely to heighten Soviet concern, thereby reducing the degree of Soviet policy flexibility; and
- 5) the developments which tend to increase Soviet flexibility.

### 3. Likely Soviet Policy

I shall make one assumption here. Soviet perceptions of the external environment are essentially the same as those indicated in

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\*All the logically conceivable bivariate relationships are not specified. One may easily multiply the number of propositions relating the interactions involving the countries in other geographical regions: South and Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America.



	Likelihood of Significant Change in Recent Relationship: High, Medium, Low	Major Trends: Co-operative-Neutral, Antagonistic	Recent Developments Heightening Soviet Concern: Present, Absent	Developments Enhancing Soviet Flexibility +	Developments Inhibiting Soviet Flexibility -
External Setting Factors					
1. NK-SK	Low	Basically Antagonistic			-
2. US-PRC	Low	Cooperative	Present		-
3. PRC-Japan	Low	Cooperative	Present		-
4. US-Japan	Low	Cooperative	Present		-
5. US-NK	Medium	Neutral (Reduction in Antagonism)		+	
6. US-SK	Medium	Cooperative (Reduced)			-
7. PRC-NK	Low	Cooperative (Reduced in Antagonism)			-
8. PRC-SK	Low				-
9. Japan-SK	Medium	Cooperative (Reduced)			-
10. Japan-NK	Medium	Cooperative		+	
11. Japan-SU	Medium	Cooperative			-
12. PRC-SU	Medium	Reduction in Antagonism	Present		-
13. US-SU	Medium	Antagonistic	Present		-
14. SU-E. Europe	Low	Cooperative			-
15. SU-W. Europe	Medium	Cooperative			-
16. US-W. Europe	Medium	Cooperative (Reduced)	Present		-
17. Soviet Perception of SK's: Domestic Stability For. Pol. Orientation	Low Low	Inapplicable	Inapplicable		- -
18. US-M. East					
19. SU-M. East					
20. Japan-S&SE Asia					
21. PRC-S&SE Asia etc. (Lat. Amer., Africa)					

section III 1. Of the external factors shaping Soviet policy in the midrange the following may move in a direction which might enhance Soviet flexibility toward South Korea:

- 1) the U.S. policy toward North Korea;
- 2) Japan's policy toward North Korea.

In considering all the external factors, the following may contribute to conditions which would heighten Soviet anxiety, thus inhibiting Soviet flexibility toward South Korea:

- 1) U.S.-PRC relations
- 2) PRC-Japan relations
- 3) U.S.-Japan relations
- 4) Sino-Soviet relations
- 5) Soviet-American relations
- 6) U.S.-Western Europe relations

Overall, the inhibiting factors (indicated by minus signs in Table I) appear to outweigh those factors that tend to promote Soviet flexibility.

#### **IV. Internal Setting Factors Shaping Soviet Foreign Policy**

In the preceding discussion of Soviet foreign policy, the internal setting was held constant. The remainder of this paper is concerned with the impact which domestic politics, ideology and economy may have on Soviet foreign and security policies in the period 1980-1985.

##### **1. Major Policymakers and Their Orientations**

We may safely dismiss the notion of a monolithic body of elite making decisions. We may go a little further and accept the presence—to some degree—of institutional pluralism and “bureaucratic politics” of a sort. However, it should be kept in mind that policy debates occur within the officially prescribed institutional framework.

It seems that no major policy decisions could be made without the understanding of the military and defense industries. These interests are well represented within the party apparatus. Brezhnev's policy of *detente* reportedly has had the approval, albeit limited, of the military-industrial complex. It is difficult to envisage those with

military and heavy industry interests in mind enthusiastically supporting a major shift in priorities in programs or a movement toward détente as Americans define it.

The KGB cannot be expected to be positive toward a significant reduction of tensions leading to a *modus vivendi* with the U.S. The

Foreign Ministry cannot successfully promote a policy inconsistent with the interests of the party apparatchiki, the military, and the KGB. The Ministry itself must contend with two opposite tendencies, reflecting contradictory interests perceived by different geographical departments.

The International Department of the Central Committee provides the most crucial input. The Department is on the whole likely to exert a restraining influence on a policy of accommodation with the U.S. The Politburo is unlikely to favor a significant departure from the policies it has hitherto followed under Brezhnev. Brezhnev's Secretariat, which plays a key role in policy making, must remain sensitive to the political complexion of the Politburo.

The dominant Soviet perception regarding the current status and prospective trends in the correlations of forces is such that the risks that the Soviets are prepared to take in pursuit of their objectives may be considerably higher than the Western analysts estimate. In sum, the fundamental hostility to the U.S. will probably continue to be an important component of Soviet foreign policy.

## 2. Political Succession

One of the following three types of regime could emerge when Brezhnev passes away:

- 1) Neo-Stalinist
- 2) Moderate/pragmatic

- 3) Another Brezhnev muddling through, doing more of the same

The first type is highly improbable. The second type is possible but not probable in the midrange. An extreme deterioration in economic performance would bring about a reduction of defense-related expenditures, but in principle the primacy of politics over economics would prevail. The assigning of greater priority to economic per-

formance would not necessarily be followed by a significant change in political and institutional arrangements. It is reasonable to assume that the political interests of the leaders would receive higher priority.

If Brezhnev's demise occurs soon, it is likely that the so-called two-stage succession scenario will be acted out. The initial collective leadership by the old guard will be followed within a few years by the younger party leaders. During the interim period the old guard is likely to continue more of the same. The young leaders would have relied on the support of the "military-industrial complex" for their successful bid for power and would not be in a position to introduce policy representing a fundamental departure. Besides, their own power base, the manner of their recruitment and experience would not incline them to act otherwise, at least in the midrange period under consideration here. It is useful to recall that even Brezhnev with all his institutionalized power at his disposal was compelled to be deferential to his colleagues in the Politburo on major issues.

This line of interpretation finds further basis for support when the nature of two major *political* problems confronting Brezhnev's successors is taken into account. The problem of China and the nationality problem in the Soviet Union are issues of enormous political sensitivity and interest. These issues would probably act as constraints on any fundamental policy change.

Different conceptions of Soviet national interest, particularly of what constitutes the most appropriate means to the ends, may be vigorously articulated within the party apparatus, but a significant policy change is not likely to occur under the forthcoming transition period. Aside from the comingling of policy debates with the power struggle, the external environment confronting the successors would not be conducive to a significant innovation or policy change.

### **3. Ideology and System Maintenance**

I do not want to revive a perennial debate on the relative weights of national interest and ideology or on the nature of the role of ideology in shaping Soviet foreign policy. In my view, the ideology affects the perceptions the Soviets have of the reality. The Soviet

conception of national interest necessarily includes some sensitivity to ideological objectives. At times, the ideology serves more than a mere justification for Soviet actions dictated by non-ideological considerations. To the extent that the communist ideology is consistent with, if not requiring, Soviet support for the Third World and national liberation movements, to that extent the ideology serves as a constraint on the Soviets enacting contrary behavior. Even if the notion of ideology providing a guiding principle compelling Soviet external behavior is discounted, the ideology as a functional necessity for maintaining the political system must be kept in mind. It is instructive that the recent period of *detente* has been accompanied by calls for the intensification of ideological struggle. The system maintenance requires the sanctity of ideological orthodoxy and that in turn requires a fundamental hostility toward the U.S. The point here is that the ideology tends to inhibit the development of policies associated with the rule type II.

#### 4. Conclusion

The most fundamental assumption underlying the analyses presented herein is that Soviet policy toward South Korea is to a significant degree a function of its policies toward other major powers.

The internal setting factors considered in the present section tend to impede the development of a significant change in Soviet foreign policy.

Thus, the relevance and weight of the external environment in shaping Soviet foreign policy remains substantially the same as was assumed in section III.