

# CIA official says watch perestroika, don't finance it

*CIA Deputy Director Robert Gates gave two speeches in mid-October, in which he veered sharply from the State Department's appeasement approach toward the Soviet Union. The speeches warned that the success of the reforms instituted by Mikhail Gorbachov would only make the Soviet Union "a more competitive and stronger adversary in years ahead." Thus, his policy recommendation, which is representative of an increasing number of U.S. intelligence professionals, is that we should watch perestroika, not finance it.*

*Not surprisingly, the State Department immediately declared that Gates's rare public statements did not represent policy. Gates and his allies in the intelligence community have stuck to their guns, reportedly telling the State Department that while his analysis may not be policy, it certainly is reality.*

*We reprint excerpts of Gates's Oct. 14 speech to the Colloquium on Science, Arms Control, and National Security sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, entitled "Recent Developments in the Soviet Union and Implications for U.S. Security Policy."*

It is typical that we in the West, and particularly in the United States, with our focus on personalities in politics, should focus on Gorbachov's personnel moves, who is up and who is down, who is in and who is out. . . .

This morning I would like to put aside the discussion of personalities . . . in the Soviet leadership, and focus instead on what is genuinely important.

The selection of Mikhail Gorbachov as General Secretary in the spring of 1985 signaled the Politburo's recognition that the Soviet Union was in deep trouble—especially economically—trouble that they recognized was affecting their military power and position in the world. . . .

They coalesced around an imaginative and vigorous leader who they hoped could revitalize the country without altering the basic structure of the Soviet state or Communist Party.

## Strengthening the leadership

There has been consistently strong support in the Politburo since 1985 for modernization of the Soviet economy. . . . Even so, nearly every step Gorbachov seeks to take toward structural economic or political change is a struggle and support in the Politburo for his initiatives shifts constant-

ly, from issue to issue. . . .

Gorbachov probably can count on only 3 or 4 of 12 Politburo members as being totally his own men, consistently supportive across the board. . . .

In sum, Gorbachov has declared war on the party apparatus, much as Stalin did in the late 1920s. . . .

Taken as a whole, the reform measures put in place in Gorbachov's three-year tenure are an impressive package. Nevertheless, the reforms do not go nearly far enough. . . . The reforms, even if fully implemented by 1991 as intended, will not create the dynamic economic mechanism that Gorbachov seeks as the means to reduce or close the technological gap with the West. To the contrary, aggressive implementation of the reforms is causing serious disruptions and turbulence in the economy.

An important milestone in the evolution of Gorbachov's views was recognition that the revitalization of society and economy could succeed only if there were significant changes in the political arena as well. The regime appears to be moving on at least three fronts to create the political climate it seeks.

- The first is ideology. . . . He seeks to expand his room to maneuver by an increasingly open attack on stagnation in ideology. . . .

- The second front is democratization. . . . Gorbachov apparently believes that without such reform, it will be impossible to break the resistance within the party to his agenda. By the same token, as he demonstrated two weeks ago, the old methods remain available. . . .

- The third front is *glasnost* or openness. Tight central controls over the flow of ideas and information lie at the heart of the Soviet system. . . . The new leadership believes that this approach is incompatible with an increasingly well educated society, complex economy, and the political needs of the moment. I see other motives as well. . . .

- to criticize officials Gorbachov sees as hostile

- to highlight problems he wants to attack

- to coopt intellectuals and particularly engineers and scientists to be full partners in the attempt to modernize the economy

- to compete with foreign and other unofficial sources of information

- to print the news and put an official spin on it

—to break the back of domestic resistance and increase his room for maneuver at home.

### Implications for foreign policy and strategy

There seems to be general agreement in the Politburo that, for now, economic modernization requires a more predictable, if not benign, international environment. . . . First Gorbachov wants to establish a new and far reaching détente for the foreseeable future to obtain technology, encourage investment and trade, and above all, avoid large increases in military expenditures while the Soviet economy is revived. Gorbachov must slow or stop American military modernization. . . .

Second, a less visible but enduring element of foreign policy—even under Gorbachov—is the continuing extraordinary scope and sweep of Soviet military modernization and weapons research and development. At this point we see no slackening of Soviet weapons production or programs. Soviet research on new, exotic weapons continues apace. Virtually all of their principal strategic weapons will be replaced with new, more sophisticated systems by the mid-1990s. . . . Their defenses against U.S. weapons are being steadily improved, as are their capabilities for war fighting.

The third element of Gorbachov's foreign policy is continued pursuit of Soviet objectives and protection of Soviet clients in the Third World. . . . Soviet objectives in the Third World . . . remain adversarial and seek to diminish U.S. global influence and reach.

The fourth element of Gorbachov's foreign policy is new and dynamic diplomatic initiatives to weaken ties between the United States and its Western allies, China, Japan, and the Third World; to portray the Soviet government as committed to arms control and peace. We can and should expect other new and bold initiatives, perhaps including unilateral conventional force reductions that will severely test alliance cohesion. . . .

Gorbachov is prepared to explore—and, I think, reach—significant reductions in weapons, but past Soviet practice suggests he will seek agreements that protect existing Soviet advantages, leave open alternative avenues of weapons development, offer commensurate political gain, or take advantage of U.S. unilateral restraint or constraints. . . .

For the next several years, the benefits of arms control . . . are primarily strategic and political, not economic.

The political benefits . . . are evident. It has the potential to bring downward pressure on Western defense budgets, slow Western military modernization, weaken resolve to counter Soviet activities in the Third World, and open to the U.S.S.R. new opportunities for Western technology. . . . Arms control gives credence to Soviet claims of their benign intentions and makes them appear to be a far more attractive partner to other countries in political, cultural, and economic arenas.

Arms control is an attractive proposition from Gorba-

chov's point of view for its strategic impact as well—as long as any agreement incorporates basic Soviet positions: permitting continued modernization of heavy ICBMs and deployment of mobile ICBMs, preventing the United States from deploying an effective space-based missile defense, and constraining air- and sea-launched cruise missiles . . . deep cuts in strategic offensive arms, with these provisos, offer the means to limit the growing number of hard target weapons in the U.S. arsenal and constrain U.S. progress in the development of advanced strategic weapons. . . .

The result is likely to be a Soviet political challenge to the U.S. abroad that could pose greater problems for our international position, alliances, and relationships in the future. . . .

### Conclusions

. . . Westerners for centuries have hoped repeatedly that Russian economic modernization and political reform—even revolution—signaled an end to despotism. Repeatedly since 1917, the West has hoped that domestic changes in the U.S.S.R. would lead to changes in Communist coercive rule at home and aggressiveness abroad. These hopes, dashed time and time again, have been revived by Gorbachov's ambitious domestic agenda, innovative foreign policy, and personal style. . . .

While the changes under way offer opportunities for the United States and a relaxation of tension—Gorbachov intends improved Soviet economic performance, greater political vitality at home, and more dynamic diplomacy to make the U.S.S.R. a more competitive and stronger adversary in the years ahead.

. . . We should ask ourselves if we want the political, social, and economic revitalization of the historical and current Soviet system. I think not.

What we do seek is a Soviet Union that is pluralistic internally, non-interventionist externally, observes basic human rights, contributes to international stability and tranquility, and a Soviet Union where these changes are more than a temporary edict from the top. . . .

We cannot—and should not—close our eyes to momentous developments in the U.S.S.R., but we should watch, wait, and evaluate. As long-time Soviet-watcher William Odom has said, we should applaud *perestroika*, but not finance it. We should not make concessions based on hope and popular enthusiasms here or pleasing personalities and atmospheric or superficial changes there. We should, however, take advantage of opportunities where the terms are favorable to us or where we can bring about desirable changes in Soviet policies. . . .

Whether Gorbachov succeeds, fails, or just survives, a still long competition and struggle with the Soviet Union lie before us. Preserving the peace and fostering an enduring relaxation of tensions depend upon our seeing this reality clearly. . . .