

fied in terms of insuring the survivability of our ICBM forces, but not in terms of accuracy and yield threatening to Soviet ICBMs. The SALT II debate is the place and time to reconsider, modify, or draw the line on the trends toward war-fighting doctrine and return to a clear and unambiguous policy of deterrence only. Defending SALT II through the "missions" approach to deterrence described above may be the most convincing strategy. Forces deployed under this concept would be planned for their ability to destroy specific targets, not by the need for parity or essential equivalence with comparable elements of Soviet forces. So long as force ceilings remain high, as a diversity of forces is maintained to ensure survivability, and as ABM prohibitions remain in effect to ensure societal vulnerability, the president's case is strong. The treaty is not frozen in time; it guides the U.S. and the Soviet Union through one short period—to 1985—when SALT III will address the problems of stability apparent by then and anticipated for the future. In the meantime, nothing in the treaty precludes the president from dealing with the

alleged problems of destabilization of U.S.-Soviet mutual deterrence caused either by new military technology or marginal Soviet force advantages.

Paradoxically, for the arms reductionist, if SALT III succeeds in bringing about major force reductions, existing weapons asymmetries may become more significant. Essential equivalence can be loosely defined under high force ceilings. The perceived instability of a transitional stage to a significantly lower ceiling may require greater force and doctrinal symmetries. If force reductions are ever achieved, the problems of maintaining strategic stability under lower ceilings would be greater, since technological innovation or cheating could more easily take on military and political significance. The fact that we are already hearing these alarms directed against SALT II, a treaty that requires no reductions in U.S. forces but allows both quantitative and qualitative growth, is evidence of how far we are from controlling or reducing nuclear weapons. Doctrinal clarity rejecting war-fighting by the president as part of the SALT II debate would be a significant step. WV

How the Russians Look at SALT



Walter C. Clemens, Jr.

Russia's Aesop, Ivan Krylov, said: "You can be sure the puppy is strong, because it barks at the elephant." The Russian bear is much more powerful than a puppy, but it stands on feet of clay. The United States is not an elephant, but it is by far the world's strongest economic and military force, striking both respect and fear in Soviet leaders, from Lenin through Brezhnev.

The U.S. economy is more than twice the size of the Soviet and much more dynamic. Our strategic arsenal also overshadows Moscow's. According to Defense Secretary Harold Brown, the United States today has nearly 10,000 strategic nuclear warheads aboard our land- and sea-based missiles and bombers, compared to

5,000 for the Soviets. These power realities help explain Kremlin complexes about Moscow's persistent *Avis* posture in world affairs.

Russia, like the United States, has championed the cause of arms limitation—not just in recent years, but after World War I, and through much of the nineteenth century. But Americans and Russians approach this subject from quite different historical, geographical, and cultural traditions. Do they mean the same thing when they espouse disarmament? Let us look at seven basic problems.

1. *Have the Russians been sincere in seeking disarmament, or have they manipulated the negotiations to paralyze the West and buy time to build up their own forces?*

Most governments make arms control proposals designed to perpetuate their own strengths and reduce

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their adversary's. While U.S. disarmament diplomacy has usually led from strength (our capital shipbuilding program in 1921, our atomic monopoly in 1946, our lead in cruise missile technology in the late 1970's), Russia's rulers have generally used disarmament negotiations as a way to compensate for their country's technological and economic weaknesses. Czar Nicholas II, for example, conceived the 1899 Hague Conference as a way of outlawing the rapid-fire cannon available to other countries but not to Russia except at great expense. Lenin's government, in 1922, tried to get Russia's neighbors to cut their armed forces by 25 per cent—a reduction that Moscow planned to carry out independently of the negotiations. Stalin—faced with America's nuclear monopoly—called for “banning the bomb,” just as Brezhnev called in the mid-1970's for banning cruise missiles.

Russia's rulers, probably more than America's, have used arms control to win political support at home and abroad. Czar Nicholas II, for example, wanted to impress pacifist forces in Europe. Lenin wanted to split the pacifist wing of the European bourgeoisie from the warmongers in 1922. Stalin focused more on dividing the masses from their leaders, but Soviet diplomacy under Khrushchev and Brezhnev returned to the Leninist principle of “exploiting contradictions” among Western élites. In Khrushchev's time, for example, Senators Mansfield and Fulbright ranked among “sober” elements in the United States, while Senator Goldwater and Governor Rockefeller were placed with “madmen.”

Russia's rulers have also used arms control to win support from their allies and to set rival governments against each other. Thus, Nicholas II felt compelled to assure his French partners that no arms reductions would result from the Hague Conference. Khrushchev and Brezhnev, in their days, promised progressive forces throughout the world that arms controls would not hurt but would abet revolutionary transformations around the globe. Following Lenin's example in 1922, Soviet diplomacy has used arms control to set France against Britain, Europe against the United States, and all the West against Germany.

The most honest negotiations—those that anticipate balanced, mutually advantageous agreements—can take place only when each side feels it has a sufficient deterrent and a force structure comparable, if not identical, to the adversary's. Hence, Khrushchev could become more “sincere” about achieving genuine arms accords only in the mid-1950's, when the USSR acquired at least the image of an intercontinental delivery system. Only when the USSR acquired the image of strategic equality in the late 1960's could both sides sit down to serious SALT negotiations.

In short, the Russians may have *wished* for disarmament accords that would alter the military balance to their favor, but they could not seriously *hope* for balanced agreements until they came closer to matching their main strategic rival. Meanwhile, they became masters at exploiting disarmament diplomacy for political gains at home and abroad. But disarmament talks also opened the Kremlin to strong criticism from Peking and foreign revolutionaries; to skillful political uses of

disarmament by the West, from Eisenhower's “Open Skies” plan in 1955 to President Carter's “deep cuts” initiative in early 1977; and to internal opposition from Party ideologues and the Soviet military-industrial complex.

2. *Do the Russians believe that their system will prevail because history is on their side, or do they see war as a necessary and desirable engine for social progress?*

Russia's inferiority complexes about material backwardness have been intertwined with a messianic confidence that Orthodox (later, Soviet) civilization would redeem humanity. Most Soviet leaders have continued to believe that history is on their side and that, if the USSR holds on, its cause will ultimately prevail. Less militarily aggressive than the czars, the Soviet leaders have generally welcomed arms control and other means to prevent war because they would promote Soviet security while ensuring the working out of the dialectical processes by which capitalism's contradictions lead to the triumph of socialism. Khrushchev's epithet “We'll bury you” really meant “We'll dance at your funeral, because our system is superior and will outlive yours.”

But there is another strain in Soviet thinking that goes back to Friedrich Engels's notion that “the more militarism, the better,” because it would sharpen the conflicts within and among capitalist societies. Lenin, for his part, always stressed that a true revolutionary would use whatever means advanced the class struggle: peace or war, coalition or confrontation, exposure or deceit. For him World War I was an international *class* struggle destined to raise proletarian awareness of the need to overthrow the bourgeoisie. To speak of disarmament in those conditions, he averred, was counterrevolutionary because it would nourish illusions of peace and prosperity while the capitalist system endured. From the time of Russia's 1905 Revolution until 1920, Lenin contended that the task was to disarm the bourgeoisie—not talk of negotiating disarmament between nations.

A second stage in Lenin's approach to disarmament was manifested in 1921, when Foreign Commissar Georgii V. Chicherin announced that Soviet Russia would welcome any disarmament measures resulting from the Washington Naval Conference later that year. Lenin's 1922 correspondence explains the rationale for this shift: He now saw disarmament as a useful *tactic*. It was part of a two-pronged program of “trade” and “pacifism,” which Chicherin was to expound at Genoa. The primary political goal, Lenin advised, was to “try everything possible and perhaps even the impossible to strengthen the pacifist wing of the bourgeoisie to increase, however slightly, its chances of victory at the polls.” The secondary task was to “divide among themselves the countries that have united against us at Genoa.”

Lenin's wife recalled in 1931 that he spoke several times in 1918-21 about the day when the increasing destructiveness of weaponry would make war obsolete as an instrument of policy. “It was evident,” she affirmed, “how passionately he wanted war to become impossible.” If Krupskaya's reports are correct, there may have

been incipient in Lenin's thinking a third approach to arms limitation: one that saw it as a strategic necessity. But Soviet diplomacy was rebuffed in 1922 and Lenin died in 1924, leaving his regime enmeshed in the clandestine program of military collaboration with Weimar Germany.

Stalin continued Lenin's tactical use of the disarmament issue, both before and after World War II. Only under Khrushchev and later Brezhnev did the third stage adumbrated in Lenin's thinking come to fruition: Soviet policy accepted arms control, not just as a tactic, but as a long-range strategic objective.

The reason for the shift was sternly explained in a July 14, 1963, open letter from the Soviet Communist party to the Chinese: "The atomic bomb does not respect the class principle." Contrary to Mao Zedong's musings, nuclear war might well destroy socialist as well as capitalist civilization. Still confident that history was on the side of Soviet socialism, Khrushchev and Brezhnev generally chose to avoid confrontations that could escalate into major wars. Instead, they staked their own careers on the feasibility and desirability of reaching meaningful arms limitations and other agreements with the leaders of the bourgeois camp. As Khrushchev put it in 1960: "We must not now repeat mechanically what Vladimir Il'ich Lenin said about imperialism many decades back, and again and again reiterate that imperialist wars are inevitable until socialism has won all over the world."

"In reality, the USSR and the United States have not sought to rival each other in every domain."

3. *Is there an arms race? Does each side react to the other, or do they each "do their own thing"?*

A "theorem of multiple symmetry" has been proposed, arguing that both superpowers have sought to match each other in every weapon, from strategic delivery vehicles to espionage to psychological warfare. Since each side errs on the side of caution, it tends to exaggerate the quality and quantity of arms development by the adversary and build more and better arms than needed merely to match the other side.

This model makes bad history and bad advice. In reality, the USSR and the United States have not sought to rival each other in every domain. Though recognizing the importance of aircraft carriers for a modern navy,

the Kremlin considered them prohibitively expensive, both in Stalin's and in Khrushchev's time. The several helicopter and V/STOL carriers built in recent years displace less than half the tonnage of one of the thirteen U.S. aircraft carriers. Similarly, the USSR invested in intercontinental missiles rather than long-range aircraft because this seemed a more feasible way of threatening the United States. Even the Warsaw Pact, sometimes seen as a counterpart to NATO, was formed in 1955—six years after the Western alliance, and it did not conduct coordinated maneuvers till the early 1960's.

As a prescription for policy, the model errs in failing to take account of the assets and problems unique to each country by virtue of its geopolitical and historical background. The USSR, for example, needs a much larger constabulary merely to police its long frontiers and malcontent border areas, while the United States needs a better developed air and sea arm to carry on its trade and maintain contact with distant lands (allies and foes).

It would be foolish for either superpower to build some weapon just because the other side possesses it. Since Soviet economic and technological development has lagged far behind the U.S., Russia has had to make do and improvise. The often-cited Soviet lead in missile throw-weight (the guidance system and payload atop each missile) results from the fact that the Kremlin experienced difficulty in miniaturizing its warheads and streamlining its guidance systems. Moscow built bigger but not better bombs, testing them demonstratively (especially in 1961) and hauling them across Red Square. But once a certain threshold has been crossed, accuracy is more important than payload for destroying enemy targets. The Pentagon has opted since the mid-1950's for smaller and more accurate warheads, while demanding higher defense budgets to offset the Russian lead in megatonnage. The Pentagon's demands are the more egregious, since they often omit detailed reference to the megatonnage carried by our long-range and forward-based aircraft, which, if included in the equation, gives the United States at least parity in overall strategically usable payload.

Though the multiple symmetry or action-reaction model is too simple, the fact is that both sides have responded to perceived threats from one another. Sometimes they have sought to acquire analogous arms (e.g., nuclear-tipped missiles); but often they have sought their own unique way of coping with the perceived or possible threat from the other side. Their choices reflected the problems and opportunities particular to their respective geopolitical, economic, and technological situations and historical background.

Though alarums about a present danger have sometimes been utilized to whip defense spending artificially in both countries, the fact is that each has rationalized its military buildup as a defensive reaction to threats posed by the other side. From Moscow's perspective its military buildup since the 1930's has been basically defensive, responding to dangers posed first by Japan; then Nazi Germany; after 1945 by the United States and its allies; since the 1960's by the People's Republic of China as well.

It seems disingenuous to proclaim self-righteously that Soviet defense spending has increased in recent years while ours has tapered off; that Russia has built ever more missiles and submarines while our present force levels have remained about the same since about 1967; or—more generally—that the Soviets refuse to accept our strategic doctrines.

The fact is that the USSR has started from a lower level in quality and quantity of strategic weapons; its technology and economy are more backward; the United States can “do more with less.” While the USSR overtook the U.S. in some quantitative indexes of power in the 1960’s, the warhead and accuracy gaps widened to United States advantage. These patterns have shifted in recent years, but the bear still relies on a massive embrace; the eagle, on speed and fine-honed talons.

4. *Which side looks more threatening to the other—the United States and its allies or the Soviet Union and its allies? Can either side achieve a meaningful level of superiority in the years to come?*

Though Stalin ordered a crash program to develop an atomic bomb in 1945 and intensified naval construction programs, economic planning in 1946-47 stressed reconstruction and heavy industry rather than preparations for an imminent war. Soviet troops were cut from 11,365,000 in 1945 to 2,874,000 by 1948. The formation of NATO in 1949 (after the Czech coup and Berlin blockade the previous year) and the Western buildup during the Korean War helped bring about a doubling in Soviet troop strength to 5,763,000 men by 1955. Stalin had been particularly alarmed about the need to defend against a U.S. air attack and set up 100 mm. anti-aircraft guns around Moscow, loaded and ready to fire around the clock. Stalin, according to Khrushchev, “trembled with fear” and “ordered that the whole country be put on military alert,” where it remained until some time after he died.

Both sides exaggerated the willingness and the capability of the other to wage war in the late 1940’s and 1950’s. Starting with the 1955 summit meeting of Messrs. Eisenhower, Khrushchev, Eden, and Faure, Western and Soviet leaders seem to have understood that they all viewed nuclear war as an unacceptable way to conduct policy. Nonetheless, the awesome military capabilities acquired over the years persistently raise the question: Are *they*—the other side—striving for a first-strike capacity, one that could disarm us at a stroke and eliminate our means to threaten retaliation?

This question arises now for Westerners, who look at “heavy” Soviet missiles and ponder the day when their payloads consist of multiple, highly accurate warheads capable of destroying U.S. missiles in their silos. But this question has already confronted Soviet planners with even greater urgency, because the Pentagon has for years possessed several times as many warheads as the USSR, and much more accurate ones. And though Americans “know” they would never launch a war, Defense Secretaries McNamara and Schlesinger called

for an ability to launch a preemptive strike that would destroy the enemy’s “forces” while sparing his “cities” and other “values.” Indeed, one of Henry Kissinger’s first major books explained how nuclear weapons could be used “tactically” in Europe. If the Kremlin assessed only “capabilities” rather than our “intentions,” it might spend even more than it does on defense. If it tried to infer our intentions from our capabilities, it would arrive at quite grim projections.

Fortunately, the Soviet leaders temper their threat assessment with a steadily improving understanding of the complexities of Western political life. They understand that we wish—for political as well as profit motives—to keep defense plants occupied; that anti-Communist rhetoric sometimes wins votes; that even the trade unions (nay, especially some trade union leaders) are inveterately hostile to Soviet-style socialism. They have seen that the United States did little to exploit its erstwhile nuclear monopoly or superiority, and has generally conducted its military interventions around the world so as to avoid confronting other great powers.

Americans find it hard to empathize with Soviet strategic sensitivities, even though our access to reliable factual material is immeasurably greater than most Soviets’, and our historical experiences have been far less conducive to paranoia. If we consider the situation soberly, we see that U.S. military assets stem from an economy twice the size of the Soviet’s, and immeasurably more innovative. Our geography isolates us from hostile neighbors, while Russia’s is harsh and exposes it to invaders on all sides. The Kremlin confronts strategic problems far more severe than Washington’s. It must prepare against nuclear threats, not only from the United States, but also from China, France, Britain, and from other NATO countries with “two-key” systems controlled by Washington. While America has had only one hostile neighbor, Cuba, the USSR is surrounded by foes with ideological and territorial grievances.

Can either side achieve a meaningful superiority in the years to come? One can imagine all kinds of worst-case scenarios, but it is unlikely that either superpower could destroy all or even most of the other’s land-based missiles with a first strike; that a Soviet attack would catch all U.S. bombers on the ground; or that either could successfully track and destroy all the other’s submarines. If only one Polaris-type submarine survived, its sixteen missiles—each carrying some ten warheads—could inflict “unacceptable” damage on the USSR instantly. Soviet foreign policy has often been expansionist, but mainly in low-risk situations.

Whether Soviet or U.S. weapons are politically useful depends a great deal on *how* we talk about them, since the United States supplies most of the hard data about the global balance and its significance. If we *say* there is a Soviet advantage in throw-weight and that this is significant, our assertion will enhance Moscow’s influence abroad. If we underscore Western assets in a way that aggravates Soviet sensitivities, we may improve our global bargaining posture but deepen Moscow’s drive to overtake or exceed Western strengths. Assuming that both sides retain an effective deterrent, the White

House should rather assert that we and the Russians have strategic sufficiency, and take steps to transfer our competition to nonmilitary realms.

5. *If the Russians fear war and do not believe it necessary for advancing their interests, why their growing presence—military as well as political-economic—in the Third World?*

The dimensions of Moscow's role in Third World affairs must be seen in historical and comparative perspective. The Soviet presence has developed gradually and incrementally and does not represent some overnight decision to take advantage of Washington's Vietnam paralysis. Expansionist tendencies date from before the Bolshevik Revolution, for the czars were interested not just in Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan, and China, but even in more distant Ethiopia. Though Moscow has skillfully exploited the many "contradictions" between the Third World and Western nations, most developing countries still look to the West for ideas as well as for technology and trade.

The Soviet military and economic presence in the Third World is small compared with that of the United States and its allies. Even the Red Tide that some commentators assert is sweeping the high seas has been vastly exaggerated, for example, by reports that the Soviet Navy possesses three times as many ships as the U.S.

The facts are that the USSR and its Warsaw Pact allies possess about 2,000 warships, compared to just over 1,500 NATO ships, but that the Western navies are more powerful, displacing over 8 million tons, compared to under 4 million by Pact navies. The reason is simple: The Eastern navies, led by the USSR, contain many more small craft for coastal patrol and mine warfare. In numbers of major surface combatants, aircraft carriers, and nuclear subs the West leads the Pact by a large margin. Furthermore, the West operates from established bases all over the world, while the Soviet Navy depends mainly on moorages and a few politically volatile bases offering little logistic security. The Soviet Navy must operate from waterways controlled by Turkey, Norway, and Japan. To reach the Indian Ocean, for example, ships in Russia's Black Sea Fleet have to pass through, not only the Turkish Straits, but also the Suez Canal.

Working with limited resources and experience, the Soviets have sought first of all to protect their own coastline—hence the large number of patrol boats; second, to threaten Western commercial shipping and forward-based military systems with attack submarines; third, to deploy at sea a part of the Soviet nuclear deterrent; and fourth, to show the Soviet flag as part of the campaign to play the role of strategic equal with the United States.

Since threats and opportunities abound in the Third World, why leave undisturbed the West's sources of economic natural resources, military bases, and political influence? Why not neutralize potential influence? Why not neutralize potential threats to Soviet interests and nullify Western advantages, if this can be done without undue risk of war or undue damage to détente?

Why not indicate to the world that the USSR, no less than the United States, can show its flag on all oceans and in many ports?

Thus, Soviet expansionism derives from an amalgam of historical momentum, inferiority complexes, technological and organizational idiosyncrasies, economic limitations, and geopolitics. But it also reflects what Joseph A. Schumpeter called the mindless imperialism of the warrior class. Given that certain branches of the Soviet armed forces prosper from overseas expansion, this generates political and economic pressures for further expansion. The interests of this élite and its industrial and Party ideological backers will either grow or atrophy, and they prefer growth. The backers of Third World expansion back their claim on Soviet resources with both ideological and pragmatic arguments that the men at the top find difficult to resist. They, too, retain messianic hopes for Moscow's world role and come under great pressure to placate the many factions demanding a share of the economic pie.

6. *Does Moscow see SALT as a way to ensure an era of peace or as an instrument to advance the class struggle?*

While Americans see this as an either/or proposition, the Kremlin leadership thinks it can have both lasting peace and revolutionary advance. Indeed, it believes the two can reinforce one another dialectically.

The Soviet society and economy are much less dynamic than the U.S., but Kremlin leaders think and talk more about distant goals than the Americans. One might say that the Russians *talk* change while the Americans *act* to bring it about. The Russians continue to make five-, and fifteen-year and beyond plans for changing their own country and to look for revolutionary transformations elsewhere. Insecure about their own achievements to date, they legitimize their regime by promising future advances.

Since the atomic bomb does not respect the class principle, nuclear war must be avoided. Khrushchev and Brezhnev therefore proclaimed "peaceful coexistence" with capitalism to be a long-term strategic goal of Soviet foreign policy. While taking all steps to prevent dangerous confrontations with the West, the Soviet leaders have assumed that they could help intensify the class

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struggle in bourgeois societies and national-liberation struggles in the Third World. Indeed, they have asserted that the Soviet peace program wins respect for the USSR among the masses and moderate élites abroad, while the Kremlin's nuclear shield makes it easier for Third World peoples to throw off the imperialist yoke because Soviet strength stays the hand of Yankee interventionists.

Though the Kremlin devotes some energy to promoting world revolution, its primary goals are, first, to *maintain* Soviet security interests at home and in Eastern Europe; and, second, to modernize the sluggish Soviet economy. Arms control, détente, and trade with the West are expected to enhance both goals.

While Americans focus on the technical aspects of arms control, the Kremlin is concerned more with its overall impact on the political climate at home and abroad. Whether or not SALT achieves specific arms limits, the *process* of ongoing negotiations helps curb the prospect of Western military buildups or intervention.

While SALT is justified to the U.S. press and Congress in terms of its detailed impact on the balance of power, the Soviet press ignores the numbers game and stresses the "equal security" features of the various agreements reached since the May, 1972, summit. Indeed, the protocol specifying the number of weapons permitted each side under the 1972 interim agreement seems never to have been published in the USSR, while the specific ceilings agreed to at Vladivostok in November, 1974, were disclosed by the American side only after it returned to Washington. Soviet discussions of strategic forces generally refer only to the size of Western forces "as reported in the foreign press," while offering no specifics about Soviet force levels.

In the 1970's, as in 1922, Soviet diplomacy promotes both a peace program and trade. Moscow sees trade as useful for securing infusions of Western technology and, when Russian harvests fail, grain imports to alter the protein/carbohydrate ratio in Soviet diets, but also as a means of creating a *material* basis for East-West peace. The Soviets want to build a web of economic incentives making it attractive for world capitalism to help to develop the Soviet economy and, more important, to inhibit military adventures against the socialist camp.

While working for peace, the Kremlin nonetheless continues to expect conflict. The Marxist dialectic specifies that, sooner or later, inherent contradictions within capitalist societies will intensify, exploding into a new and more progressive socialist system. As the internal troubles of world capitalism multiply, the prospect of a last-ditch attack on socialism also mounts. Russia must be ready, when conditions are ripe, to facilitate the transformation of the Western capitalism, but also to guard against any military convulsions of its dying gasp.

The Kremlin's dialectical view of history thus differs profoundly from the confidence of many American leaders in a natural harmony of interests within and among nations. We tend to think that conflict is an aberration; they, that it is the law of history. Americans, strange to say, agree more with the naturalist-philosopher Petr

Kropotkin that mutual aid is the most powerful force in evolution; Soviets, more with the rugged Darwinians, who held that struggle is central to the survival of certain species.

7. *Given the Kremlin's messianic and revolutionary ambitions, could it be in Russia's interest and ours to conclude and adhere to a strategic-arms accord?*

Peaceful coexistence, as Khrushchev often declared, is dictated by life itself. The Soviets have come to understand the fundamental lesson of modern game theory: that actors with conflicting interests may also have interests in common. Nuclear war could be viewed as a game that neither side can win if both proceed on a collision course. Other enterprises, such as joint projects in environmental protection, can only benefit both sides. Arms control negotiations are more complex. Both sides can win from a mutually advantageous agreement, but it is possible that one side may win *more*, or even that one partner may come out the loser (e.g., if the other "successfully" cheats on the accord).

Both superpowers (and the rest of humanity as well) will gain if SALT helps to make war less likely; the Soviet and the American people will win if the economic burdens of arms racing are reduced (though the Russians will gain more, since they spend about twice as much of their wealth on defense as the Americans); all sides will gain if SALT constraints lessen the damage that results if war should break out (though one side might gain more if these constraints helped its bargaining position during the conflict). Both the White House and the Kremlin can gain domestic political support from arms control agreements that can be presented as enhancing their country's interests, as Khrushchev and Kennedy did in 1963 and as Brezhnev and Nixon did in 1972-73.

The fact is that, while the Soviets have continued to talk world revolution, arms control and trade with the West have taken on ever higher priority. What started in 1921 as a tactic or stratagem is becoming a deeply rooted, strategic commitment. The right combination of firmness and accommodation in Western diplomacy can contribute to this process and help to ensure that Moscow observes the principle to which both sides subscribed in 1972: to avoid seeking unilateral advantage and to base our relations on principles of equal security.

As Lenin anticipated, military technology has made war counterproductive as an instrument for conducting foreign policy among major powers. But Moscow will never rest while its military image lags behind the United States. Arms agreements can be used to contain some aspects of East-West competition while helping both sides to cultivate common interests in other domains, perhaps overshadowing their conflicts. Both Soviet and Western leaders claim to believe that history is on their side; if so, let them compete and cooperate in nonmilitary realms. "Security," they may find, lies not so much in deterrence systems but in finding answers to the economic and environmental problems sweeping the globe. 