



The Washington Post \_\_\_\_\_  
The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Washington Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
The Christian Science Monitor P.20  
New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
USA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
The Chicago Tribune \_\_\_\_\_

Date 11 MAY 1989

# What's Bush's Vision?

**G**EORGE BUSH's inclination to be cautious and deliberate has generally served him well over the years. For the most part, it's been what the country needed as it moved beyond the Reagan era in foreign and domestic policy. The President has put together a solid Cabinet of experienced veterans and begun in a few areas to make his mark.

But there's a feeling now - six months after the election - that events are beginning to control Mr. Bush rather than the other way round.

Looking at public opinion and the pronouncements of many analysts and former government officials - even those close to Ronald Reagan - one senses caution becoming hesitancy. It's too soon to call it lack of leadership or drift (and certainly not "malaise"). But Americans, and the country's allies and adversaries, have yet to get a clear picture of Bush's world view and how he'll proceed now that he heads the world's richest, most powerful nation.

He may be uncomfortable with "the vision thing," as he unfortunately once called it. But that's exactly what's needed now, and nowhere is this more important than in relations with the Soviet Union. It affects how the US conducts itself

in other parts of the world. And it's essential to building the domestic political support necessary to move ahead in a time of new relationships.

There can be little doubt that things have changed remarkably under Mikhail Gorbachev. Soviet troops start pulling out of East Germany today. Americans are in Russia (and Russians in Utah) checking out the dismantling of nuclear missiles. Soviet voters are chucking out party hacks. Political reform is coming to Poland, and some of the barbed wire between Hungary and Austria has been torn down. These are largely symbols, it's true. But they are symbols with considerable substance behind them as well, and they require a substantial response.

The Bush administration reaction has been to tut-tut over West Germans wanting to get rid of nuclear weapons designed only to land on German soil (not an unreasonable concern). Defense Secretary Richard Cheney suggests, unhelpfully, that Gorbachev is likely to fail. And Secretary of State James Baker III brings nothing new to Moscow.

The Soviet leader *could* fail (although it's increasingly unlikely that would mean a return to the old days of Soviet bullying). NATO *should* remain strong (and that prob-

ably will have to include some battlefield nuclear weapons for at least a while). And caution in dismantling the remnants of the cold war still is called for.

But as former CIA director James Schlesinger said the other day, "For [the US] to appear both passive and impassive to Gorbachev is a problem. One needs to strike a balance between caution . . . and responsiveness to the changes going on in the Soviet Union."

So it's time for George Bush to demonstrate a little more boldness, a little more vision in his approach to the way the world is changing. He could start with the speeches he's planned for this week and next. We haven't heard one of any particular note since Republicans nominated him last summer. We need to now.



STAT