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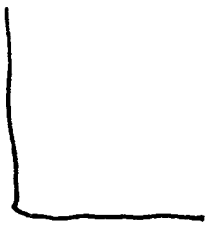
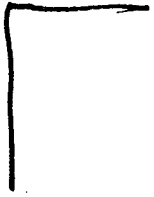
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MEMORANDUM

Soviet Detente Policy

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SOVIET DETENTE POLICY

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THE UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD CONCURS, EXCEPT AS NOTED IN THE TEXT, AS FOLLOWS:

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of the estimate:

The Central Intelligence Agency, the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Defense, Treasury, and the National Security Agency.

Concurring:

The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence representing the Central Intelligence Agency

The Director of Intelligence and Research, representing the Department of State

The Director, Defense Intelligence Agency

The Director, National Security Agency

The Assistant General Manager for National Security representing the Atomic Energy Commission

The Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury representing the Department of the Treasury

Abstaining:

The Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, the subject being outside of his jurisdiction.

ALSO PARTICIPATING:

The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army

The Director of Naval Intelligence, Department of the Navy

The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force

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SOVIET DETENTE POLICY

NOTE

This National Intelligence Analytical Memorandum addresses the Soviet conception of detente, the factors which commend a detente approach to the Soviet leaders, the dangers they see in it for themselves, and its durability as a general framework for Soviet international behavior. It discusses the relationship between detente and the USSR's major foreign policies, but does not attempt a detailed analysis of each of these individual policies.

PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS¹

A. The USSR sees in detente the international atmosphere best suited to maximizing the power and security of the Soviet state and its influence abroad. Soviet leaders neither expect nor intend their "peace program" to end rivalry with the outside world, but rather to set prudent limits on that rivalry in the nuclear age and allow for greater Soviet policy maneuver.

B. For the Soviets, detente is at least as much a need as a choice. The major contributing factors include: the necessity to avoid nuclear war and, by extension, to manage local crises with great care; the problem of coping with Chinese hostility; a need for Western capital and technology; opportunities to have the USSR's superpower status recognized and to consolidate its hegemony in Eastern Europe; and the chance to inhibit Western military programs without accepting corresponding limits on those of the USSR.

C. Pursuit of detente also raises problems for the Soviets at home and abroad: the problem of maintaining internal discipline in a more relaxed international atmosphere; possible erosion of Soviet control in Eastern Europe; and complications in relations with client states and within the international communist movement. These problems do not appear critical at the moment.

¹ The Director of Naval Intelligence and the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Air Force, believe that this Memorandum, as a whole, does not stress sufficiently Soviet use of detente as a tool of external policy designed to expand Soviet power and influence in the world.

D. Brezhnev and the detente approach seem well entrenched, but both must sustain a defensible record of accomplishment. Foreign policy setbacks of a magnitude to bring the overall detente approach into question would pose a challenge to Brezhnev's position. He would probably be able to head off such a challenge by initiating some policy shifts. But if these setbacks were to coincide with serious domestic difficulties, he might not be able to carry off such a maneuver.

E. While Soviet leadership changes are likely over the next few years, successors will face much the same set of opportunities and imperatives. After some hiatus for domestic political consolidation, they will probably be predisposed by Soviet national interests to look favorably on a detente approach.

F. The most durable elements of the Soviet detente approach are the drive for expanded economic relations and the avoidance of threat and challenge in relations with the highly developed countries. Barring a radical change in Sino-Soviet relations, which we think unlikely, the rivalry with China will also serve to keep Moscow on this track. But some easing of this conflict, perhaps after Mao's passing, could reduce Soviet incentives to pursue detente.

G. In the Middle East, the USSR is concerned to regain lost ground and hopes to do so at the more difficult later stages of Arab-Israeli negotiations. In any crisis within the next year or so, if Moscow were forced to make a clear choice between detente and its regional interests, the chances are better than even that, within the requirement of avoiding a confrontation with the US, the USSR would be willing to risk a setback to detente.

H. Soviet relations with the US are central to the future of detente, and arms control negotiations are central to those relations. While Soviet policy does not allow for a collapse of MBFR and SALT, Moscow still appears to be searching hard for advantage in these talks, and would like to believe that this behavior does not threaten other Soviet interests bound up in detente.

I. In the meantime, the USSR continues to pursue ambitious military programs. These extend beyond its vigorous ICBM development efforts to embrace many other weapon systems as well.

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J. While the Soviet balance sheet on detente is becoming more complicated, the leaders will prefer to deal with various problems in pragmatic fashion, and to keep detente as a whole from coming into question. Even if only partial gains are realized, Moscow will not choose deliberately to abandon detente unless forced to do so by critical repercussions at home or in Eastern Europe.

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DISCUSSION

1. For the Soviet leaders, the function of detente is to provide a setting which best enables them to benefit from the USSR's strengths and to compensate for its weaknesses as they see them. They mean it to facilitate pursuit of their time-honored objectives: maximization of the power and security of the Soviet state and of its influence abroad. In seeking detente in relations with the West, and the US in particular, they proceed from the belief that in present circumstances such an easing of tensions is a more expedient way of promoting Soviet policy objectives than a climate of hostility and confrontation. The Soviet leaders neither expect nor intend their "peace program" nor the particular policies it now encompasses to bring an end to the rivalry with the outside world, especially the highly industrialized countries. Instead, the detente approach is meant to set prudent limits on that rivalry in the nuclear age and to provide Soviet policy with greater room for maneuver. But the Soviet leaders also recognize that detente is to a great extent a matter of mutual perceptions of the other side's objectives and that this places certain constraints on their own policies.

2. Detente, in the Soviet view, thus does not usher in an era of East-West cooperation, devoid of conflict. Negotiation and cooperation are, to Moscow, not ends in themselves but necessary adaptations to conditions. The Soviets view most issues on which they are engaged with the outside world in highly competitive terms, and this adversary attitude makes calculations of unilateral advantage—and of risk—an inveterate aspect of the USSR's behavior in international affairs. Particularly telling in this respect are the large weapons modernization programs now under way, which the USSR must realize could not but arouse US anxieties.

1. MOSCOW'S MOTIVATION

3. The pursuit of detente was not new with the advent of the Brezhnev-Kosygin leadership in 1964, the flowering of Brandt's *Ostpolitik* in 1970, or the Soviet-US summitry of 1972-1973. Detente has been an important element of Soviet policy at least since Stalin's death, though unevenly pursued because of contrary international developments and the ebullient, sometimes adventuresome personality of Khrushchev. The immediate objectives of embryonic post-Stalin peaceful co-

existence were to end the USSR's isolation in international affairs and correct domestic ills caused by the dead dictator's rigid and autarkic policies.

4. In the present stage, detente has been elevated to become the USSR's "general line" because of a variety of factors, some of which *attract* Moscow to this course, others of which *impel* it in the same direction. These factors include:

- the destructiveness of nuclear weapons, which makes it imperative to avoid general war and, by extension, to manage local crises with great care.
- the implacable and active hostility of China, which argues strongly for an avoidance of major tensions, and even a cultivation of useful relations, with the US and Europe.
- the need to draw on Western resources, particularly technology and know-how but occasionally grain as well, to boost productivity, primarily in the civilian sector but in military industry as well.
- the opportunity to obtain recognition of superpower status on a level with the US. This is due largely to the USSR's advances in strategic strength, but its acknowledgement increases the USSR's sense of security and the weight of its diplomacy.
- the chance to consolidate recognition of the USSR's postwar gains in Eastern Europe and prepare the ground for gains in Western Europe.
- the opportunity to reduce the sense of a Soviet threat in the West and Japan, in the hope that this can induce a lowering of military expenditures and an erosion of Western alliance cohesion even while the USSR continues to seek relative military advantage.

Problems and Limitations

5. The pursuit of detente raises specific problems for the Soviet regime. In the leaders' view, a crucial one is that of maintaining discipline and control within the Soviet Union. A relaxed international atmosphere and greater exposure to the outside world inevitably encourages those forces within the Soviet Union desiring relaxation of the stringencies of the Soviet regime, especially of the Party's heavy-handed interference in every sector of society. These forces include the small but vociferous dissident group, which is able to appeal to a sympathetic world forum. They also include otherwise loyalist segments of society, such as those within the scientific and creative intelligentsia, the ranks of economic/industrial executives, and some second-echelon party and government officials. Fearing adverse reactions from this increased exposure, the regime has intensified its ideological and vigilance campaigns simultaneously with the pursuit of detente abroad. Nevertheless, the regime's methods for containing restive domestic forces remain moderate by traditional Soviet standards, among other reasons because of the Soviet leaders' stake in detente and their consequent vulnerability to international pressure.

6. The Soviet Union faces similar and inter-related problems in Eastern Europe. The maintenance of communist systems and control in Eastern Europe is seen as critical not only for security reasons, but also because instability there feeds back into the Soviet Union. A variety of institutional controls, plus the dependence of these local communist regimes on Soviet power, tend to keep this problem within manageable limits. Nevertheless, the attractive pull of Western Europe increases with detente and threatens to diminish Soviet influence in the area.

7. In this connection, and despite the image of confidence which the Soviets are at pains to project, several notable fears lie at the heart of Moscow's policymaking. Attuned as they are to revolutionary potentialities and to the turbulence of Russian history, the leaders seem more concerned about the stability of their regime than many Westerners would think justified. As for their immediate neighbors, they are aware of the persistent force of nationalism in Eastern Europe and, looking westward, find it difficult to assure themselves that the German people are permanently reconciled to their division into two nations. To the east, they perceive Peking as not only hostile but incalculable; they appear to feel more insecure vis-a-vis China than most Western calculations of relative strength would suggest as reasonable.

8. At a less critical but nonetheless important level, the cultivation of a detente atmosphere sometimes severely complicates Soviet relations with client states. The acceptance of the 1972 Soviet-US summit in the face of US mining of Haiphong cost Moscow in its relations with North Vietnam. In the same vein, Soviet cultivation of relations with the US contributed to the alienation of Egypt, which feared that larger Soviet concerns would take precedence over Arab interests. In addition to such instances, Moscow faces chronic problems in the international Communist movement in squaring the Marxist ideological inheritance with its newly moderate line toward the capitalist states.

II. MOSCOW'S CURRENT DETENTE BALANCE SHEET

9. The Soviet leaders must currently view the results of their detente policy as a mixed bag, with both successes and disappointments. Presently heading the list of disappointments are the difficulties that have arisen in bilateral relations with the US. Failure to obtain cer-

tain additional government-guaranteed credits and MFN treatment represents at least a momentary setback for Moscow's long-range plans for US assistance in development of the USSR's economy and natural resources. Furthermore, Soviet concessions on largely domestic issues, especially the key one of Jewish emigration, have only raised demands for further concessions. The USSR has run into much the same problem at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which has been prolonged because of disagreement over measures such as freer East-West exchange of people and ideas. The USSR's bilateral prospects in Europe have recently been thrown in some doubt by changes of government in France and particularly West Germany. In the Middle East, Moscow has been deeply concerned to find itself now playing a secondary diplomatic role and suffering a notable reduction of influence in the area despite its heavy prestige and material investment in the Arab cause.²

10. Despite these disappointments, the Soviet leadership probably derives much satisfaction from the results of detente to date and continues to look to the future with expectation. Moscow's stature in international affairs has risen to unprecedented heights, its status as one of the world's two superpowers has been universally recognized, and its military capabilities continue to improve. The Soviet

² The Director of Naval Intelligence and Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, disagree with the view that the Soviets are suffering a notable reduction of influence in the area. They believe that, with the exception of Egypt, the Soviets continue to have considerable influence in those countries with which it has aligned itself, e.g., Syria and Iraq, as well as increased involvement with the fedayeen movement. They also point out that Soviet setbacks in Egypt and in the current disengagement talks may very well be transitory phenomena.

leaders can be sure that any future strategic arms agreement, or any other accord in the disarmament/security field, will be concluded on a basis granting the USSR no less than full equality with the US. Conclusion of the CSCE would give all-European blessing to the status quo there and in the short run at least encourage Soviet prospects in Europe. Meanwhile, significant differences have surfaced among the West Europeans themselves, and those with the United States have increased. While not primarily responsible for these developments, Soviet cultivation of detente has helped to create a political atmosphere in which such differences flourish.

11. With regard to the economic aspect, the picture is generally satisfactory for the short term. Last year's volume of US-Soviet trade (\$1.4 billion, with grain sales accounting for over half the total) and growing Soviet access to US technology and expertise, while still not large in international trade terms, must be gratifying to Moscow. The same positive economic picture prevails with respect to Europe. The Soviets feel they have some reason to hope that opposition in the US to a quantum jump in bilateral economic relations will eventually be overcome; in any case, the issue is not now critical.

12. Notwithstanding a generally favorable detente balance sheet from the Soviet point of view, Soviet leaders differ from time to time over the specific details. A close reading of Politburo speeches over the last six months suggests as much. Further, it is natural to suppose that leaders may even occasionally have misgivings about the larger aspects of such a comprehensive undertaking. There is undoubtedly concern at various levels that detente might lead to a weakening of the USSR's defense posture and internal security. There are unquestionably also officials—particularly

among professional ideologists and propagandists and within the lower party apparatus—who find it hard to reconcile themselves in general to a softer line toward old capitalist enemies. And there are signs of a debate among Soviet commentators over whether nuclear war can be won, a topic with possible future implications for force planning and arms control negotiations.³

13. In these circumstances, both Brezhnev and the detente approach will have to sustain a defensible record of accomplishments. Policy setbacks of a magnitude to bring the utility of detente into question would at the same time pose a challenge to the General Secretary's position. Brezhnev has a good record of political savvy, and he would probably be able to head off such a challenge by himself initiating a policy shift. His personal role in detente, however, is now so visible that, if these foreign setbacks coincided with serious domestic difficulties, he might not be able to carry off such a maneuver.

14. We do not see signs that such a combination of troubles now exists. The evidence points to a fairly solid consensus behind detente at the top political level, and there is considerable evidence attesting to the strength of Brezhnev's position of leadership. In particular, he has been careful to assure himself of military support, and while the military are doubtless a cautious force in the framing of arms control positions, they have every reason to be satisfied with the trend of allocations to defense under Brezhnev's regime. Defense Minister Grechko in particular has been a supporter of Brezhnev in foreign policy matters.

³The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, believes that this sentence does not reflect the nature of the debate within the Soviet Union. The debate is limited to the philosophical realm of "military science" and has not affected Soviet doctrine, which calls for victory in a nuclear war should one occur.

Yet in the present situation Brezhnev needs to insure that the momentum of detente is not lost, but at the same time to plan his steps in a way which guards him against further setbacks. Balancing these requirements confronts him with one of the trickiest problems of policy and political management he has faced during his leadership.

III. FACTORS BEARING ON THE FUTURE OF DETENTE

15. The Soviet leaders have made a strong public commitment to detente, and there is abundant evidence that they do not regard it as a transitory element in their policy. This is implicit in their eagerness to engage Western corporations in long-term developmental projects and their willingness, at least in principle, to negotiate limits on strategic arms. This attitude does not mean that, come what may, the USSR will adhere to detente, but it does indicate an expectation that this will be the most advantageous general course for the USSR for some years to come.

The Leadership

16. If only for actuarial reasons, there will probably be important changes in the leadership in the Soviet Union in the next few years, possibly a generational turnover. Our meager information about the younger members of the present leadership does not reveal any clear divergence from present foreign policy views. A successor regime's first priority will probably be to consolidate its position and establish its authority in domestic and East European affairs. This might initially mean retrenchment or at least lack of innovation in foreign affairs. The new leaders, however, will be faced with the same realities and imperatives as the present ones: the need to modernize the Soviet economy, the same set of political and security problems on the USSR's Western and Eastern frontiers, and the need for

exercise of restraint while playing a superpower role in the nuclear age. As they settle in, it seems likely that the requirements of Soviet national interests will predispose them to pursue a policy along the lines of that of the Brezhnev regime. This predisposition could be altered, however, by external events beyond their control. Furthermore, being less identified with the detente line as it has developed, they might be quicker and more severe in judging its utility in the face of crises or setbacks.

The Question of Discipline

17. The most serious problems that detente is likely to raise for Moscow are precisely in those areas which take priority over foreign policy considerations: stability at home and security in Eastern Europe. While the Soviet regime can absorb slight and gradual changes on these two fronts, it would probably react forcefully to abrupt and far-reaching ones. Domestically, the question of how much dissident activity to tolerate for the sake of internal esprit and Western sensibilities will remain under constant review, and the leaders will not hesitate to react to serious danger signs on the home front. In Eastern Europe, it is easy to envisage a prompt and decisive Soviet reaction to, for example, a Romanian attempt to bolt the Warsaw Pact. In such circumstances as these the Soviets would not publicly renounce detente. Indeed, they would probably redouble their verbal adherence to it, hoping to limit the extent and duration of foreign reaction and to resume beneficial dealings with the West as soon as possible.

China

18. One major result of the Sino-Soviet conflict has been to impel Moscow to normalize and develop its relations with the West. The China factor will probably continue to have this effect, even allowing for the possibility of

some improvement in the present strained state of Sino-Soviet relations. As for China itself, while the USSR will exploit tactical opportunities, through political action or subversion, basic Soviet strategy appears to be based on a desire to avoid any further deterioration of relations while waiting and hoping for a more responsive leadership to follow Mao. To the extent that this hope was realized, Moscow would feel less concerned to pursue Western engagements out of fear of isolation. Conversely, the Soviets might come to believe that a military solution to their China problem was necessary and feasible; in this case they would hardly expect to be able to preserve detente as well. While border skirmishes might well occur, we continue to estimate that the odds on a premeditated Soviet attack on China leading to war are low—no higher than 1 in 10—and that a genuine and durable rapprochement between the two is highly unlikely.⁴

Economics

19. The economic incentive is probably one of the most durable elements in the USSR's approach to detente. Basically, this is because

⁴ See NIE 11/13/6-73: "Possible Changes in the Sino-Soviet Relationship," dated 25 October 1973. DIA continues to differentiate between the possibility of a large-scale Soviet invasion and a disarming strike, and would rate the likelihood of a disarming strike as markedly greater than that of an invasion.

The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, believes that while the odds on a Sino-Soviet war over the long term are low, the near term—the period during which a succession to Mao will probably take place and the Chinese deploy their CSS-X-3 ICBM—will be critical for Sino-Soviet relations, and the possibility of major hostilities occurring in that period will be temporarily higher.

The Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State, believes that the continuing deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations since the publication of NIE 11/13/6-73 warrants a somewhat higher casting of the odds of a major conflict than only one chance in ten.

the USSR remains far behind the US in a number of key areas, especially in capital and labor productivity. The Soviet leaders realize that the rate of growth, which has slowed in recent years, cannot be pushed upward again simply by bringing new farmland under cultivation, by introducing new plants and equipment, and by expanding the labor force. Because of lower birth rates, the labor force will eventually increase at a slower rate, while the growth of plant and equipment is becoming harder to sustain in the face of competing demands for consumer goods. Meanwhile, the desired increase in productivity is not being obtained, among other reasons because of a lag in introducing the necessary improvements in technology, and the technological gap between the West and the USSR has persisted in almost every sector.

20. Moscow believes that trade with the industrialized countries of the West will speed up the rate of technological progress and provide production capacity in a much shorter time and at less expense than it would take to develop the technology at home. It has resorted to this policy in past periods, and current Soviet efforts to obtain Western goods and technology have again resulted in an upswing in trade with the West. The developed West's share in Soviet foreign trade rose from 19 percent in 1965 to 26 percent in 1973. Continuing Soviet efforts to obtain Western equipment, technology, and now large sums of capital are leading the USSR to move toward greater dependence on the West. The USSR, for example, is committing itself to long-term deliveries (e.g., 20-30 years) to Western trading partners, and is acknowledging the need for fuller participation in the "international division of labor."

21. In financing more imports, the USSR's ability to manage a larger debt or to pay cash

will be significantly enhanced by the increases in Soviet export earnings which are expected during the next two or three years. Major price increases for gold and for traditional Soviet raw material exports, along with expanded deliveries of natural gas, could push total Soviet exports to the developed West to perhaps \$6 billion in 1974 and \$7 billion in 1975—up from less than \$3 billion in 1972. The USSR will thus have substantial export surpluses—in sharp contrast to past deficits. As a result, debt service in 1975 should be no greater than in 1973 and perhaps even less, depending on price trends. The outlook for the longer term is less favorable, largely because of the expected leveling off and eventual decline in the volume of crude oil exported to the West during 1977-1980.

22. With regard to the military aspect, expanding economic relations have increased the opportunities for transfer of important military-related technology to the USSR from Western Europe, Japan, and the US. Soviet initiatives to US aircraft, computer, electronic, and metallurgical companies are of special interest in this connection. The Soviets clearly hope that the climate of detente will lead to a further loosening of allied controls on the export of strategic goods.

23. Even should its efforts falter on other fronts, the USSR is likely in the near term to persist in its attempts to acquire Western technology and capital, bargaining and shifting among alternative suppliers as necessary. Ultimately, however, the USSR may discover that it has exaggerated what imported technology—in the absence of structural change—can do for the Soviet economy. Even so, the Soviets would almost certainly not give up altogether in trying to expand economic ties with the West. But they would place less

of a premium on these ties, and the economic factor in detente would accordingly diminish.

The Third World In General

24. In the Third World, contradictory factors will affect Soviet behavior. On the one hand, most regions in this category are of lower priority in Soviet calculations than the highly industrialized countries, and Moscow will not wish to compromise its relations with the latter by an overly aggressive pursuit of opportunities in the former.⁵ On the other hand, the Soviets remain ambitious and view their present strength as entitling them to a full measure of influence in those areas of the world previously beyond their reach. Their competition with China propels them in the same direction. In general, the product of these factors will probably be a Soviet policy of seeking an expansion of influence, tempered by a sober appraisal of local difficulties and a concern to avoid confrontations with the US.

25. In Latin America and most of Africa, the Soviets for some time have been limiting their expectations and their commitments. Their aims in Southeast Asia, which is less accessible to them than to China or the US, are also likely to remain modest. The Indian subcontinent is of much greater interest to them, and while their position there is subject to periodic strains, they probably expect to remain the principal external influence in India for some time to come. In all these areas, they will regard their global detente approach as assisting their traditional diplomatic and economic activity and their continuing search for military relationships.

⁵ The Director of Naval Intelligence and the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, believe that this assessment has little weight in the Soviet calculations. The Soviet Union might very well be willing to risk compromise of its relations with the highly industrialized countries by an aggressive pursuit of opportunities in the Third World.

The Middle East In Particular

26. This is a more critical area for Soviet policy because both the East-West stakes and the instability of the region are high. In the past few years, Moscow has maintained its traditional policy of seeking to maximize Soviet influence among the Arabs with diplomatic and military support, hoping that the detente it was developing on a larger world scale would not interfere with this course. The summits of 1972 and 1973 revealed the contradictions inherent in this approach, and when the October war broke out, Soviet behavior was essentially governed by considerations having little to do with detente—support of the Arabs up to the limit set by the need to avoid military confrontation with the US. When disaster threatened their clients, the Soviets found it useful to resort to the diplomatic mechanisms developed in the practice of detente for crisis management, and indeed took the line that the new Soviet-US relationship was the key element in resolving the crisis. In fact, however, they were conducting a diplomatic salvage operation. In the ensuing negotiations, they have been severely discomfited by their relegation to the diplomatic sidelines and by the readiness of the Arabs, particularly Egypt, to disregard their advice and interests.

27. It is likely that this experience has brought home to Moscow, more clearly than ever before, the inherent conflict between the twin Soviet aims of cultivating East-West detente and maintaining a strong Soviet position in the Middle East. Despite this discord in Soviet purposes, we believe that the Soviets rate both detente and the Middle East too highly to forsake either voluntarily. Instead, we expect them to try to keep the contradictions within manageable limits and, in any new Arab-Israeli crisis within the next year or so, to try to balance and even advance both aims. In such a crisis, however, events might de-

velop in a way that forced the Soviets to choose between detente and their interests in the Middle East. If the Soviets found themselves thus compelled to choose, we think the chances are better than even that, within the requirement of avoiding a confrontation with the US, they would be willing to risk a setback to detente with the US for the sake of their critical Middle Eastern interests, e.g., in Syria, Iraq and Egypt.

Europe and Japan

28. Developments in Western Europe and Japan are likely to justify to the Soviets the wisdom of a detente approach. By continuing their current mode of behavior, they expect to facilitate a gradual erosion of anti-Soviet alliances and to give freer play to conflicts of interest among their rivals. Over the next few years, the USSR will not be able to bring these nations under its dominant influence, and indeed current Soviet thought seems to put this objective off into a fairly distant future. In the meantime, Moscow sees virtue in a continuing US presence because this serves to block more dangerous possibilities: in the west, a more strongly united Europe led by West Germany, and in the east a close Sino-Japanese collaboration.

29. In these circumstances, the Soviets will probably continue to regard Western Europe and Japan as sources of economic aid—important not only in their own right but as alternatives for bargaining—and arenas of long-run political competition best prosecuted by the techniques of detente. They see no urgency in making concessions of their own on such issues as mutual force reductions in Europe or Japanese demands for the return of the four small islands off Hokkaido. But they will also see little profit in a reversion to a more demanding or threatening posture unless they come to feel themselves faced with dangers to their own security, as in any move-

ment toward a European nuclear force, a revival of German or Japanese militarism, or an erosion of their position in Eastern Europe.

The US

30. Soviet-American relations pose the vital problem of Soviet detente policy. Despite the rise of multipolarity, the USSR still views the US as its primary rival and encounters it as an obstacle wherever it seeks to expand its influence. It is the US which provides the underlying security permitting Western European independence of the USSR. It is the US which competes with Soviet influence in the Middle East. It is the US which is capable of developing with China a relationship potentially dangerous to the USSR. And beyond this, the US stands as a major source of technological assistance, the only serious threat to Soviet security, and the necessary partner for arms control negotiations.

31. One Soviet approach to this problem is to encourage a condominium arrangement with the US in which the two superpowers make the crucial decisions and pressure the rest of the world to accept them. The advantages to the Soviet Union of such an arrangement are obvious since the US, as the superpower with the more far-flung interests and alliance systems, has more to deliver than the USSR, and more to lose in terms of frictions with friends and allies. To a lesser degree, the USSR's external engagements, both ideological and political, subject Moscow to similar vulnerabilities. Nevertheless, Moscow sees a special relationship with the US not only as central to pursuit of a detente policy, but hopefully as improving Soviet opportunities in Europe and with the major powers of the Far East, China, and Japan.

32. Moscow has qualms, however, about the US as a detente partner. In the Middle East, for example, it has been unable to

use the superpower relationship in support of its position. Furthermore, the Soviets see a variety of anti-detente forces in the US, including Jewish leaders, intellectuals upset over treatment of their counterparts in the USSR, ideological anticommunists, and others who question the priority attached to relations with the Soviet Union as opposed to those with Western Europe. In addition, they are clearly concerned about US long-range intentions in the bilateral strategic balance of power. Despite the magnitude of their own strategic weapons development program, which they rationalize as a justifiable attempt to redress specific imbalances with the US, they are genuinely worried about such programs as B-1 and Trident; they probably also perceive the recent elaboration of US strategic targeting doctrine as part of a political tendency which runs counter to detente.

33. In addition to all these problems inherent at this stage of the Soviet-American relationship, a new and important factor is Soviet uncertainty about the implications for the USSR of the domestic position of the US Administration. The Soviet leaders almost certainly have been considering whether to exploit the President's difficulties or to be accommodating. On the one hand, they suspect that his critics primarily seek to sabotage his policy toward the USSR. On the other, they recognize that the Administration has a decreasing ability to deliver on agreements they deem important, e.g., MFN. Their problem is underlined by other recent developments, which must point up to them that a great deal of the substance of their relations with the West has been developed by personalities who have now departed the scene, like Pompidou and Brandt. Because of Brezhnev's personal association with detente policy and his relationship with the President, he wishes to appear more accommodating, as witnessed by Soviet willingness to publicize the forthcom-

ing summit. But we doubt that this factor, in itself, will strongly influence the positions the Soviets take on major substantive issues; it may serve to add a further portion of caution to Soviet policy and perhaps slow the pace of ongoing negotiations while Moscow waits for uncertainties on the US side to be resolved.

IV. LIKELY SOVIET BEHAVIOR

34. In playing a global role under the rubric of detente, the USSR encounters particular opportunities and problems.

- The leadership is able to orchestrate a global policy virtually independent of domestic public opinion.
- In this process success can be used to gain further success, in the sense that a Soviet reputation of respectability and constructiveness enhances Moscow's opportunities for new advances.
- At the same time, however, others will hold the USSR to account for behavior which is inconsistent with their definition of detente.
- This may on occasion require more Soviet concessions, or more restraint, than the leadership originally envisaged.

35. As for specific areas, the following are likely to be the most stable elements of Soviet policy:

- With respect to *China*, continued defense against Chinese ideological and diplomatic attacks, continued improvement of regional military capabilities, and an effort to avoid further deterioration of relations while awaiting political change in China.
- With respect to *Western Europe and Japan*, continued cultivation of improved state-to-state relations, not only for the sake of Soviet economic requirements

but also to expand Soviet political influence.

- With respect to *economic relations*, continued efforts to attract Western cooperation in the development of Soviet resources and in the provision of advanced technology to boost productivity in both civil and military sectors.

The second and third of these elements seem particularly stable, since the Soviets probably see little prospect of gain in reverting to economic autarky and a stance of political-military threat in their relations with their highly developed neighbors. Policy toward China would change only if the Chinese were to substantially alter their own behavior—in either direction. If there were movement toward accommodation, the Soviet calculus favoring detente with the West would be weakened. If Chinese aggressiveness increased and the Soviets decided that a military solution was necessary, though continued detente with the West would be all the more in their interest, they would be prepared to risk its collapse.

36. In the *Arab-Israeli conflict*, we do not expect the Soviets to accept passively the present trend against their interests there. The USSR is taking a critical public attitude toward the US-sponsored disengagement initiative and may be playing an obstructive role behind the scenes. Moscow probably hopes that negotiations will founder at some point over such issues as Jerusalem and Palestine, and that the Arabs will then welcome, and pay a price for, renewed Soviet support. In any case, the Soviets can be expected to intensify their efforts to strengthen their position in Syria and Iraq, PDRY, and Somalia while working to undermine Sadat and Egyptian influence.

37. The oil resources of the *Persian Gulf* provide an attractive target for Soviet ambitions. The USSR has been probing more actively in this region in recent years, and its

growing naval and air capabilities are broadening its options. While we expect continuing efforts to expand Soviet influence in the Gulf, these efforts will be tempered by several considerations. Not only are the local governments likely to remain resistant, but the USSR is aware that any major effort to establish Soviet control there would threaten the vital interests of the neighboring states, especially Iran and Saudi Arabia, and the major oil-consuming countries as well. While inclined to seize upon any opportunities that present themselves, Moscow will recognize that reactions from these quarters could jeopardize the prospects for detente and might involve military risks as well. Accordingly, we believe that the Soviet Union, while not abandoning its longer range hopes, will move cautiously in this region over the next few years.⁶

38. In *post-Tito Yugoslavia*, the USSR will use political, economic, and subversive means to try to bring Yugoslavia back closer to the socialist bloc. It is possible that Moscow would put sufficient priority on this objective to pursue it aggressively, even to the extent of jeopardizing detente prospects in Europe and with the US. We think it more likely, however, that detente considerations, along with local risks and the chance of associated troubles elsewhere in Eastern Europe, will deter the USSR from the use of force or a serious threat of it.

39. The Soviet leaders will try to give an overall shape to detente which makes the

⁶The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, and the Director of Naval Intelligence believe that this estimate overstates the effect of detente on Soviet actions in the Persian Gulf. Soviet continued advocacy of the use of oil as a political weapon is but the most recent manifestation of Moscow's long-term strategic goal of bringing the oil producing states under its influence or even control. Fundamental to the realization of this goal is the ability to influence, control, deny, or disrupt Western and Japanese access to the energy resources of the Persian Gulf.

relationships among specific issues work to their advantage, nowhere more so than in the field of *arms control*. Soviet political and military leaders believe that a diversified and highly modernized military machine is an essential foundation for any foreign policy, including one conducted in detente terms. Obviously, they will attempt to reserve to themselves to the fullest extent possible the right to judge whether their arms programs square with detente or not. Meanwhile they are maintaining an intensive research and development program in military weaponry, the Soviet Navy has expanded rapidly, and the ground and tactical air forces have undergone continual modernization. At the same time, Moscow no doubt realizes that in areas such as Europe, the potential advantages of detente have a better chance of being realized if the menace of Soviet military power is removed from the forefront of Soviet policy. Soviet leaders, political and military, now also talk about the need to go beyond political detente to military detente. Such an attitude serves propaganda purposes, but it also suggests that some of them would foresee economic and military disadvantages to the USSR in unrestrained arms competition with the West.

40. With regard to specific ongoing arms control negotiations, the USSR is committed to continuing momentum and some periodic results in both MBFR and SALT; its detente calculations do not allow for a collapse in these talks, particularly SALT. But Moscow considers its negotiating partners to be under the same pressure to at least an equal degree. Regarding MBFR, we believe that Soviet movement toward Western terms will be slow and partial and will require limits on non-US as well as US forces.⁷ In SALT, we doubt that

⁷More detailed views on the outlook for Soviet behavior in MBFR talks are contained in Memorandum to Holders of NIE 11/12-73, "Soviet and East European Attitudes Toward MBFR, 7 May 1974."

the Soviet leaders will come to accept US concepts of stability and security as negotiating criteria. Instead, they will continue to explore how much they can limit US programs and how little limitation on their own programs they must accept in return. They evidently believe that this year's negotiating target can be satisfied with some sort of partial agreement. Thereafter, they can derive some confidence, in both bargaining and security terms, from the fact that their current developmental programs are scheduled to bear fruit before those of the US.

41. If the Soviets behave in this fashion, it means that they would like to believe that they need not yet make a hard choice between a continuing strategic arms buildup and detente, but can simultaneously pursue both. Their developmental programs seem to reflect a hope that, by vigorous pursuit of their opportunities under the Interim Agreement and any subsequent accords, they can improve their strategic position vis-a-vis the US. Though they have probably not decided whether they could get away with it, their objectives probably include an opportunistic desire to press ahead and achieve a margin of superiority if they can.

42. In this connection, the Soviets are laying the groundwork for very substantial improvements in already large and formidable ICBM forces. A vigorous testing program is aimed at extensive MIRVing, at improving accuracy, and at increasing throw weight. The new D-class ballistic missile submarine has joined the fleet. At the same time, the USSR is continuing the development of a swing-wing supersonic bomber and the modernization of its naval, tactical air, and ground forces.

43. While they carry on these programs, the Soviets hope that hard arms-control bargaining on their part will not damage the other elements of detente. To this end, they will continue to resist relating SALT and MBFR to other East-West issues. In the CSCE negotiations and in their relations with the West generally over the past year, the Soviets have been discomfited by such linkages.

44. These and other complications have not led the USSR to renounce detente, nor do we expect that they will. The Soviet leaders will prefer to deal with various issues in pragmatic fashion and to set aside those which they find not ripe for solution on acceptable terms. When they find themselves unable to advance on one front, they will try to move forward elsewhere and will seek to discourage others from putting detente as a whole in question.

45. Obviously, too long a string of setbacks and disappointments could eventually compromise detente altogether in Moscow. But, as we have indicated earlier, this course is perceived as at least as much a need as a choice for the USSR. Economic needs and the dangers posed by China are perhaps the strongest arguments against reverting to a hard line across the board in foreign policy. Only critical developments closer to the heart of the regime's concerns, such as a threat to domestic discipline or to Soviet control in Eastern Europe, would be likely to cause Moscow deliberately to abandon detente. Short of such dire contingencies, they will seek to preserve and develop the climate of detente, while dealing with specific issues as much as possible in terms of their particular relation to Soviet national interest.

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