Chapter 4

IDEOLOGY AND THE SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY IN POST-BREZHNEV YEARS

This is a four-part chapter. Part I examines the ideology and foreign policy of USSR during the Andropov and Chernenko period which can be regarded as a period of transition from Brezhnev to Gorbachev. Whether the roots of some of the reforms under Gorbachev could be traced to Andropov and Brezhnev years is also examined.

Part II relates to the re-interpretation of Marxist-Leninist ideology currently underway in USSR.

Part III examines the new theoretical-ideological basis of Gorbachev's New Political Thinking.

Part IV analyses the link between the Soviet foreign policy and the new political thinking.

Andropov Interregnum (Nov. 1982 - Feb. 1984)

Andropov restrained himself within the framework of the 26th Party Congress resolutions. But, unlike Brezhnev, he focussed on the unresolved problems of the Soviet society and initiated corrective steps in some areas of the economy and social life. Andropov made no significant changes in the existing theoretical framework of the Marxist-Leninism hinted about the need to further develop Marxist-Leninist theory. In the realm of foreign policy,
the years under Andropov were marked by an all-time low in the US-USSR relations and unusual increase in East-West tensions as manifest in the sharp anti-Communist rhetoric flowing from Reagan administration evoking anti-US sentiments from the Soviet Union. Yet, some significant initiatives were taken during Andropov years, most notably with regard to improvement of USSR's relations with China. There was strong emphasis on the ideological struggle and the need for ideological purity making it difficult for any far-reaching foreign policy initiative to emerge and succeed. However, it must be noted, that despite these difficulties, the Andropov period was regarded as a period of welcome change by the common man and it contained seeds of Gorbachevian reforms.

Brezhnev, in his report to the 26th Party Congress, had spoken in glowing terms of the achievements of the Soviet society, but had also noted, albeit in passing, of the unsolved problems. Brezhnev had singled out 'the force of inertia, conventions, and habits' as the 'most important reason' for the bad state of affairs in the economy and emphasised on "... accelerated scientific and technical progress, ... intensive development (of the economy) ...", maximum saving of all types of resources, and an improvement in the quality of work". Andropov, keeping himself within the parameters of the 26th Party Congress, and showing

concern for the unresolved problems in society, gave the idea of 'perfecting the developed socialism', thereby subtly questioning the very concepts of Brezhnev's "developed socialism".

In fact, Andropov had spoken of 'perfection of developed socialism' as the task facing the Soviet society in the last two decades of the 20th century as early as 22 April, 1982 in his report on the 112th anniversary of Lenin's birth, and this elaborated the concept on coming to power. His suggestions to perfect "developed socialism" included: to increase consumer goods production, to improve productivity, to switch to intensive economic methods, to give more independence to associations and enterprises, collective and state farms, to accelerate scientific and technological progress, to encourage a 'system of material incentives' to those willing to introduce 'new technologies'. He laid great stress on discipline, resource saving, struggle against corruption, mismanagement, sloganeering etc. On the whole, Andropov, confident that socialism could be improved within the broad parameters of Marxism-Leninism, was for a drastic changes in methods and style of work. The law "on labour collectives and the enhancement of their role in the management of enterprises, institutions and organisations" aimed at broadening the powers of labour collectives in the conditions of "developed


3. Andropov's speech at the CPSU CC plenum on November 22, 1982 in Ibid., pp. 248-60.
socialism" was a major Andropovian economic reform. Many of its ideas were later taken and developed further under Gorbachev. Andropov's realistic approach could be summed up in one phrase which he used in his famous Kommunist article titled "The Teaching of Karl Marx and Some Questions of Building Socialism in the USSR": "Work and work alone, its practical results rather than someone's subjective desire must determine the level of every citizen's well-being".  

While Andropov's first priority, as can be gauged from his writings and speeches, was economy, significantly, he was equally aware of the need for perfecting social relations. While upholding the principle of democratic centralism he, nevertheless, saw in over-centralisation of power and decision-making the bane of socialist democracy. He said, "Soviet democracy requires removal of bureaucratic 'over organisation' and formalism-everything that handicaps and undermines the initiative of masses, the creativity and enterprise of the working people". He particularly singled out the inadequacy of the Soviets. It is important to see that these very ideas were incorporated in Gorbachev's reform-package. The idea of 'socialist construction' permeated his thinking. He regarded 'developed socialism' as a dialectical unity of real

4. For the text of the law see Pravda, 19 June 1983.
successes and accumulated unsolved problems. He recognised the existence of non-antagonistic contradictions in the Soviet society and urged that these should not be ignored. These could, in fact, act as 'a stimulus' for further progress. (This idea is being developed further under Gorbachev). In other words, Andropov was not in favour of brushing aside the problems, a tendency that had grown in the last years of Brezhnev.  

Andropov, like his predecessor revered the Soviet past and favoured the 'creative' development of Marxism-Leninism. He dismissed notions implying that Marxism was in 'crisis'.

Andropov, stressing the importance of ideology and ideological propaganda, regarded the ideological work as a key component of the task of building communism. Andropov's time a distinct hardening of Party's line on ideology was noticeable as the June 1983 plenum of the CC, CPSU showed. Andropov was no liberal. For instance, he said that Party could not be indifferent to the ideological content of the art.

Andropov wanted Party's strategy in the conditions of developed socialism to be based on 'the solid foundations of Marxist-Leninist theory'. On the shortcomings of the theoretical work, he said, "frankly, we have not yet fully revealed the laws intrinsic to it (i.e. the society in which we live)... Therefore, at times we have to act empirically, as it were, relying on

7. Ibid., p.297.
9. Ibid., p.353.
extremely irrational method of trial and error". 10 Andropov was for better research in social sciences but within the ideological parameters. K.U. Chernenko, delivering a report on the 'Topical Questions of Party's Ideological and Mass Political Work' at the June 14, 1983 CC, CPSU plenum said, "... there are truths that are not subject to revision ... one should not, while remaining on scientific ground, 'forget' about the fundamental principles of materialist dialectics". 11 Amongst the tasks before sciences which Chernenko identified were: a detailed study of contradictions as the motive force of social development, detection of trends of development in time, linking science with practice etc. He also admitted that the task of 'moulding of new man' had suffered and much needed to be accomplished in this field. The overall impact of this 'ideology' plenum on the social-sciences in Soviet Union was negative.

On the political side, Andropov emphasised socialist democracy, participation of masses in administration, improvement of the functioning of Soviets etc. but no fundamental political reform was attempted. This was a deliberate tactics. First priority was to the economy tone up through a tough line on laxity etc. In the various economic and social organisations. Innumerable references to the Party Programme and the 26th CPSU Congress line showed that no drastic restructuring was being planned. However, the very fact that

10. Ibid., p. 352.

Andropov encouraged relatively free though limited discussion of the problems of the society in all aspects indicates that he would have been aware that discussions on the need for fundamental revision of some aspects of political life could not be postponed indefinitely. The strategy of perfecting 'developed' socialism could not but affect the political nature of the system, i.e., the superstructure. This awareness was shown by him in the following words: "The Party proceeds from the premise that the coming years and decades will bring considerable changes also in the political and ideological superstructure of the spiritual life of society". (emphasis added) By projecting that these changes in the political life could take place only in coming decades, Andropov was signalling a policy of hastening slowly. His priorities included limited economic reforms in the first place. There was a mixture of reformist and conservative approach. The hardening of the ideological line of the party could be explained in part by the exceptionally tense international situation and unprecedented sharp anti-Soviet US rhetoric calling for a "crusade" against Communism, the 'evil empire'.

Andropov upheld the main lines of Brezhnebian foreign policy: peaceful coexistence, avoidance of war, promotion of peace, unity and cohesion of the socialist world, close relations with the newly liberated countries, etc. His analysis of the international situation was also along conventional lines: deepening of the

crisis of imperialism and corresponding increase in its aggressiveness. The foreign policy tasks derived from these principles were also standard: pursue peace but not at the expense of upsetting of military-strategic balance between socialism and imperialism which "objectively contributes to peace", continue to do every thing that strengthened "the security of our country, armed our friends and allies". The Soviet forces were described as "a powerful factor in holding back aggression". This line was interpreted in the west as a hardline. The net result was the collapse of Geneva talks on Arms control and the beginning of the deployment of US short and medium range nuclear missiles in West Europe.

Andropov followed the Brezhnevian line of close cooperation with the developing countries but added some nuances. Thus, in respect of the countries of socialist orientation he made it clear that their economic development and social progress could be "the result of the work of their peoples and a correct policy of their leadership". Thus, he hinted at the possibility of a review of USSR relations with these countries.

Andropov endorsed the principle of "Socialist internationalism" and opposed "bourgeois-reformist" line leading to weakening of the "guiding role of a Communist" party. Nor was he in favour of differences between socialist countries coming in the way of mutual cooperation.

13. Ibid., p.358.
15. Ibid.
There was exceptionally high accent on the questions of war, peace and ideological struggle in the Soviet writings of the period. Here, it may be useful to single out the idea of war and peace; which was to become the basis of Gorbachev's "universal values" idea later. As noted earlier even during Khrushchev's times it was recognised that atomic weapons did not respect class barriers. Avoidance of war had been one of the main planks of the Soviet foreign policy of peaceful coexistence. But it was also been maintained that peaceful coexistence did not apply to the area of ideological struggle. In 1983, there were a series of writings recognising that the overblown ideological struggle rhetoric could degenerate into war which must be avoided. Andropov in his speech at the Kremlin on 3 May 1983 said:

"... the historic contest between the two social systems, the battle of ideas, is a perfectly legitimate phenomenon ensuing from the very fact of the existence of socialism and capitalism. However, we are resolutely opposed to this historic confrontation being directed towards curtailment of peaceful coexistence let alone progression towards nuclear war".16

Thus Andropov was defining limits on ideological confrontation. This idea was further elaborated by Gorbachev.

Anti-war, peace movements, very active in 1983 in West Europe and USA, were fully supported by the USSR regardless of their political complexions. Under Gorbachev similar idea has been advanced that communists should closely work with these movements without assuming for themselves the role of leaders.

16. Ibid., p.328.
Gorbachev has also highlighted certain global problems, which can be solved only through world-wide cooperation between socialist and capitalist countries. Andropov had realised this, as the following quote from his June 1983 speech at the CC CPSU plenum will show:

"... indeed, there are quite a few large problems which concern all countries of the world, and their significance grows steadily. This refers, for instance, to nature, conservation on our planet, the search for new energy sources, the exploration of outer space and the utilisation of the resources of the world ocean".17

This survey of Andropov years with regard to continuity and change in the Soviet ideology and foreign policy brings out that Andropov,"developed socialism" concept needed improvement in theory as well as practice. He was aware of the accumulated problems and had initiated some practical steps to deal with them, particularly in the economic field. The law on labour collectives encapsulated his approach to economic reforms. He was also aware that economic changes were necessarily linked with political changes. However, he was not in favour of a hasty approach. Caution was the hallmark of Andropovian approach. He would not therefore suddenly loosen on the ideological front as he anticipated adverse consequences of sudden loosening up.

Andropov was not able to undertake any major political initiative to ease the international situation owing partly, to his pre-occupation with domestic policies at home, his failing health and an extremely hard line emanating from Washington.

17. Ibid., p. 357.
Nevertheless, Andropov showed insight into the problems of peaceful coexistence and the common problems facing the mankind thereby paving the way for Gorbachev's new political thinking. Of course, it is entirely possible that the new team which Andropov had assembled and of which Gorbachov was a member was having an influence on him.

The Chernenko Interregnum (February 1984 - March 1985)

During the Chernenko year, references to Andropov's policies were continually made. Yet, there was yet a visible slackening in the drive for discipline, elimination of corruption, implementation of economic reforms etc. There was a slide-back to the Brezhnevian slogans and policies. Chernenko, in his first speech on taking over as the General Secretary of the Party, referred to the 'honourable vanguard role' of the party in strengthening the 'leading positions of socialism' in international arena and advocated the 'look before you leap' policy in the economic sphere in which Andropov had initiated limited experimentation in some specified industrial units.18 Similarly, in the sphere of foreign policy, there was no visible improvement in the international situation. Chernenko's obviously failing health made it clear to everyone of his temporariness as General Secretary. In those years the USSR foreign policy continued to lay blame on the USA for placing reliance on armed

18. For the text of Chernenko's speech see *International Affairs* (Moscow), no.3, 1980, pp.5-10.
force, seeking military superiority by such acts as deployment of US missiles in Western Europe. Chernenko, like his predecessor upheld the principle of 'equality and equal security' of the sides as a basis of talks with USA.\(^1\) Anti-US rhetoric (just as anti-USSR rhetoric in USA) became sharper during the Chernenko year.

On the whole, there was an extreme stress on the ideological basis of Soviet state and its foreign policies. This once again underlined the fact that whenever the international situation worsened, the fall-back on ideology was immediately noticeable in USSR. Chernenko years confirmed this pattern.

Under Chernenko there were no significant initiatives either in theory or practice. The Soviet foreign policy followed a rigid, inflexible course just as the US foreign policy was doing. The initiatives in the fields of ideology, economic and the social-sphere taken during the Andropov years were not followed up during Chernenko's time.

II

**Gorbachev: Renewal of Socialism and Ideology of Perestroika**

In USSR there has never before been such a stress on the 'creative' development of Marxism-Leninism as today under Gorbachev's leadership.

\(^{19}\) Chernenko's Interview to Pravda, reproduced in *International Affairs*, no.5, 1984, p.1.
Gorbachev has put up the very concept of 'socialism' for 'renewal'. Gorbachev's concept of "humane, democratic socialism" essentially takes socialism outside the bounds of traditional Marxism-Leninism. The new concept of socialism incorporates the ideas of multi-party system, private property etc. thereby doing away with the key Marxist-Leninist notions of socialism. The dismantling of the political, economic and social system built after the October revolution has begun in the USSR through Perestroika which is unfolding itself in three broad but interconnected directions - democratisation of the society, introduction of regulated market economy based on multiple forms of property and Glasnost. So sweeping is the scope of changes that Gorbachev himself has called 'Perestroika' a revolution.20 In the field of foreign affairs, perestroika has given rise to the concept of 'New Political Thinking'. Which, in essence, has meant categoric rejection of the notion of regarding peaceful-coexistence as a 'Specific form of class struggle' and seeking cooperative relationship with the west through unilateral concessions when necessary.

While analysing the ideological basis of perestroika, it needs to be kept in mind that the ideological basis of restructuring has been evolving constantly over the 1985-90 period. Thus, what began as a plan to further improve or renew socialism is now leading to reinterpretation of the meaning of 'socialist' choice and abandoning of the principles of socialist theory as evolved in the USSR since 1917.

20. M.S. Gorbachev, Perestroika i Novoe Mishlenie [Moscow, 1984], p.46.
Renewal of Socialism

In his book on Perestroika (1987), Gorbachev maintained that the reasons for Perestroika were to be found in the socio-economic stagnation in the USSR in the late seventies and up to mid eighties as well as in the thirties when socialism, under Stalin, got deformed and distorted. Therefore, there was a need for the renewal of socialism itself. This did not mean that socialism was in any crisis, Gorbachev asserted. The negative tendencies of the 70's and distortions of the thirties were precisely the result of the deviations from the principles of socialism. The task of Perestroika was to put socialism back on its rails. The desire underlying Perestroika was to restore to socialism the lost values of humanism and to realise its immense socio-economic potential. Perestroika did not mean that the Soviet Union was abandoning the path of 'socialism' and going to the 'other camp', Mr. Gorbachev stated categorically.

Although Perestroika was talked about during 1986 in the media, its comprehensive definition was given by Gorbachev at the January 1987 plenum of the CPSU. The essential elements of perestroika were considered to be overcoming the negative

21. Ibid., p.33.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
tendencies and retardation mechanisms which originated in the stagnation period, further development of democracy, strengthening of discipline, widening of glasnost, intensive development of the Soviet economy, rejection of command and administrative method of management, full cost-accounting in all spheres of the economy, basing practice on science, priority for the development of social sphere, deliverance of the society from the distortations of socialist morality, re-instatement of the principles of socialist justice, reinforcement of the unity of word and deed, rights and duties, overcoming the equalising and levelling tendencies etc.

The final goal of perestroika was defined as "deep renewal of all sides of the life of the country, giving to socialism the most modern forms of Soviet organisation, the most complete opening up of humanistic character of our system in its most important aspects-economic, socio-political and moral." These were desirable aims, in order to achieve them a radical reform concept was needed. In the theoretical plane what was needed was a concept of new political-economy to explain the current economic reforms, a new political theory to facilitate the political reforms, a review and renewal of all the social sciences, the theoretical explanations for socialism's past record of achievements and failures, a theory for the 'renewal of socialism' and particularly of the concept of "humane-democratic socialism", and ideology for the future.

The theoretical work on the concept of the 'renewal of socialism' began after the 19th Party Conference (June 1988) when a commission on ideology, under the chairmanship of Vadim Medvedev the then Member of the Politbureau, and the Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, was set-up to look into the work relating to 'ideology'. In an interview to Kommunist, Vadim Medvedev underlined the need for a new concept of socialism which could prove adequate for the 21st century too.25

Rejecting the idea of stage-wise development of socialism, Medvedev said that socialism was a living process which constantly had to be renewed. Brezhnevian concept 'developed socialism' was a mere means to hide the problems and to create illusions of forward movement in ideological-theoretical field.26 Medvedev outlined the essential features of the modern concept of socialism as follows: it was based on the fundamental ideas of Marx and Lenin, but was aimed at bringing out the humane essence of socialism, it firmly linked ideology and theory with practice, it took into account Lenin's idea that complete socialism could be achieved only as a result of a series of efforts each of which was necessarily of one-sided character; it took full account of the role and place of culture of all the people in the world, it fully studied the experience of the other social systems (i.e. capitalism etc.) and adopted a non-nihilist constructive approach to relations with capitalism.27

26. Ibid., p.6.
27. Ibid., pp.6-8.
In the economic sphere, the new concept of socialism entailed: introduction of 'lease' (аренда - in Russian) system at all levels of the economy, development of theory and practice of cooperatives; introduction of 'economic pluralism' in the economy; urgent review of old biases regarding commodity-money relations under socialism and between plan and the market, a redefinition of the role and sphere of the 'centralisation' in economy, individual initiative and incentives etc. 28

The new concept of socialism sought to take a thorough and 'realistic' view of capitalism. It was now recognised that capitalism had been able to adapt itself to the new situation, had even ushered in a new scientific technological revolution and had left behind socialism in this regard. Capitalist countries had even evolved effective system of democracy which guaranteed human rights and freedoms. Capitalism had also come out with effective methods of organisation of power and management of society and the state. Socialism could and should learn from capitalism in these areas. 29

In the new concept of socialism the old stereotypes of socialism Vs. capitalism equation would have to be discarded. It was realised that capitalism and socialism were part of the same human civilisation. The universal values affecting mankind as a whole had to take precedence over the class based priorities.

28. Ibid., pp.14-17.
29. Ibid., p.11.
The notions about the 'limitations of the bourgeois democracy' would had to be reconsidered. 30

Medvedev maintained that the efforts to define a new concept of socialism were only beginning. Answers to even the most fundamental question were not yet available. Lenin, particularly his last works, could still prove immensely helpful in defining the new concept of socialism.

The question whether perestroika was in accordance with 'socialist idea' became acute in the USSR after the 19th CPSU party conference (June 1988). In a seminal article titled "The Socialist Idea and Revolutionary Perestroika", Gorbachev reassured that "Socialist Choice" itself was not in question but what was needed was a new vision of socialism which would be judged by such criterion as freedom within the reinterpreted parameter of collectivism, labour efficiency and productivity, primary of universally accepted human values and bringing "the vector of class principles" in line with the "progress of civilisation towards freedom and peace". Interestingly, in this article Gorbachev continue to stress the "need for keeping a one-party system". 31 This idea was jettisoned a few months after the publication of this article.

30. Ibid., p.12.

The February 90 plenum of the CC, CPSU was a watershed in the evolution of Perestroika when the party came out with a draft platform for the 28th CPSU Congress. In this platform the party agreed to relinquish its constitutionally guaranteed vanguard role in the society and accepted the legitimisation of the private ownership along with other forms of ownership. The February plenum reversed many of the theoretical positions held until by Soviet theoreticians, just a few months earlier. Thus, the 'humane, democratic' form of socialism was to be based on a multi-party political system and on economic system in which private ownership was allowed. Thus, convergence of socialism with reformed capitalism was brought nearer. The problem, inherent in the re-examination of socialism as practiced hitherto, is that nobody is clear today as to what socialism is.

The 28th CPSU Congress (July 1990) approved the idea of 'humane, democratic, socialism' but failed to come out with a theoretical elaboration of the concept. The process of renovation of the ideological work of the party has begun as it is realised that the socialist ideology itself has to be


33. Academician S.S. Shatalin, member of Gorbachev's Presidential Council, said at the February 1990, CC, CPSU plenum that the concept of "human, democratic socialism" was "absurdity" as 'socialism' by definition had to be humane and democratic. FBIS-SOW/vol.XLII/7, 1990, p.11. At the plenum, there were heated but inconclusive debates about what socialism really is.
reinterpreted and the ideological work of the party restructured.\textsuperscript{34} While the Congress adopted a declaration titled "Towards Human, Democratic Socialism", a detailed programme of the party has \textit{yet} to be worked out. For this purpose a commission was set up by the Congress so that it can be presented to the "regular party Congress in 1991".\textsuperscript{35} In his report to the Congress on the discussion in the working group on ideology, set up at the 28th Congress, I.T. Frolov, inter alia, said that most members of the working group had felt that there was an ideological crises in the party and that a number of theoretical questions like the linkage between the concept of "humane, democratic socialism" and the party's "Communist perspective" had not been proved. There was also no clear understanding of the concepts like "socialism", 'market' and "social-democracy". This had made the party's ideological work difficult. The feeling at the Congress was that "the theory of \textit{perestroika}, the ideology of renewal" needed to be worked out more fully.\textsuperscript{36} Mary, Engels and Lenin were defended but stress was laid on their reinterpretation.

\textsuperscript{34} The 28th CPSU Congress set up a Commission which has been asked to study the "complex socio-political situation" in the country to give within one year recommendations on the "renewal of the party's ideological work". See "Rezolyutsii xxviii, Sezda Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza Po Političeskomu Otvetstvu. Tsentralnogo Komiteta KPSS XXVIII Sezdu KPSS i Zadacham Partii", \textit{Pravda}, 11 July 1990.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Pravda}, 9 July 1990.
The February (1990) party CC plenum, paved the way for a radical change in the party’s character. The party in a historic decision accepted to drop its constitutionally guaranteed monopoly on power, undertook to discard several ideological notions like "simplified class approach which opposes national and universal human values", "State hegemony in public" "The primitive view of socialist ownership", negative attitude towards "commodity-money" relations and accepted perestroika’s ideological principles like interdependence of states, primary of its human values. It also agreed to place "man in the focus of party policy". It also rejected the earlier policy of idealising its past.

Thus, the net impact of the February (1990) CC, CPSU plenum had been that the party began the process of ridding itself of the ideology which had justified the continuance of party-state structure in USSR. This trend was confirmed at the 28th Party Congress (July 1990).

Even before the February plenum, Gorbachev, through a process of political reforms envisaged in the 19th party conference (1988) had been able to achieve a substantial degree of separation of the party from the state structure. Thus, the Constitution of the Congress of Soviet Peoples Deputies (2250 deputies elected through secret ballot, multi-candidate elections in March 1989) held its two sessions in 1989, constituted a supreme Soviet and other organs of power thereby reducing party’s role in every-day decision making in the USSR.

The Party

It is obvious that the political, economic and social restructuring of the Soviet state and society could not be carried out without restructuring the party, its ideological underpinnings, and the scope of its functioning.

In his report to the 27th CPSU Congress Gorbachev warned that the party members, "there is no such thing as communists’ vanguard role in general: it is expressed in practical deeds".38 The message was clear; the party’s vanguard role in the society would depend upon its attitude towards perestroika. And on this score it has been found wanting. It has been widely criticised for having been slow in adjusting to the changing realities and being antipathetic towards perestroika.

The restructuring in the party has been essentially in three principal directions: (1) a reappraisal of the functions and role of the party in society, (ii) inner-party democratisation, and (iii) re-interpretation of Leninist principles which guide the party in the perestroika.

In the early stages of perestroika, the party documents and the political leadership stressed upon the continuing role of the party as a political vanguard of the society. It was repeatedly and unambiguously stated that the new political system was

unthinkable without the active participation of the Party. 39

As late as December 1989, Gorbachev ruled out multi-party system
in the USSR. 40

The inner party democracy, party reforms and the
reduction of the powers and privileges of nomenklatura is the
second strand of party's restructuring. Thus, the 28th Party
Congress took important decisions on this score, adopting new
party rules and reorganising the party structures which are
expected to promote more democratic functioning within the party.
The key theme of the party restructuring at the Congress was to
convert the CPSU into a 'Vanguard of the Society' but without the
powers of the state. 41

Clearly, the CPSU in its restructured form would be
entirely different from the Leninist concept of the party as it
evolved in the USSR. The Soviet ideologues, in order to justify
CPSU's transformation are justifying these changes in terms of
Leninism. 42 Despite this, the party's popularity in USSR is

39. M. Gorbachev, Restructuring the Party's Work: A Top
    Priority Task Report at a Meeting of the CPSU Central
    Committee on July 18, 1989. (Moscow, 1989), p.11.

40. At the 2nd Congress of Peoples' Deputies (December 1989)
    Gorbachev publicly clashed with Sakharov over Article 6
    of the Soviet Constitution guaranteeing the CPSU monopoly
    on power.

41. The 28th Congress resolutions endorsed the presidential
    system in USSR, the multi-party system and the idea of
    "cooperation with other parties and movements". However,
    it retained the principle of "democratic-centralism",
    "territorial-production" principle and opposed the de-
    politicisation of the Red Army, KGB, CPSU also rejected in its own
    transformation into a parliamentary form of party. See n.34.

42. See for instance, Yu K. Malov, "Problemi Vozrozhdeniya
    Leninskoi Komsomol Partii", Voprosy Istorii KPSS (Moscow),
    no.3, 1990, pp.3-19.
State and Political Reforms

As noted in an earlier chapter Engels had a definite conception of the 'withering away of state'. Lenin, believed in state transforming itself into a social-self government. Stalin reversed this policy and in the name of building 'socialism in one country', removal of antagonistic classes, and the capitalist encirclement argued in terms of strengthening the state maintaining (January 1933) that the withering away of state would not take place by weakening the state. The extreme concentration of power in the hands of the Party-state apparatus ensured the failure of political and economic reforms initiated by Khruschev. The 'Developed Socialism' and the "real socialism" concepts of Brezhnev did not negate the concept of the 'withering away of state' but only postponed it to a distant future. In the meanwhile, the party-state apparatus continued to grow leading to stagnation, and, negative tendencies in the society and deformation from the principles of socialism.

The trends started in the 20's about subordinating society to a 'totalitarian state-apparatus' continued unabated right upto the mid-eighties, some attempts at reforms in the fifties and

43. According to G. Razumovsky, the then Alternate Member of CC, CPSU polit bureau, 136,600 members quitted the CPSU in 1989 and 82,000 in the first quarter of 1990. See Pravda, 5 July 1990.

sixties notwithstanding. One of the aims of the political reforms in the Soviet Union is considered to be to rectify this trend and ensure democracy.

It is not anybody's case in the USSR that state should wither away in the present circumstances. The advocacy of withering away of state would be nothing short of a "pure and simple utopia". What is held to be the objective of the reforms in the USSR is to make a transition from hyperstate, visible today in the form of powerful mechanism retarding Perestroika, to a 'half state' (a term used by Lenin). The essential idea is to replace the control exerted by the 'apparatus' by the control to be asserted by the society. A clear distinction between society and state is sought to be made. The strengthening of the state does not necessarily mean strengthening of the society, it is maintained.

Seen in this general context, the outline of reforms in the Soviet Union are easily discernible: involvement of the masses in the process of governance, self-governance, self-regulation, development of individual and collective initiative, free development of every nation and nationality, social legality, laws to abolish misuse of power, provision and protection of citizens right and freedoms, strict demarcation of functions of

45. Ibid., p.37.
46. Ibid., p.42.
47. Ibid., p.43.
Party and state bodies, guarantees for the irreversibility of Perestroika.48

The stress is not only on the rights and freedoms, but also on dismantling of yesterdays debilitating controls. It is equally being realised that there are forces which would use glasnost, democracy and other methods to sabotage perestroika. Hence, equal emphasis on rights and duties, conscious discipline, recognition of responsibilities etc. The need to form a political consciousness and political culture is also stressed.49

What complicates the formation of a new state structure is the increasing sway of nationalistic tendencies, ethnic conflicts, isolationism among republics, past history, worsening economic situation and ideological confusion. It, however, seems clear that the new state structure will incorporate a number of western liberal ideas. Thus multi-party system, accountability to parliament, separation of party from state, strengthening of local bodies, a new treaty between the republics and the centre, codification of the right of cessation, a presidential form of system are some of the concepts underlying the new model of state in USSR.

Contradictions, Antagonisms as Motive Forces of Socialist Society

With ethnic, social, economic contradictions exploding in


the USSR, the Soviet theory is having a new look at the contradictions and antagonisms within the socialist society. The underlying idea is to understand how contradictions could arise in a socialist society and why they were not given due attention in the past. Stalin's high-handed methods of removing contradictions and antagonisms from the Soviet society are being blamed for the deformation of socialism.

Contradictions are intimately connected with an individual's or group interests. Andropov, as we have seen, was in favour of the study of human interests as a motive force behind society's development. The theme of contradictions has become topical in the USSR today as the present stress is on harmony rather than conflict.

There is as yet no definite theory about contradictions, antagonisms, conflicts and catastrophes in the socialist society. Those who still believe in socialism feel that these contradictions and can be removed through progressive methods, through according to privacy to human values. The new thinking on contradictions is being used to justify reforms. Contradictions and antagonisms in socialism are no longer considered to be dirty words. 50

It must however be added that the analysis of contradictions in socialism merely serves as an apologia for socialism. With socialism itself becoming unpopular in USSR, analysis of contradictions would seem mere hairsplitting.

50. "Protivorechiya i Plizyshiye Sili Sotsialisticheskogo Oobshestva" (A Round Table Discussion), Kommunist, no. 4, 1989, pp. 48-55.
Focus on Individual

**Perestroika** seeks to make individual as the centre of social development thereby attempting to remove his alienation from the state and from the means of production. It is believed that economic and technical progress cannot be achieved unless individuals' stakes in the latest revolutionary technology are created. 51

After the 20th Party Congress, the theoretical interest in the role of the individual increased in Soviet Union, particularly in the field of philosophy. But, these researches suffered a setback during the Brezhnev period. 52

In the socio-political fields, the interest of the individual is being attended to people's political rights and suitable guarantees for the same, freedom of expression (i.e. glasnost), freedom of conscience, legal guarantees for personal rights of citizens, human rights etc. The necessary legislation in many of these areas are under draft stage.

Placing man at the centre of affairs has several theoretical consequences. In particular such an approach will affect the egalitarianism of the old socialist theory which is now labelled as crude wage levelling. Further, it will also lead to privatisation of the economy which in turn will affect the politics of the

52. Ibid., p.50.
country. The Marxist principle that production relations in a society derive their character from the existing productive forces is being regarded as too restrictive, as it ignores the role of the individual. One of the standard Western criticisms of the Marxist economics is that the productive forces in a society are given too much of an importance over man who actually creates them. The current trend in Soviet economic thinking seems to be to accept this criticism. The net result of this lies in suggestions that there is nothing wrong in giving the material incentive to worker, or to raise prices of subsidized goods, or to introduce conscious differentiation of wages or to have a fresh look at the existing system of 'social use fund' which compensates the citizens for low wages by subsidizing housing, food, transport, education, health facilities etc.

Economic Reforms: Need For a Theory

There has been an enormous amount of debate in the Soviet Union on the theory and praxis of economic reforms. The main direction of the reforms in the last five years has been a transition from a command-administrative, Stalinist type of economy to a regulated market economy based on diverse forms of

property including private property, price reforms, etc. The reforms were begun at the April 1985 plenum of the CC, CPSU and elaborated further by Gorbachev at the 27th party Congress and particularly at the June 1987 plenum. At that moment of time the underlying premise of the economic reforms theory, in the words of Vadim Medvedev, the Head of the CC, CPSU's Ideological Commission, was that the "economic basis of socialism are all in need of serious renewal and deepening". The entire economic management practice, based on the ideas of the 30's, needed to be changed. The essence of the economic reforms was "the transition from administrative to economic methods of economic management, reinforcement of economic stimuli of growth of production, qualitative improvement of productivity on the basis of acceleration of the scientific-technical progress at all levels and in all the links of the economy."\S The main components of the economic reform as perceived then included: "Social reorientation of economic development towards satisfaction of the needs of peoples, changes in planning, management, pricing mechanisms, finance and other instrument of economy". Self-financing, self-reliance, cooperatives, introduction of leasing and contract systems, material incentives for individuals etc. were the key elements of the economic reforms in 1987-89. The Law of State Enterprises seeking to bring in complete self-accounting in all enterprises and were the bold steps taken to reform the

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55. V. Medvedev, n.25, p.15.
economic mechanism. The old stereotype about commodity-money relations, socialist market, decentralisation, independence of decision making were slowly discarded.

This reforms package was really an extension and further elaboration of the earlier economic reforms attempts in the fifties, sixties and the seventies. Even in the late 1950's it had been realised that the centralised economy, after having quickly developed an industrialised base, was facing difficulties. In 1958 Khrushchev dismantled a host of centralised ministries and created Sovnarkhozes with dispersed regional operations. In the early sixties Liberman first mooted the idea of profit as a basis of operation for the Socialist economy. During Khrushchev's time the general slogan was economic freedom for the enterprises, thus putting profit motive at the centre of planning and management. This led to economic reforms in 1964-65 in both industry and agriculture. These reforms envisaged right of enterprise to use part of its profits for capital investment, for investment in the social sphere and for bonuses for the workers. But, these reforms were not all-embracing nor was there a political will to see them through to their logical end. Therefore they failed. 56

As the reforms unfolded a heated debate began in the Soviet Union on the need for discarding the old theoretical concepts and

bringing in the new ones. At the heart of the reforms lay the limitations of the socialist view of ownership, law of value, importance of human factor, harmonisation of market and plan, and the need for price reforms, tolerance of unemployment etc. Several leading economists participated in this debate and over time took positions that reforms could not succeed unless a full fledged market based on diverse forms of ownership was introduced in the USSR.  

The idea of diverse ownership relations including private ownership and the market were finally accepted when in March 1990 the "USSR Law on Ownership in the USSR" and the "Fundamentals of Legislation of the USSR and the Union Republics on Land" were adopted. Finally, the Soviet government introduced in the USSR Supreme Soviet in May 1990 the economic programme of transition to regulated market economy. This programme envisaged drastic price hikes and introduction of market forces in USSR. The government was asked to revise the programme so as to create infrastructure needed for effective introduction of market.

The process of economic reforms has resulted in the deideoloziation of the socialist economic theory. There is little doubt as the 'socialism' is redefined as "anything that is good for the individual ...", the elements of capitalist economy get accepted in the USSR. A completely new political economy would be required to understand, explain and implement the transition from "state socialism" to humane democratic" socialism.

58. See Pravda, 10 March 1990 and Izvestiya, 7 March 1990 respectively for the text of the laws.


Features of such a new economic model were outlined by Gorbachev at the 28th Congress: a multi-layered economy with diverse forms of property relations, a regulated market which ensures right to work, tolerance of property differentiation in accordance with the 'principles of socialism', price reforms but with assurances of protection for the weaker sections of the society, economic sovereignty for the republics but without disrupting "the unity and integrity" of the national economy, integration with the world economy. 61 A fine balance between contrasting forces is called for to construct such an economy.

Nationalities Policy

Under the impact of glasnost and perestroika the national question in USSR, which the 1986 CPSU programme claimed had been resolved, resurfaced in an acute form accompanied by wide-spread violence and persistent demands for secessionism, thereby threatening the integrity of USSR.

A study of Gorbachev's policy on national question shows that even at the 27th party Congress, he, like Brezhnev before him, lauded the previous nationalities policy but showed greater

61. m.S. Gorbachev, "Advancing Further Along the Path of Perestroika". Report by CPSU Central Committee General Secretary, m.S. Gorbachev, CPSU Central Committee Political Report to the 29th CPSU Congress and the Party's Tasks", Pravda, 3 July 1990 (Trans. FBIS-90-128-9, 3 July 1990., pp.1-20, especially pp.5-7.)
sensitivity to the accumulated problems. Criticising, like his predecessors, "... nationalism and chauvinism, no matter what the guise may be", Gorbachev suggested development of an "integrated, national, economic complex, promotion of inter-republic cooperation ..." to resolve the nationalities question. 62 Events in Nagorno-Karabakh which led to civil-war kind of situation in some Azerbaijan and Armenian districts led Gorbachev to declare at the 19th Party Conference to speak about "the greatest possible accommodation with regard to the interests of each nationality and nation and emphasise the need for the "internationalisation of the economy and of the entire social fabric". He also spoke of USSR as "our common home". However, he held the "existing state structure" of USSR as inviolable. 63 As the ethnic situation worsened in the country, Gorbachev, according to a well established pattern, blamed Stalin and Brezhnev policies for the ethnic troubles and began to suggest wider political, economic and cultural autonomy for the republics. 64

During 1989, the debate over economic and political sovereignty for the republics and its impact on the federal structure of the union became sharp. The ideas of self-reliance, self-financing republics, territories and regions within the

62.  XXVII CPSU Congress, Documents, n.38, p. 69


framework of "national, economic complex" were mooted. At the same
time, dangers of economic and political isolation on account of
autonomy and disentigration of USSR were also expressed. 65

In September 1989 the much awaited plenum of the CC, CPSU
on the nationality question was held at a time when the Baltic
secessionism had become strident and the East European revolution
was about to begin. The new national policy of the party spoke for
first time about the need for transforming the Soviet federation
accepting that under the command system of administration several
ethnic minorities suffered. It also debunked the earlier official
claims that the nationalities problem had been resolved once for
all. The party spoke in favour of "restoration of Lenin's principle
of ethnic self-determination in its true form ..." through proper
democratic guarantees. On the theoretical aspects of renewal of
Soviet federation, the ideological basis of the earlier policy was
held valid but it was emphasised that harmonisation nationalism and
the principle of internationalism should be done without destroying
the national distinctiveness. The party document emphasised the need
to change the implementation methods rather than revise the Leninist
basis of the nationalities policy. It emphasised that the class-
content of Leninist internationalism could be harmonised with the
growing role of universal human interests and values. 66


66. For the text of the CPSU platform on the nationalities, see Pravda, 17 August 1989. Also see Viktor Chebrikov's
interview on the nationalities plenum in Pravda, 19 August 1989.
The party's new nationalities policy came too late and gave little satisfaction to the separatists in the Baltics or the nationalists in Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Lithuanian CP separated from the CPSU in December and declared independence from USSR as a goal despite Gorbachev's trip to Lithuania in January 1990. Armed insurgency in Azerbaijan and Armenia occurred in January. It became clear that party's nationality policy had to be substantially revised. Declaration of independence by the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet and internationalisation of this issue threatening East-West detente forced Gorbachev to have a law on secession passed by the Supreme Soviet in April.67 Election of Boris Yeltsin as president of RSFSR and subsequent assertion of Supreme Sovereignty by the RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies compelled Gorbachev to talk about revamping the state structure of USSR on the basis of new treaties between the sovereign republics and the centre. The USSR is to become a loose federation or even a confederation of sovereign states in the near future. The pressure of events has made the socialist theory of nationalities question irrelevant although. Gorbachev claimed at the 28th party Congress a "better understanding than ever before of the essence of Lenin's views on the nature and aspects of the Union as a voluntary unification of peoples linked by common economic and

67. The law on secession gives content to the formal right of the republics to secede from the Union through a referendum. For the text see, Pravda, 7 April 1990.
political interests, and by history itself." The theory of perestroika cannot be complete without a theory on self-determination which is yet to be fully figured out.

Reassessment of the Past

Reassessment of the past is an important element of the ideology and tactics of perestroika. The 20th CPSU Congress, through partial revelations about the true nature of Stalinism, began the destalinisation process in USSR. Under perestroika, the past has been reassessed with a view to establish the need for a change and also to implement new ideas. However, the reassessment of the past has led to questioning of 'Socialist Choice', made in October 1917, re-examination of Leninist legacy, sympathetic assessment of Social democrats and skepticism about the very concept of "socialism".

In the early phases of perestroika, as for instance in Gorbachev's report in 1987 at the 70th Anniversary celebrations of October revolution, a cautious view of the past was taken. Socialist choice was defended as were the collectivisation and industrialisation policies of Stalin. The Stalinist purges were underplayed and the Nazi-Hitler pact was defended. At the same time great emphasis was laid on NEP and Lenin's writings during that period. Perestroika was

68. Gorbachev, n.61, p.9.

said to be imparting "second wind" to socialism. Call for removing "blank spots" from the history was given. Politbureau member Yakovlev drew parallels between the 1920s (NEP) and the mid-eighties (perestroika). Historian Yuri Afanasiev called for a re-examination of the period 1917-1929 and 1956-1965.  

As perestroika advanced and divisions in the society became acute, the debate over past also sharpened. The question whether Stalinism had its roots in Leninism became unavoidable and particularly painful as it involved passing judgement on life, works and sacrifices of several generations. At the 28th Congress, the party self critically assessed the mistakes of the past but added that the achievements and sacrifices of the people could not be negated. The CPSU Central Committee has authorised a group of authors to re-examine party's history and paint a truthful picture in this work titled Historical Studies of the CPSU.  

Breaking Mechanism

The theory and practice of perestroika also included the analyses of forces impeding perestroika which were referred to as the 'braking mechanism'. The term covered all tendencies which tended to perpetuate Stalinism and neo-Stalinism in USSR. The state-owned means and the fruit of production and the property which alienated people from the command-administrative methods which deformed people's consciousness were held to be the

70. Pravda, 3 December 1987; Sovetskaya Kultura, 21 March 1987. Also see A.N. Yakovlev’s address to the Social Scientists in Pravda, 18 April 1987; his speech at Dushanbe in Izvestiya, 11 April 1987.

71. Alexander Yakovlev felt that in doctrinal sense Stalinism was an off-shoot of the revision of Leninism. See Alexander Yakovlev, Socialism From Dream to Reality, (Moscow, 1990), p.22. Also see M.S. Gorbachev, "O Leninе", Pravda, 21 April 1990, and
cause of 'breaking mechanism'. In the political arena, the struggle between the 'breaking mechanism' and the pro-perestroika forces was said to be bringing about in the USSR a new "correlation of social forces". Thus, 'breaking mechanism' concept was really used against the conservatives who were seen as a major threat to perestroika till about the end of 1989. It is indeed interesting that in April 1990, a party document identified the radicals and not the conservatives as the main threat, 'breaking mechanism' concept seems to be falling in disuse now, just as the official perception of threat to perestroika has varied from time to time (e.g. the threat came from the radicals (1987: Yeltsin's Ouster), from the Conservatives (1988: the 19th CPSU Congress), the radicals again (CPSU letter of 11 April 1990) and the 'Conservatives' again (the CP, RSFSR Congress June 1990).

It is clear that perestroika is essentially a pragmatic approach meant to dismantle the State socialism model in the USSR and to replace it by a "humanized democratic socialism". Increasingly, in the media the term "humanized democratic society" is often preferred as the term "socialism" is dropped. Owing to its pragmatic nature, theoretically the concept of perestroika is not a firm concept. As a result, the

ideological basis of perestroika has evolved continuously. Perestroika is an ideology of deideologisation as it still serves as a guide to action and is used to combat the 'State Socialism' ideology.

There is much in the socialist revisionist thought of the late 19th early 20th century which has direct relevance to perestroika. A fresh look is being given in the USSR to the ideas of social democracy. Thus, many of Eduard Bernstein's ideas like parliamentarianism, cooperative federalism, local autonomy, trade unionism and Rosa Luxembourg's anti-war, anti-militarism, anti-centralisation ideas and Antonio Gramsci's ideas about fusing together of diverse social forces to achieve progressive aim are particularly relevant. Thus perestroika is enriched by a diverse variety of thoughts in the West.

III

Ideological Basis of the New Soviet Foreign Policy: New Political Thinking

In the realm of international relations the 'new political thinking', a direct off-shoot of domestic Perestroika, has influenced


74. The CPSU draft platform for the 28th Congress spoke of the need for cooperation, inter-alia, with social-democratic parties and asserted that the 'historical split' in the socialist movement is being healed by perestroika.

a number of new foreign policy approaches. In fact 'new political thinking', championing the deideologisation of the international relation, was the first manifestation of the ideology of deideologisation which perestroika symbolises. The foreign policy initiatives of Gorbachev justified as manifestations of the 'new political thinking', have ushered in a number of important changes in such crucial areas as East-West relations, arms control, Europe, Asia-Pacific and regional conflicts etc. The 'new political thinking' has pulled out the Soviet foreign policy from its earlier straight jackets and has confronted the Western world with a challenge to respond in a constructive manner. Gorbachev has been forced to make a retreat on international issues on account of his urgent requirement of a deep socio-economic crisis at home which makes it difficult to maintain the Soviet military super-power status. The Western response to the 'new political thinking' varied from negative to cautiously optimistic. The success or failure of domestic reforms could affect the Western response to 'new political thinking'.

The 'new political thinking', as it unfolded at the 27th CPSU Congress, was a mixture of the old and the new. The elements of continuity included reliance on the traditional Marxist-Leninist theory to analyse the world, emphasis on link between peace and socialism, belief that war was not fatalistically inevitable and should be avoided at all basis, along with the assertion that imperialism engenders war, the belief in the historic destiny when all the exploiting classes (i.e. imperialism) would disappear, the unavoidable competition between socialism and capitalism, the
emergence of world socialist system and its role in bringing about fundamental changes in the alignment of forces in the international arena etc. All these were mentioned in the Party programme adopted by the 27th Party Congress in February 1987. 76 Similarly the 1986 party programme retained the provision of international conditions favourable to the perfection of socialist society and the advance to communism, progress of world socialist system, peaceful coexistence with capitalist states, equal and friendly relations with newly free countries, solidarity with communist and revolutionary parties, the international working class movement, as goals of CPSU's international policy. In terms of basic ideas and theory, these elements of the Party programme provided the elements of continuity.

The newness in the Soviet Union's foreign policy consisted in filling these elements of continuity with a substantially new content. In the process, several new ideas e.g. the primacy of common human interests of mankind over the class interests and consequent 'deideologisation' of the international relations were introduced. These new ideas were declared to be in consonance with the traditional class-based Marxist-Leninist approach as applied to conditions of modern time.

The New World View

The main idea behind the new world view was that such

fundamental changes in the world as scientific-technical progress, the existence of a number of problems of global nature and the existence of nuclear stockpiles which threaten mankind with extinction had completely altered the world. In such a world, there could be no place for policies which led to confrontation and war. Both capitalism and socialism were realities and had no alternative but to co-exist peacefully, and to actively cooperate with each other to solve the pressing problems facing the mankind. The nucleus of the new thinking is recognition of the priority of common human values, more accurately - survival of mankind.\textsuperscript{77} This was a significantly new and bold formulation of the world view. It imparted a new content to the idea of peaceful coexistence.

Indeed, Khruschev had realised that peaceful coexistence between capitalism and socialism was a must. But, he regarded peaceful coexistence as a 'specific form of class struggle'. What Gorbachev has done is to take the peaceful coexistence out of the narrow domain of class-struggle and has placed it even higher, as a universal value embodying the very survival of mankind. Even during Khruschev's time it was realised that atomic weapons knew no class-barriers. Indeed the Soviet historian Obichkin has mentioned that even in January 1955, the Soviet leadership had highlighted the problem of the survival of humanity faced with the existence of nuclear missiles on both sides. But the view which prevailed at that time was that the world had evolved according to the objective laws and

\textsuperscript{77} M.S. Gorbachev, \textit{Perestroika i Novoe mishleniye Dlya Nashei Strani i Dlya Vsego Mir'a}, (Moscow, 1987), p.149.
Therefore it could not be destroyed by an accident. 78

Gorbachev has now put this idea on a philosophical footing and made it the cornerstone stone of his foreign policy. The 1986 CPSU Party programme declared: "A world without wars and without weapons is the ideal of socialism". This formulation on 'war' was a further advancement on the Khruschevian view that wars were not "fatalistically inevitable".

The central piece of Gorbachev's world view is the concept of 'interdependent and integral world' elaborated at the 27th Party Congress and in his book on Perestroika .... The idea of integral and interdependent world has had far reaching consequences for the theory and practice of the Soviet foreign policy. The main theoretical ideas of 'new political thinking' are discussed below.

**Diversity**: Diversity of the interdependent, interconnect world is not to be scoffed at but something which ought to be appreciated. Earlier the Soviet theory regarded diversity as 'a source of discord and difference'. Now it is regarded as something which can be of benefit to any civilisation, especially to socialist civilisation. 79

78. Oleg Chichkin, "Perestroika, the 19th Party Conference and Foreign Policy", *International Affairs*, no.7, 1988, p.13. This is a record of a joint discussion organised by the *International Affairs*, and the Academy of Social Sciences under the CPSU, CC, held in 1986 before the 19th Party Conference.

Contradictions: Contradictions do not merely sow conflicts and wars. They can even be a 'source of movement and development'. Contradictions need not be resolved by war. Even antagonistic contradictions can be resolved dialectically and not necessarily by way of war. War, in fact, is held to be 'the most undialectical method of resolving contradictions'. In the Soviet theory now contradictions of the interdependent world are nothing to be frightened of.

Cooperation and Development: The interdependence of the world opens up new vistas for the development and cooperation in the world. Earlier, a mere hint of interdependent world was regarded as by the Soviet theory as 'disguised sorties of the class enemy'.

Set Formulas: The earlier formulas ignoring the interdependence of the world are no good now. Therefore, the theory of foreign policy and international relations would have to be completely revised.

Place of Class-Struggle: There would have to be a complete revision of the earlier class-approach to international relations. In an interconnected world, it is the universal values of the mankind which have to be accorded the highest priority. Any approach which gives priority to the values of one-class over

80. Ibid., p.31.
81. Ibid.
the universal values is wrong. Since the world is now regarded as objectively to be a single whole, common interests prevail over class-division. The 'class-egoism' is dangerous for 'every one'. Does this mean that class-divisions and class-approach do not exist? No, the Soviet theoratician answer. They do exist. But a simplified view of class-approach is wrong. The priority of universal values over class-values should itself be incorporated into the class-approach. "In fact, today even for the working class, the struggle for the universal human interests is the struggle for its class interests". (emphasis in the original)82

Other ideas put forward by Gorbachev, supplementing the integral, interdependence world as well as 'universal values' concepts are those of 'balance of interests', 'global problems', 'freedom of choice', and nonviolent, nuclear-free world.

Global Problems: The idea of the existence of global problems is closely tied to the concept of interdependent, integral world. Such problems as ecological imperatives, third world problems, nuclear annihilation of mankind etc. are regarded as 'global problems' which affect the destiny of the mankind as a whole. These problems can not be solved by the efforts of any one country alone. For their solution international cooperation is required. Thus, international cooperation emerges as anecessity rather than a voluntary act by a state.

82. Ibid., p.34.
Balance of Interests

In a diverse, interdependent world besieged by a host of global problems the recognition of the interests of each state and people and a balance of these interests is the only sane way to conduct of international relations. Any approach which seeks to give preference to the interests of one or the other country or to the interests of one or the other social system is dangerous for the mankind. So far, according to Gorbachev, this 'balance of interests' does not exist. 83

The chief purpose of the policy of the 'balance of interests' seems to be to generate confidence in the other side that the Soviet Union does not wish to pursue its own interests to the exclusion of the interests of others including the capitalist countries. This has a direct bearing on the problems of security and related issues.

Freedom of Choice

Freedom of choice, in the words of Gorbachev, means ".... recognition of the right of each people to choose its own path of social development... inadmissibility of interference in the internal affairs of other states, respect for others together with an objective, self-critical view of one's own society'. 84 Whether

83. M.S. Gorbachev, n.77, p.138.
84. Ibid., p.146.
somebody chooses capitalism or socialism, it is his own exclusive right. It is necessary to free "political positions from ideological impatience". Adherence to this principle has led to a totally fresh look at such principles as 'socialist-internationalism' and the 'unity and cohesion' of working class movement and to a restructuring of USSR's relations with its allies in the third world.

Deideologisation of International Relations

Deideologisation of international relations means that ideological differences should not be allowed to come in the way of lessening of tensions and deepening of cooperation. This, together with new interpretation of class approach to international relations, means discarding the earlier principle of ideological struggle as an integral component of struggle against imperialism. Ideological struggle is now held to be incompatible with 'new political thinking'. Gorbachev, in his address to the UN General Assembly in November 1988 said, "the new stage (in the world) demands that international relations be freed from ideology". Otherwise, he continued, such imperative objectives as mutually beneficial cooperation between states, breakthroughs in science and technology, protection of environment, end of poverty, elimination of nuclear threat and militarism would not be realised.86

85. Ibid., p.146.

The 'deideologisation of international relations' is intended to be a confidence building measure in the field of ideology and has even led to the deideologisation of inter-state relations as is evident in the recent developments in US-USSR and USSR-East European relations.

**Non-Nuclear, Non-Violent world**

A non nuclear world has been proposed by the Soviets ever since the beginning. However, the necessity of a non-violent world in a nuclear-world is a relatively new doctrine. The Delhi Declaration signed jointly by the then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in November 1986 and the Indo-Soviet Statement signed in Moscow by Gorbachev and the Indian Prime Minister V.P. Singh in July 1990 have become a reference point for the Soviet theoreticians. The underlying idea behind a non-nuclear non-violent world is that such a world will be more secure and a more just world.

These are the main concepts on which the 'new political thinking' is based. Examined below are in general terms the new foreign policy doctrines which have now come into being under the 'influence of new political thinking'. A detailed examination of the restructuring of the Soviet foreign policy in some of the key areas of traditional importance would be examined in separate chapters.

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87. For the text of "Delhi Declaration" see FBIS-SOV, 28 November 1986, p.D-14, and, for the Indo-Soviet Statement signed in Moscow, see The Hindu (Madras), 24 July 1990.
The Restructuring of the Soviet Foreign Policy
Under the Impact of New Political Thinking

Gorbachev, in his report to the 27th Party Congress described the "struggle against the nuclear threat, against the arms race, for the preservation and strengthening of universal peace" as the main direction of the Party's line on international affairs. 88

While analysing the world situation he used the traditional Marxist-Leninist theory of contradictions and pointed out towards the emergence of a new set of contradictions in addition to the old ones. These were described as 'between transnational corporations and the nation-state form of society's political organisation', 89 '... between imperialism, on the one hand, and the developing countries and peoples, on the other', 90 and contradictions on "global scale, affecting the very foundations of the existence of civilisation". 91 The last group of contradictions referred to 'global problems' like impending ecological disasters etc.

Keeping with tradition, there was the usual condemnation of imperialism and the characterisation of the 'USA, its military-industrial machine' as 'the locomotive of militarism'. 92

88. Documents and Resolutions of the 27th CPSU Congress, n. 76, p.82.
89. Ibid., p.19.
90. Ibid., p.20.
91. Ibid., p.23.
92. Ibid., p.83.
Thus, as for Gorbachev, the world situation, with the acute contradictions and continued existence of US militarism, remained grim. What was, however, new was Gorbachev's suggestions regarding escape from this situation not through confrontation but through cooperation which could be made durable only by discarding the class approach to international relations. The 'new political thinking' was conceived to provide the philosophical underpinnings to the deideologisation of international relations. This was the single most important theoretical shift in the ideology underlying the Soviet foreign policy.

At the 27th Party Congress Gorbachev outlined the framework of the Soviet foreign policy as consisting of the following components: the security, the European direction, the Asia-Pacific direction, the relations with the socialist world, relations with the international communist movements and the social democratic movement. At the 28th CPSU Congress, Gorbachev further downgraded the third-world and the world communist movement. 93

Security

Security concerns from the bed-rock of Soviet relations with the USA and also in Europe. The 27th Party Conference put forward the idea of universal, comprehensive security. The new concepts introduced in this area were:

93. At the 27th CPSU Congress, Gorbachev made a departure from the post by changing the order in which the various concepts of the Soviet foreign policy were presented. At the 28th Congress, the foreign policy section of Gorbachev's report did not mention the third-world or the world communist movements.
Parity and Comprehensive Security

There is a rejection of the idea that the military superiority can bring any political gains to anybody. Although the concept of military-parity, which underlined the Brezhnevian detente has not been altogether dropped, it nevertheless mentioned that if the arms race continued, "even parity will cease to be a factor of military-political deterrence". Proceeding from this premise, it is being stressed that "genuine equal security is guaranteed not by the highest possible, but by the lowest possible level of strategic parity, from which nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction must be totally excluded". 94

It is also maintained that a comprehensive system of security should not only take into account the military and political factors alone but also the economic environment and human factors too. In other words, a mere reliance on military-political factors is no guarantee of security.

A further aspect of the comprehensive security concept is that security must be universal, and in case of USA and USSR, reciprocal. The comprehensive, universal security, which incorporates the ideas of 'collective security', is considered to be a new and higher philosophy of world politics which gives primacy to universal values. 95

94. Ibid., p.85.

Defensive Military Doctrine and the Principle of 'Reasonable Sufficiency'

A direct outcome of the comprehensive security aspect is that of defensive military doctrine and the principle of 'reasonable sufficiency'. As mentioned in the 27th Party Congress report, the military security, in the changed world situation, should be based on the recognition that nuclear war was unwinnable and should not be fought, preventing arms race in outer space, ending all testing of nuclear weapons and fully eliminating them by the end of this century, banning and destroying chemical weapons, the dissolution of military alliances and, as a step to it, the renunciation of their extension and of the formation of new ones, a proportional and commensurate reduction of military budgets and lowering of the military capabilities of countries to reduce them to the level of "reasonable sufficiency". These are the elements on which the WTO military doctrine brought out in May, 1987 was based. This doctrine was evolved in accordance with "the Marxist-Leninist teaching (that)... it is possible to avert war and save mankind from nuclear catastrophe. This is the historic mission of socialism...". 96

The concept of 'reasonable sufficiency' has led to drastic restructuring of the Soviet armed force, unilateral defence cut and the beginning of cardinal military reforms in the country. This is a break from the past when expansion in armaments and numerical parity were the norms.

Even more important consequence of the new understanding of concepts like parity at a low level and 'reasonable sufficiency' was to extricate USSR from a crippling arms race in unfavourable economic situation at home. The calculation of "reasonable sufficiency" in armaments has proved to be a highly complex task as it related to the concept of 'parity'. Moreover, till such time as nuclear weapons are actually eliminated from the world, the Soviet Union's priority task would remain "reliable deterrence to a probable nuclear aggression through maintenance of strategic equilibrium". Thus the actual implementation of the concept of 'reasonable sufficiency' despite unilateral a defence cuts depends to a large extent upon its acceptance by other parties too. The USSR, by unilaterally cutting down its armaments in East Europe, Asia, has taken initial steps towards the 'reasonable sufficiency' goal.

The US-USSR Relations

The Soviet foreign policy based on 'new political thinking' has led to significant change in the character of US-USSR relations from that of confrontation to cooperation. For the US, the unilateral concessions made by Mr. Gorbachev on such key


98. A detailed discussed of the new society concepts and new military doctrine can be found in Chapter 7.
issues as INF, CFE, Regional Conflicts (Afghanistan), human rights (release of Sakharov, emigration of Russian Jews etc.) and the domestic reforms (political and economic reforms at home) was the proof of Gorbachev's sincerity about 'new political thinking'. For Gorbachev, the initiatives, amounting to concessions in the traditional sense, nevertheless could be used to put the US and the West on the defensive and compel them to revise their image of USSR as an evil empire.

The US public opinion, which till the signing of the INF accord (1987) in which USSR made several one-sided concessions had not been convinced of perestroika and 'new political thinking', began to gradually change as Gorbachev in his December 1988 addressed at the UN announced unilateral defence cuts and other concessions on conventional force levels in Europe. When in 1989, Gorbachev refused to interfere in the developments in East Europe thereby encouraging the east European revolution, US and the West developed a high stake in the continuation of Gorbachev at the helm of affairs in the USSR and began to support perestroika most heartily. Thus, at the Bush-Gorbachev summit meeting in Washington in May 1990, Bush took care not to exploit the domestic difficulties of Gorbachev as jeopardising the prospects of improved US-USSR
relations. 99

The contacts between US and USSR have increased tremendously. Each of the Seven Summit meetings between the US & USSR Presidents has led to the betterment of the bilateral relations.

Gorbachev, through skillful diplomacy involving use of 'concessions' to drive a wedge in Europe, has widened the agenda of US-USSR bilateral relations. The improvement in US-USSR relations has led to a reduction in international tensions. However, it remains to be seen how these relations change as the world moves to a post-cold-war situation which is still not free from tension and conflict. 100

99. The Seven US-USSR Summit meetings were at Geneva (November 19-21, 1985); Reykjavik (October 11-12, 1986); Washington (December 7-10, 1987); Moscow (May 29-June 1988); New York (December 7, 1988); Malta (December 2-3, 1989) and Washington (May 29-June 2, 1990). The significant landmarks achieved in these summits were: common view that nuclear war cannot be won and should not be fought (Geneva); Possibilities of a START agreement (Reykjavik); Signing of INF agreement (Washington, 1987); Real possibilities of ending the Cold War (Malta); prospects of further arms control acts, normalisation of US-USSR trade and economic relations and new security structure for Europe (Washington, May 1990).

The European Direction: "Common European Home"

Gorbachev's idea of a 'Common European Home' extending from the 'Atlantic to Urals', serves as the basis of USSR's policy towards Europe.

Three important problem areas between USSR and the West European countries have been: The German Question i.e. the unity of the two German nations; the NATO-WTO relations and the European Security, and, the US factor in Europe. With the accomplishment of the East European revolution, the Soviets have accepted the inevitability of the German unification but linked the external aspects of the evolution of an alternative European security structure on as well as the evolution of other pan-European structure.

The 'Common European home' idea propounded by Gorbachev in October 1985 on French T.V. has been further elaborated by the Soviets in the Council of Europe. 101

The key issue underlying the "European Common home" is that new European of the security structure following the overcoming of the division

101. At Strasbourg on 6 July, 1989, Gorbachev proposed new ideas on European cooperation on ecology, culture, education, T.V. etc., Pravda, 7 July 1989. The USSR is for a Committee of Foreign Ministers of CSCE countries as a part of the Helsinki process, a European human rights institute, a European nuclear rich reduction centre. In February 1990 the European Parliament approved the Brussels agreement on trade, commercial and economic cooperation between the USSR and the European Community.
of Germanies. The USSR after initial opposition accepted Western demand for the United Germany in NATO and were promised economic aid in return and the change in NATO's character.\textsuperscript{102}

The "Common European Home" idea got a filip when the Soviets signed the INF accord with US, thereby altering the nuclear weapons deployment strategies in Europe. The defensive military doctrine adopted by WFD, unilateral armed reduction by the USSR (500,000 personnel, 10,000 tanks etc.); reduction of USSR troops in Central Europe to 195,000 (US to keep 30,000); reduction in additional USSR troops elsewhere; agreement on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Czechoslovakia and Hungary, acceptance of a major US role in Europe, overlooking of the French and the British nuclear arsenal and adherence to Helsinki process had mark the idea of "Common European Home" possible. With the German unity questions almost settled the 'Common European Home' is likely to be implemented to some degree.

Relations with the Third World

With the ending of the cold war period there is an apparent change in the conceptual basis of the Soviet view of the third world countries. This is examined in detail in a subsequent Chapter.

\textsuperscript{102} Arvind Gupta, "German Unification: Soviet Concerns", \textit{The Times of India}, 28 May 1990.
So far, the importance of the third world countries for the Soviet Union lay in their importance in the anti-imperialist struggle in which the third world countries were supposedly the 'natural allies' of the Soviet Union. However, under the 'new political thinking', the Soviet foreign policy towards the third world is to be based on such principles as the 'freedom of choice', the poverty in third world countries as a 'global problem' to be resolved jointly by all the countries irrespective of their political and other differences. The third world 'debt problem' is identified by Gorbachev as requiring urgent attention. The Soviet sincerity in cooperating with interested parties (e.g. France) to resolve third world problems is repeatedly expressed.

As regards regional conflicts, there is an apparent thinking in Moscow that these conflicts should be resolved quickly as they impede East-West normalisation. Their resolution would also facilitate normalisation of Soviet Union's relations with some key western countries, ASEAN and China etc. At the 28th CPSU Congress, Gorbachev called for a restructuring of USSR's relations with the Third World.

The Asia-Pacific direction of the Soviet foreign policy has received a great deal of attention from Gorbachev. Some new initiatives have been taken to normalise relations with the countries of this region to utilise the potential of their region.

103. M.S. Gorbachev's address to the 43rd UNGA Session, Pravda, 8 December 1988.
for achievement of the Soviet foreign policy aims. 104

Conceptually, Gorbachev has stressed that USSR is an Asian power just as it is an European power. At Vladivostok in July, 1986, he stressed the "balance of interests" in the context of Asia-Pacific region and declared that USSR did not claim "privileges and special positions" and was against the concept of security which strengthened some nations (e.g. USSR) at the expense of others. 105 He also recommended a Helsinki kind of process of detente for the Asia-Pacific. It was the concept of Asia-Pacific security, as an integral component of the comprehensive international security that Gorbachev propounded. The key components of this plan were identified by Gorbachev as:

- settlement of Afghanistan and Kampuchean problems,
- stopping further proliferation of nuclear weapons in the area (this included declaration of the southern part of the Pacific as well as Korean peninsula as 'nuclear free zones'),
- turning the Indian ocean into a peace zone,
- reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments in Asia to levels of 'reasonable sufficiency',
- confidence-building measures and non-use of force in the region etc. 106

104. Gorbachev's initiatives announced at Vladivostok (July 1986), Krashoyansk (September 1988) from the crux of the Asia-Pacific direction of the Soviet foreign policy. Gorbachev also elaborated his approach on comprehensive security for Asia during his talks with the Indian Prime Minister in May 1985. In November 1986 Gorbachev came up with initiatives on Indian Ocean. For a discussion on the impact of 'new political thinking' in USSR's third-world policy, see Chater 6.

105. For the text of M.S. Gorbachev's speech at Vladivostok see Moscow News Supplement, no.31 (3227), 1986.

106. Ibid., p.5.
At Krasnoyarsk, Gorbachev called for negotiations among the USA, USSR and China (leaving out India) on Asian security. In Washington (1990), he proposed discussion with India, Indonesia, China and Japan on Asia-Pacific. 107

It may also be mentioned that the process of having a fresh look at the Asia-Pacific had started with Brezhnev in 1982 when he signalled the improvement of Soviet-Chinese relations. However, Gorbachev has taken some bold initiatives—withdrawal of troops from Mongolia, concessions to China on the border issue, flexibility on the Kampuchean issue and normalisation of relations with a number of countries. These practical steps are new, while the Asian-Pacific security programme is a mix of old (Brezhnev’s Asian collective security plan) and some new (like the Helsinki proposal for Asia-Pacific) concepts. 108

**Relations with the Socialist Countries** 109

Gorbachev ‘s ‘new political thinking’, particularly the concept of “freedom of choice” which in turn meant non-interference in other countries’ affairs led to a breakdown of Brezhnev doctrine and the collapse of that part of the Soviet foreign policy ideology which


108. Brezhnev’s Asian Collective Security plan had the following elements: (i) renunciation of the use of force, (ii) respect for the sovereignty and inviolability of borders, (iii) non-intervention, and (iv) economic and other forms of mutual cooperation.

109. For a detailed discussion see Chapter 5.
treated world socialist system as a distinct form of international system with its own specific laws.

Further, it may be stated that Gorbachev's statements on relations with the Socialist countries during 1985-mid 1989 gave the impression that Gorbachev was focussing on the radical overhaul of the USSR-East European relations, including the restructuring of WTO and CMEA, within the framework of socialism. However, as Brezhnev doctrine disappeared and opposition to communist regimes began to emerge, the Soviets policy towards East Europe also evolved. This change coincided with deideologisation of USSR's internal policies which in turn encouraged anti-socialist forces in the East Europe to challenge the established communist regimes.

The collapse of established regimes in East Europe at once a positive influence on USSR's relations with US and other East European countries. An end to cold war was signalled. For the USSR, an historic opportunity arose to gain from cooperation with the technologically and economically superior West.

With the collapse of Berlin Wall, the problem of reshaping Europe has arisen. The Soviet endeavour is to safeguard its interests - security, political, economic, cultural etc. - in the new Europe.

The normalisation of USSR's relations with China in May (1989) was an historic event. But its importance was overshadowed by Tiananmen Square incidents in June 1989 and the shift of focus to Europe after the collapse of Berlin Wall in November 1989. The
Chinese have not been enthusiastic about rapid deideologisation in USSR as they fear instability in China on account of perestroika in USSR. However, the normalisation with China was directly attributable to the 'new political thinking'. The Soviet concessions to China on border and territorial dispute, military withdrawal from Mongolia and Afghanistan, flexibility on Cambodian issue have facilitated the normalisation.¹¹⁰

**Relations with the International Communist Movements**

International communist movement is likely to weaken as *perestroika* and 'new political thinking' unfold in USSR.

In his report to the 27th Party Congress Gorbachev declared, "The CPSU is an inalienable component of the international communist movement". This was in marked contrast to Brezhnev's report at the 26th Party Congress in which he visualised "struggle for peace against imperialism's aggressive policy, and the arms race" ... as 'the great' principle 'unifying' the world communist movement,¹¹¹ Gorbachev failed to mention struggle against imperialism either as a goal of the world communist movement or as its unifier.¹¹² For Brezhnev, the differences in the movement were

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¹¹¹ Brezhnev's report to the 26th CPSU Congress, n.1, p.24.

¹¹² *Documents & Resolutions of the 27th Party Congress*, n.76, p.94.
permissible provided they do not smack of 'reformism'. Gorbachev, on the other hand declared "unity has nothing in common with uniformity". Gorbachev's advice was that the world communist movement should take "a bold and creative approach to the new realities on the basis of the 'immortal' theory of Marx, Engels and Lenin". This was a signa. for the reinterpretation of the 'theory' of the world communist movement actions. Gorbachev also highlighted the importance of "non-communist movements and organisations including religious organisations" that were against war. Gorbachev, unlike Brezhnev, omitted to mention the "political vanguard" role of the communist and workers parties. Clearly, Gorbachev was signaling a new approach on the part of the communist movement to the question of war and peace, on the issues of cooperation with non-communist movements, on the matters pertaining to tactics. The underlying philosophy of this approach was to be the 'new political thinking' and the consequent "deideologisation" of the international relations.

Gorbachev's treatment of the social democratic movement has also been more conciliatory than that of Brezhnev's. While Brezhnev accused some of the social democratic parties of having been affected with "the virus of anti-communism", Gorbachev favoured "an unbiased look" at the differences between the Social democratic movements on the one hand and the CPSU on the other so that "the struggle for peace and international security" could be

113. Ibid., p.95.
114. Ibid.
strengthened. Over the years the relations between the CPSU and the social-democratic movements have improved considerably while uncertainties have arisen in the minds of some of the communist parties (as in CPI(M) in India) over the policies of the CPSU. The downgrading of the world communist movement was significant in Gorbachev's report to the 28th CPSU Congress where the movement (as) not mentioned at all.

Critical Assessment of the Past and New Approach in the Soviet Foreign Policy

An important feature of the Perestroika has been the critical analysis of the past. The Soviet foreign policy is also not exempt from self-criticism. The purpose of the exposure of past mistakes and calculations is to justify and chalk out new approaches in the present circumstances as was done in the USSR Foreign Ministry in 1988, after the 19th Party Conference. E. Shevardnadze’s speech at the foreign ministry conference can be regarded as a seminal document in this regard.

115. In “, P.96.
116. CPI(M)’s Document Strong criticised Perestroika and Gorbachev Personally”. For the text see Mainstream, 21 June 1990, pp.15-27.
117. K. Gorbachev, n.61, pp.1-20.
118. “Respt by Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR Eduand Shevardnadze at the Scientific and Practical Conference of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 25, 1988”, International Affairs, no.10, 1988, pp.3-34.
Shevarnadze's thesis is that each departure from the 'Leninist principles' in the domestic policy had serious and negative impact on the country's foreign policy. Thus, repressions of the late 1930's reduced the effectiveness of the Soviet foreign policy stands and initiatives and "blackened the image of Soviet state and our foreign policy with it". The problem was further compounded by the "distortion of the principles of internationalism". Similarly, there was "incorrect appraisal of the roles and possibilities of world progressives" (i.e. the 'world progressives' were over estimated). The wrong assessment of European social Democracy as an accomplice of Hitler undermined the anti-Hitler front.

In the post-war period the USSR suffered both internally and externally due to administrative command methods, by "disregard of special, professional knowledge, and an undemocratic secretive willfull style of taking decisions ... the priority of military over political means of countering imperialism, and the inability to see through the manoeuvring to draw us into an arms race fraught with economic attrition for the USSR". As a consequence, this resulted in wrong vision of world realities and of interstate relations. There was also the tendency to disregard professional advice concerning the nation's security interests. The USSR's "image of the enemy" emerged largely as a result of these mistakes.

119. Ibid., p.12.
120. Ibid.
The foreign policy also suffered because the decision making was concentrated in the hands of a few. There was no legal, constitutional mechanism to supervise the decision making process and enforce accountability.

Shevardnadze felt that in the name of country's security and prestige, the past decisions regarding building up of the stockpiles of chemical weapons, cost the country dear in political and economic terms. He criticised the past approach of decision making which did not pay heed to the costs at which the country's security was being built. The burden of Shevardnadze's argument was that the country's security would have been better ensured by political rather than military means. Implicit in Shevardnadze's criticism was the thought that there were double standards in the Soviet foreign policy - on the one hand, it advanced initiatives for disarmament etc., on the other it continued to build stockpiles of weapons under the mistaken belief that this would strengthen country's security.

As the specific directions for the foreign policy and diplomacy in future, Shevardnadze recommended an undogmatic, open foreign policy and diplomacy imbibing the latest scientific and technical discoveries. He called for setting up of a scientific coordinating centre to coordinate with scientific institutions in the country and abroad in fields like ecology, energy, inter-space etc. and maintaining ties with science 'on a contractual basis'.

His other suggestions were: establishing a correlation between international and domestic legislation, establishing an effective link between culture and democracy, a well considered cultural policy as a component of Soviet foreign policy, efforts to enhance the role of UN in world affairs, and to create a mechanism linking public opinion with the formulation and conduct of foreign policy and the deepening of the USSR's involvement in international organisations.

This brief listing of directions of the Soviet diplomacy and foreign policy indicates that the effect of the 'new political thinking' on the Soviet diplomacy was intended to be to make it more flexible, thoroughly grounded and also more independent in terms of decision making. Shevardnadze laid a particularly strong emphasis on the rectification of the country's image in the West. There was also a hint of acceptance of responsibility for developments like cold war and lack of progress on disarmament.

Conclusions

It can be argued that perestroika may be regarded as a distinct ideology which was initially aimed to 'renew' socialism but is now gradually stepping outside the overall framework of Leninism through promotion of "humane democratic socialism" which has not been fully developed and whose like with the 'communist perspective' of the CPSU has not yet been demonstrated.
Perestroika as an ideology is evolving as it tends to incorporate some of the elements of Western political and economic system. Perestroika can be termed as an ideology of the deideologisation of socialism.

The 'new political thinking', a direct offshoot of perestroika, imbibes the western ideas of interconnected word and universal values more openly. 'New political thinking' is essentially peaceful-coexistence sans class-struggle. Once the Soviets, for their internal reasons, decided to turn confrontation with capitalism into cooperation, the entire view about capitalism and imperialism had to be changed. The 'new political thinking' does precisely that.

The 'new political thinking' is also a language that appeals to the Western liberal thought. However, Gorbachev has used the 'new political thinking' to attach the concepts of nuclear deterrence which had been the mainstay of the Western strategy in the cold-war years. The 'new political thinking' extends the concept of interdependence from the realm of nuclear weapons to other

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122. Some of the concepts like global problems, interdependence etc. had been worked out in the West. See for example Gerald O. Barney, The Global 2000: Report to the President of the US; Entering the 21st Century, (New York, 1980). The report underlined the importance of treating environment as a global issue. The report of the Willy Brandt Commission on International Development Issues in 1980 spoke of "positive mutual interests", "world wide moral values", "global issues" and mankind as a "single community" in the context of North-South Cooperation. All these elements were incorporated in 'new political thinking'. See Willy Brandt & others, North-South: A Programme for Survival, (London, 1980), pp.7-12 & 64. Also see Willy Brandt & others, Common Crisis; North South Cooperation for World Recovery, (London, 1983).
'global problems' too. Thus a theoretical basis for "globalism" and a strong case for cooperation with the former adversaries is made out.

The 'new political thinking' would not have cut much ice with the West had it not for the deideologisation of the USSR's internal political and economic system and concrete concessions by the USSR in several fields. This in turn has created pressure on the West to soften its own ideological, confrontationist stance vis-a-vis USSR.

The 'non-class' character of the 'new political thinking' did generate controversy within the Soviet polit bureau in 1988, when CPSU, CC politbureau member Yegor Ligachev argued that international relations do have a class character and that primacy of general human problems did not mean that social and national struggles were less important or that class contradictions and antagonisms could be ignored. However, with rapid deideologisation of Soviet internal policies, Ligachev's dissent is now merely a historical fact.

The Soviet foreign policy will be governed to a great extent by the course of perestroika. Addressing the West, Gorbachev and

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123. FBIS/SOV, 3 August 1988, from Moscow TV on 5 August 1988. Ligachev's remarks were possibly in response to Shevardnadze's speech at the USSR Foreign Ministry, quoted earlier, in which he said, "One must not identify co-existence ... with class struggle". See Pravda, 26 July 1988.
other Soviet leaders have repeatedly said that international politics would be greatly affected by the success or failure of perestroika. This is already evident as Baltic republics work towards secession from USSR and the unrest in Central Asia affects the other muslim nations or as the Soviet state moves towards a loose confederation. Even as the Soviet policies get deideologised, the link between the Soviet foreign policy and the ideology of perestroika remain tangible.

Gorbachev is attempting to turn socialism-capitalism contradictions into a cooperation between the two. But, as it presently seems, "socialism" would have to be totally reformed for this to materialise.

The events of the last few years have clearly demonstrated the strong link between the Marxist-Leninist ideology and the Soviet foreign policy conduct right upto 1985. A whole theory of deideologisation, which is sought to be justified in the name of 'humane and democratic' facets of Marxism-Leninism, is being built to undo the ideology-foreign policy link built in past decades. The 'new political thinking' provides the philosophical undertakings of this immense deideologisation effort underway in USSR. The initial consequence of this effort has been that the former adversaries have formally declared the end of cold war and the heralding of the post-cold war phase in international relations.