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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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**Decisional Uncertainty and Grand Strategy:
Domestic Institutional Sources of International Over-Zealousness
and Under-Achievement**

**A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Political Science**

by

Adam N. Stulberg

1996

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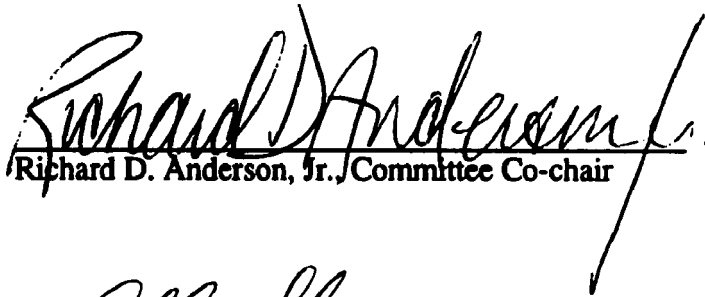
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for mom and dad
with love, admiration, and gratitude

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

**Decisional Uncertainty and Grand Strategy:
Domestic Institutional Sources of International Over-Zealousness
and Under-Achievement**

by

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Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

University of California, Los Angeles, 1996

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Great powers tend to react inappropriately to the pressures of the international system. History is replete with examples of states that incur self-defeat by undertaking diplomatic commitments to international cooperation or competition that either outstrip capacities to procure national military might, or that do not reflect available defense industrial capabilities. That some states are prone to "get it wrong" in their strategic responses, to the point of sacrificing primary security interests, demonstrates the limits of international structural imperatives for determining the character of state behavior.

This dissertation explicates the enigmas of strategic over-zealousness and under-achievement by exploring domestic political complications to grand strategy decision-making. It argues that the terms by which authority is delegated among policy-makers determine a state's capacity to reconcile diplomatic initiatives with military strategy and defense industrial policies. The level of decisional uncertainty embedded in a state's constitutional structure shapes the incentives that guide politicians and functionaries to search out informal mechanisms for streamlining the national security policy-making process. These incentives, premised on the link between private political interests and concerns for national welfare, dictate the parameters for political bargaining and delegation of authority at all levels of policy-making. The resulting institutional arrangements, in turn, affect which parties control policy decisions and bear practical responsibility for policy outcomes, the extent of information asymmetries, and the substantive preferences for national security policies. The nature of these *de facto* institutions holds the key to explaining why rational decision-makers blunder into promulgating seemingly irrational grand strategies marred by persistent asymmetries between foreign commitments and national capabilities.

The argument is tested against the "least likely" cases of Soviet and contemporary Russian grand strategies. The study shows that there is a correlation between decisional uncertainty and strategic over- and under-reaction to the imperatives of the international system. It reveals that domestic institutions do indeed matter in the formulation of state preferences for international behavior. The conclusion discusses the implications for the study of grand strategy and international relations theory.

CHAPTER 1

COMMITMENTS, CAPABILITIES, and INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: Problems of Over-Zealousness and Under-Achievement in Grand Strategy

Despite the self-help nature of the international system, great powers are rarely able to exert relative power without encumbrance. As realists and balance-of-power theorists contend, there are structural imperatives that automatically trigger opposing states to mobilize internally or to form counter-coalitions in resistance to challenges to the international *status quo*.¹ At the same time, elites in charge of formulating national security policy encounter binding domestic political and economic constraints on defense spending and the extension of foreign commitments. Understanding the interplay of these international and domestic constraints on a state's strategic posture lies at the crux of this dissertation. Specifically, the focus is on the role that domestic political institutions play in determining the balance of commitments and capabilities in a state's grand strategy for responding to international threats and opportunities.

This study takes issue with the venerable realist paradigm in international relations theory. Realists have long argued that states, preoccupied with their own survival in the anarchic international setting, respond immediately and commensurably to threats and opportunities for expansion or accommodation. It is taken for granted that states are unfettered by domestic politics in selecting their riposte to international change.

¹See in particular Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Relations* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979); and Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987).

Yet history is replete with examples of inappropriate reactions to adverse or positive changes in the balance of power that have carried different consequences for the survival prospects of individual states, and for stability in the international system.

In the quest for security in the anarchic international environment, great powers, in particular, have a tendency to "get it wrong."² Put simply, states fail to synchronize international commitments with national capabilities in their grand strategies for responding to pressures for cooperating or competing with foreign adversaries. On the one hand, they undermine their security by extending commitments that outstrip national capacities to procure and allocate military, political, and economic resources. A state is over-extended when it seeks security by making a commitment, unilaterally or via an alliance, that it does not have the capabilities to honor and that provokes counter-balancing behavior among rival states. On the other hand, a state can be under-extended, somehow handcuffed in making commitments that are commensurate with its capacity to mobilize national power. Such situations give rise to highly ingratiating strategies that unilaterally concede important national interests and convey a spirit of weakness to potential rivals. Both variants are characteristically counter-productive, suffering from inherent asymmetries between respective ends and means.

While a completely coherent strategy may be illusory, some states nonetheless prove systematically more adept than others at redressing imbalances between commitments and capabilities. Throughout modern history states have experienced different intensities and duration of self-defeat. At the dawn of the 20th century, for example, Britain was able to halt its aggressive colonial expansion into Africa that was diverting valuable national resources and alienating potential allies on the European

²In this study, great powers are defined as states that "play a major role in international politics with respect to security-related issues." Jack S. Levy, "Alliance Formation and War Behavior," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 25 (1981), pp. 585-586.

continent, thus improving its strategic position vis-a-vis the rising German threat.³ Also, after initially embracing overly-concessionary strategies of appeasement, Britain and France shifted gears to exploit the extraordinary economic difficulties Germany faced in waging war over the long haul.⁴ Similarly, the U.S. proved adroit at reversing both "under-committed" and "over-committed" strategies. On the eve of World War II, American policy-makers jettisoned neutrality in order to confront the Nazi juggernaut.⁵ Alternatively, Washington extricated itself from quagmires in the Third World, limiting the damage done to its strategic position during the Cold War by occasional bouts with "imperial-overstretch."⁶

In contrast, other states seemingly allow self-defeating strategies to persist unabated. Nazi Germany, for instance, pursued a rearmament strategy that overheated the national economy and drove it to declare war hastily on the U.S., ultimately provoking an overwhelming counter-balancing coalition that sealed its fate.⁷ In the mid-

³See especially the account of the domestic political brakes to British imperial over-extension and "splendid isolation" in Europe, in Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 153-211.

⁴As demonstrated by a prominent historian of the period, Britain and France actually enjoyed the strategic and economic advantages necessary for launching a successful preventive strike in 1938-1939 against Nazi Germany. Thus, the strategy of appeasement was not dictated by the balance of capabilities but controlled by misperceptions and domestic political considerations that inhibited the allies from capitalizing on their favorable strategic position. See especially Williamson Murray, *The Change in the European Balance of Power, 1938-1939: The Path to Ruin* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

⁵For discussion of the curious case of American "under-extension" on the eve of World-War II, see Arthur A. Stein, "Domestic Constraints, Extended Deterrence, and the Incoherence of Grand Strategy: The United States, 1938-1950," in Richard Rosecrance and Arthur A. Stein, eds., *The Domestic Bases of Grand Strategy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 101-112.

⁶Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire*, pp. 255-304.

⁷See Wilhem Deist, *The Wehrmacht and German Rearmament* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981); and Alan Milward, *The German Economy at War* (London: Athlone Press, 1965).

1930s, Japanese decision-makers fell prey to imperial expansion that drained the national economy and forced them to confront directly preponderant American strength.⁸

Despite the dominance of realism, there is widespread acknowledgment that states do not always respond with equilibrated strategies to the exigencies of the international environment. That states adopt grand strategies precipitating their own demise can be distilled from the welter of arguments surrounding external ambition, imperial expansion, and great power decline. Traditionally, most of the attention has been devoted to studying the propensity of states to over-extend themselves, focusing on the twin problems of imperial over-stretch and self-encirclement. Explanations for inflated commitments typically center on the pathological neglect of defense-investment tradeoffs, assessment failures, diffusion of technology, empowerment of narrow-minded interest groups, or persistence of "hydra-headed" justifications for expansion.⁹ While focusing primarily on the drift of power in the international system, these conventional

⁸Michael A. Barnhart, *Japan Prepares for Total War: The Search for Economic Security, 1919-1941* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987).

⁹For classic accounts of the roots and costs of imperialism, see J.A. Hobson, *Imperialism: A Study* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1902, reprint 1938); Eckart Kehr, *Economic Interest, Militarism, and Foreign Policy: Essays on German History*, trans. Grete Heinz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); V.I. Lenin, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (New York: Independent Publishers, 1916, reprint, 1939); Joseph Schumpeter, "The Sociology of Imperialism," in Joseph Schumpeter, *Imperialism and Social Classes*, Heinz Norden, trans., (New York: Augustus M. Kelly, 1951), pp. 3-83; and Thorstein Veblen, *Imperial Germany and the Industrial Revolution* (New York: Viking, 1915, reprint, 1954). For a general review of the more recent literature on imperial over-extension, see David Calleo, *Beyond American Hegemony* (New York: Basic Books, 1987); Michael W. Doyle, *Empires* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986); Aaron L. Friedberg, *The Weary Titan: Britain and the Experience of Relative Decline, 1895-1905* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Paul Kennedy *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (New York: Random House, 1987); Richard Rosecrance, *America's Economic Resurgence* (New York: Harper & Row, 1990); and William R. Thompson and Gary Zuk, "World Power and the Strategic Trap of Territorial Commitment," *International Studies Quarterly* 30 (1986), pp. 249-267. For theoretical exposition of the relationship between the pursuit of security and the unintentional provocation of threats under conditions of international anarchy, see Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 30:2 (January 1978), pp. 167-214; Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire*; and Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of War* (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, 1984). On the inconsistency of diplomacy in concurrent policy realms, see Richard D. Anderson, *Public Politics in an Authoritarian State* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993).

approaches typically fail to explain why great powers often knowingly and rationally pursue self-defeating policies.

This gap in the existing literature has not escaped attention of a growing number of scholars of international security and political economy. Stephen Blank, for instance, ascribes British discontinuous economic decline to the different policy choices made by various decision-makers under conditions of changing international power and responsibilities that ranged in their appropriateness for the imperial resource base.¹⁰ Judith Goldstein blames America's continued commitments to anachronistic versions of protectionism and free trade, despite changes to its relative economic and political position, on the vestiges of "causal ideas" layered within the foreign trade institutional structure.¹¹ Arthur Stein points to the domestic institutional separation of power and responsibility for extending commitments and mobilizing capabilities as the harbinger of self-defeat.¹² Miles Kahler attributes the divergent strategic choices made by inter-war Japan and Germany to respective levels of industrialization, and the position each occupied in the international economy.¹³ Aaron Friedberg, on the other hand, links the different American and Soviet strategic choices for waging the Cold War to the contrasting strengths of the respective political structures and their attendant ideologies.¹⁴

¹⁰Stephen Blank, "Britain: The Politics of Foreign Economic Policy, the Domestic Economy, and the Problem of Pluralistic Stagnation," *International Organization* 31:4 (Autumn 1977).

¹¹Judith Goldstein, *Ideas, Interests, and American Trade Policy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993).

¹²Arthur A. Stein, "Domestic Constraints, Extended Deterrence, and the Incoherence of Grand Strategy: The United States, 1938-1950," p. 97.

¹³Miles Kahler, "External Ambition and Economic Performance," *World Politics* 40:4 (July 1988), pp. 419-451.

¹⁴Aaron L. Friedberg, "Why Didn't the United States Become a Garrison State?" *International Security* 16:4 (Spring 1992), pp. 109-142.

Similarly, David Lake argues that the level of unrestrained "rent-seeking" enjoyed by a state biases its selection of grand strategy.¹⁵

Recently, two authors entered the theoretical fray with comparisons of different cases of self-defeat. In efforts to flesh out the sources of self-defeat, Jack Snyder and Charles Kupchan systematically examine cases of successful and unsuccessful strategic adjustment. By asking not why states choose to cooperate or compete with potential rivals, but why when doing so they tend to get it wrong and pursue strategies that are either too aggressive or too cooperative, these authors tease out sources of variable persistence of self-defeat.

Focusing on the domestic coalition-building processes among state and non-state actors, Jack Snyder claims that parochial concerns for imperial over-expansion have the greatest impact on grand strategy in political systems dominated by a select number of interest groups with distinct, concentrated interests.¹⁶ Bargaining among these "cartelized" societal groups proceeds by logrolling, involving the aggregation of diverse policy platforms into a highly offensive grand strategy. In this bargaining arrangement short-run costs are passed on to groups outside of the coalition, and contradictions among policies are ignored or rationalized away. While cartelized politics predispose a state towards overly aggressive strategies, the different forms and degrees of over-expansion are linked to the specific groups participating in the logroll, as well as to the strength of outside political actors with encompassing interests.

¹⁵David A. Lake, "Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War," *American Political Science Review*, 86:1 (March 1992), pp. 24-37.

¹⁶Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire*. Snyder uses the term "over-expansion" to characterize both the problems of self-encirclement, involving aggressive strategies that provoke an overwhelming coalition of opposing states; and over-extension, entailing the persistent expansion into the hinterland beyond the point where costs begin to outstrip benefits.

Alternatively, Charles Kupchan locates the sources of self-defeat in perceptions of vulnerability and the constraints of strategic culture.¹⁷ He argues that initial perceptions of intense vulnerability attendant to adverse shifts in the international distribution of power cause elites to propagate conceptions of strategic deficiency in order to rally domestic reaction. By molding public opinion and organizational missions for extraordinary response, however, elites unwittingly entrap themselves in a strategic culture that subsequently prevents them from reorienting grand strategy and avoiding self-defeat. Distinguishing between the concerns of states that are on different power trajectories and in different geographic regions, he argues that a) a declining state, facing high vulnerability, will be overly cooperative in the core, but highly expansionist in the periphery; and b) a rising state, under similar conditions, will be overly competitive in both the core and the periphery. Thus, the propensity for a state to blunder into international engagement with overly aggressive or cooperative strategies stems from the sequential impact of insecurity on elite beliefs and the causal images linked to organizational roles, rather than from logrolling among imperialist interest groups.

Despite renewed attention paid to the sources of great power decline and self-defeat, it remains especially problematic that national leaderships tend to make inopportune strategic choices that exacerbate geopolitical vulnerability. Traditional accounts fail to explain why some states are more prone than others to incur acute phases of over-commitment and remain paralyzed in redressing these shifts in their relative international standing. While scholars regularly address the phenomenon of over-commitment there has been general neglect of the opposite form of self-defeat, the under-commitment of national power and interests in the international arena. Snyder, though observing instances of "under-expansion," fails to explain why a single state can suffer

¹⁷Charles A. Kupchan, *The Vulnerability of Empire* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994).

from intense phases of both over- and under-commitment in grand strategy. Moreover, he does not include in his paradigm a discussion of how logrolls emerge among competing domestic political actors, or why they do not moderate either highly aggressive or conciliatory grand strategies.¹⁸ Kupchan, on the other hand, neglects interest-based explanations for explaining calculations of vulnerability. Preoccupied with the implications of ideational factors, such as strategic beliefs and strategic culture, he cannot explain cases of relatively secure declining states, such as Nazi Germany, that lash out with extreme aggression, thus precipitating their own sense of high metropolitan vulnerability.¹⁹ These shortcomings stem largely from a common tendency to overlook the constraints imposed by broader domestic political structures on the formulation of national interests, as well as on the emergence and functioning of bargaining processes that define a leadership's capacity to balance national capabilities and international commitments in grand strategy.

Variance in the persistence of self-defeat among states is particularly perplexing, given the ubiquitous leadership imperatives for maintaining security and geopolitical position generated by anarchy in the international system and the need to demonstrate legitimacy in the domestic political arena. In the self-help international setting, all states ought to be particularly sensitive to redressing any self-induced propensity to subvert absolute or relative standing. Statesmen aware of their situation should not be indifferent

¹⁸Snyder cannot account for those instances where "imperialist" interest groups, such as the military, do not always support expansionist policies and remain susceptible to changing interests under certain circumstances.

¹⁹For discussion of Germany's relative security in the defense dominant world on the eve of World War II, see especially A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1961); and Richard Rosecrance, "Overextension, Vulnerability, and Conflict: The 'Goldilocks' Problem in International Strategy (A Review Essay)," *International Security* 19:4 (Spring 1995), pp. 156-160. For an alternative account of Germany's sense of security, resting on misperceptions of defense dominance rooted in civil-military relations and the ingrained lessons of formative experiences, see especially Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity," *International Security* 44:2 (Spring 1990), pp. 156-157.

to the problem of self-defeat and ought to be intent on adjusting strategy in order to stay the course demanded of strategic interaction. Despite variation across regime types, all leaders have a stake in the health and security of their societies, and should possess both the formal power and motivation to balance available national resources with global commitments. Democratic leaders, responsive to the concerns of their constituents, ought to be especially sensitive to fluctuations in domestic welfare and international position. By the same token, self-interested autocratic rulers should welcome redress of self-defeating strategies, for as national security and welfare increase so too should the prospects for extracting greater political rents. Moreover, it stands to reason that autocrats are in a favorable position to use logrolls to break political stalemates and to contain the political ambitions of parochial-minded interest groups, rather than prone to being constantly victimized by them. Finally, despite common interests among political leaders, self-defeating strategies not only arise but vary across domestic political structures, as some states are better able to amend their strategies than others.

In addition, as evidenced by the wax and wane in the Soviet Union's geostrategic position, the persistence of self-defeating strategies in either direction can have dramatic consequences. Despite variations in the competitive or cooperative orientations of each grand strategy pursued in the post-Stalin era, there was a repeated willingness on the part of successive Soviet regimes to incur self-defeat in the pursuit of national security. The Khrushchev and Brezhnev leaderships adopted strategies that fostered imperial over-extension and provoked international balancing coalitions. Concurrently on the domestic economic plane, these strategies perpetuated and intensified the pursuit of extensive growth policies that proved deleterious to efficiency, productivity, and technological innovation. With maturation of the empire, the cumulative impact of the respective grand strategies was the broadening of the gap between power and commitments, and a subversion of Soviet international political, military, and economic competitiveness.

Similarly, while the Gorbachev revolution heralded a radical shift towards increased international cooperation, it was under his watch that the Soviet Union voluntarily abdicated its geostrategic position. Its status as a superpower came to a sudden and wrenching halt, as initial attempts at selective disengagement from forward positions in the Third World lapsed quickly into full-scale retreat from core interests in East-Central Europe. Under the banner of *new thinking*, the Gorbachev leadership made sweeping unilateral concessions to erstwhile foreign adversaries across the gamut of foreign and security issues that exceeded adjustments precipitated by changing economic, military, and ideological realities.²⁰ This under-committed strategy deprived the Soviet Union of allies, a buffer zone, a balanced force structure, and stability along Russia's immediate periphery, ultimately contributing to the final ouster of Soviet rule. In the end, Gorbachev's *new thinking* managed only to redirect strategy without extricating the regime from its traditional proclivity for self-defeat that, in this instance, was manifest in a protracted "charm offensive" that relegated Moscow to the sidelines of international affairs.

The pervasiveness of self-defeat in Soviet grand strategy challenges conventional interpretations of international relations and Moscow's geostrategic behavior, more specifically. Contrary to realist expectations, the Soviet retreat was not provoked by an unfavorable change in the distribution of international capabilities. While the Soviets

²⁰For example, while the specter of decline loomed ominously in the future, Soviet capabilities, both as perceived by the leadership and as reflected by the indices of relative economic growth and military power, had only marginally diminished at the inception of *new thinking*. For a cogent discussion of trends in Soviet economic and military capabilities on the eve of *new thinking*, see R.T. Maddock, *The Political Economy of Soviet Defense Spending* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988). While it is clear that the dynamic efficiency of the regime's economic and military production was declining and threatened to intensify dramatically a widening technological gap with its international competitors in the future, there is little evidence that the prevailing static economic indicators (level of inflation, military strength, etc...) portended immediate decline when Gorbachev initially implemented a strategy of unilateral concessions. In this regard, I challenge the popular contention that technical failure provided the primary impetus for strategic contraction. In doing so, I draw a sharp distinction between the direct causes of change and the consequences attendant to the implementation of reform in strategy.

suffered a steady absolute decline in economic growth rates during the 1970s and 1980s, relative economic capabilities during the period remained constant as the rates of growth in Western economies also retarded. The data do not show that Moscow's retreat was precipitated by relative decline, especially given Soviet retention of powerful strategic nuclear and conventional power projection capabilities throughout this period. Moreover, that the Soviet Union, at the pinnacle of its military power, opted to go out with a whimper instead of a bang stands in stark contrast to realist presumptions that states clutch to relative position at all costs. The peaceful abnegation of Soviet international power is even more perplexing when contrasted to the examples of great power preventive war prior to 1918 and the aggressive backlash by Nazi Germany when confronting similar prospects for strategic decline.²¹ While traditional observers of Soviet politics long detected the propensity of the Kremlin to pursue grand strategies marred by self-defeat, they proved unable to predict the abrupt and peaceful collapse of the Soviet system. In the end, both Western conservatives, who traditionally stressed the enduring features of the Soviet Union's global activism and the volatility of its demise, and their liberal interlocutors, who spoke of structural evolution and moderate adjustments to strategy, were caught off guard by the speed and extent of Moscow's global retreat.²²

²¹For discussion of the historical and theoretical importance of preventive war waged by declining powers (real or perceived), see especially Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of War*, pp. 1-77; and A.F.K. Organski, *World Politics*, 2nd edition (New York: Knopf, 1968), p. 376. For discussion of Germany's overall downward trajectory on the eve of World War II, see especially Charles Doran, *Systems in Crisis: New Imperatives of High Politics at Century's End* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 70-75.

²²For a classic hardline account, stressing the degeneration of Soviet politics, see Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, "The Soviet System: Transformation or Degeneration?" *Problems of Communism* 15:1 (January-February 1966), pp. 1-15; and Robert Conquest, *Power and Policy in the USSR* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961). For a contrasting argument emphasizing the gradual corrective mechanisms attendant to modernization, see Moshe Lewin, *The Gorbachev Phenomenon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

At the domestic level, that the syndrome of self-defeat in Soviet grand strategy took on both highly aggressive and conciliatory forms is especially interesting given the stability of the authoritarian leadership coalition. It was the traditional Soviet elite, entrenched since the Stalin era, that formulated and approved both aggressive and passive variants of self-defeat.²³ Contrary to conventional wisdom, the leadership was not resistant to change. It proved deft at dramatically redirecting strategy towards international cooperation in response to obvious shifts in the "correlation of forces." The problem was that it neglected to redress the legacy of excessive reaction.²⁴ It was at the height of a leader's political ascendancy, at the point of presumed maximum decision-making flexibility, that each Soviet regime adopted a self-defeating grand strategy. This suggests that the continued lapse into self-defeat, despite modifications to strategic objectives, was a pathology inextricably tied to the maturation of the Soviet domestic political system.

The purpose of this dissertation is to explain why some states tend repeatedly to "get it wrong" in their strategies for competing or cooperating in the international arena. I do this with specific reference to the Soviet Union, explicating this puzzle through examination of domestic politics. I argue that neither international systemic nor cognitive/psychological explanations fully illuminate the origins and persistence of self-defeat in a state's grand strategy. Moreover, I demonstrate that traditional accounts of domestic politics are unable to explain the "stickiness" of self-defeat across both

²³The point is that change in Soviet foreign policy originated from decisions made by members of the traditional ruling elite rather than by exogenous forces, such as an enlightened leader or previously excluded groups. Gorbachev, despite his revolutionary appearances, was a product of these traditional forces and, accordingly, remained constrained in his actions. Moreover, change cannot be attributed solely to the impact of social pressures or the heroics of the intelligentsia, since the outburst of popular demands for radical reform occurred only after the leadership became committed to a new course in foreign policy.

²⁴It is on this point that I distinguish my account of Soviet self-defeat from that provided most recently by Jack Snyder. See Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire*, pp. 212-254.

strategies of expansionism and retrenchment in dealing with the West. This study joins a number of recent efforts to fill these gaps by incorporating systematically one facet of domestic politics- institutional structure- into study of the formation and ossification of state preferences for responding to international environmental pressures for cooperation and competition.²⁵ In particular, I assert that the intensity of self-defeat is a product of the formal uncertainty governing political exchange between and among national elites and functionaries charged with crafting and implementing grand strategy. The informal institutions that emerge out of this setting to regulate elite competition and delineate administrative authority determine the political incentives and disincentives for balancing international commitments and national capabilities in accordance with the overarching exigencies of the international environment. As such, excessive strategic behavior is the by-product of rational responses to the costs of domestic political exchange in an under-regulated polity.

Explanation of this pathology of grand strategy is placed in a comparative perspective. First, unlike the preoccupation with many existing studies to fixate solely on the issue of over-extension, I demonstrate how the interplay between formal governing structures and informal bargaining processes in an institutional setting produces both over- zealous and under-achieving grand strategies. In particular, there is in-depth analysis of one state, the Soviet Union, that had a history of fluctuating between the two extremes. I compare the grand strategy decision-making processes of the Brezhnev and

²⁵See, for example, James Morrow, "Electoral and Congressional Incentives and Arms Control," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 35 (1991), pp. 245-65; George W. Downs and David M. Rocke, *Optimal Imperfection? Domestic Uncertainty and Institutions in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); Deborah D. Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change: Lessons From Peripheral Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994); Keisuke Iida, "When and How Do Domestic Constraints Matter?: Two -Level Games With Uncertainty," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 37:3 (September 1993), pp. 403-426; Michelle R. Garfinkel, "Domestic Politics and International Conflict," *American Economic Review* 84:5 (December 1994), pp. 1294-1309; and Kurt Taylor Gaubatz, "Democratic States and Commitment in International Relations," *International Organization* 50:1 (Winter 1996), pp. 109-139.

Gorbachev regimes, and the attendant implications for the persistence of self-defeat in responding to international pressures for competition and cooperation. Second, I extend the theoretical argument beyond the Soviet case in order to test its relevance for explaining the general phenomenon of self-defeat in grand strategy. This is done by holding external conditions constant while varying the study of state structure. Specifically, there is investigation of the nascent transformation of the Russian national security decision-making establishment, and its effects on the formulation and implementation of Moscow's contemporary grand strategy from 1992 to Summer 1994.

The remainder of this chapter places the problem of self-defeat in the broader theoretical literature. In the next section, I define grand strategy and posit a specific typology for variation in the ends and means of state responses to pressures of the international environment. This is followed by a review of the state of the existing theoretical literature on choice and self-defeat in grand strategy, as it pertains to the problems in general, and with specific reference to explanation of Soviet and Russian international behavior.

International Over-Zealousness and Under-Achievement

In the anarchic international environment, great powers preoccupy themselves with security and non-security objectives. Their international posture is driven by a) concerns for security preparedness as a hedge against any encroachment on the sovereignty of the state, and b) the desire to spread their global influence and ideological predilections.²⁶ Motivated by these twin objectives of preservation and greed,

²⁶For the purposes of this study, "security" narrowly refers to the protection from attack of the national homeland and vital foreign interests. The central point is that in the quest for security, national leaders strive to retain their independence in making decisions regarding these issues. See Robert J. Art, "A

leaderships must devise an overall political approach to balance national interests and capabilities in response to threats and opportunities at the international level. These grand strategies fuse foreign, military, and economic power-producing policies into an overarching framework that prescribes national security objectives and the means for their realization.²⁷

In formulating grand strategy, a state generally has many options for dealing with its international predicament. For example, a declining state may opt to retreat to more defensible positions, expand to the detriment of challenger states, unleash preventative war, cling to the *status quo* position, or re-arrange commitments and solicit new allies to

Defensible Defense," *International Security*, 15:4 (Spring 1991), pp. 6-8; and David A. Lake, "Between Anarchy and Hierarchy," *International Organization* 50:1 (Winter 1996), pp. 1-35. Alternatively, non-security pursuits, such as the promotion of international prestige and revolutionary ideals, are generated out of greed or the need for demonstrating national legitimacy, rather than necessitated by the balance of capabilities in the international system. For an insightful typology of states premised on distinct motives for security and greed, see Charles L. Glaser, "Political Consequences of Military Strategy: Expanding and Refining Spiral and Deterrence Models," *World Politics* pp. 501-508. For discussion of the different international and domestic motives behind the dual objectives of grand strategy, see also Michael Mastanduno, David A. Lake and G. John Ikenberry, "Toward a Realist Theory of State Action," *International Studies Quarterly* 33:4 (December 1989), pp. 462-465.

²⁷For similar definitions of "grand strategy," see John M. Collins, *Grand Strategy* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1973); David A. Lake, *Superpower Strategies: The State and the Production of Security* (Unpublished manuscript, 1991); Paul Kennedy, "Grand Strategy in War and Peace: Toward a Broader Definition," in Paul Kennedy, ed., *Grand Strategies in War and Peace* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), pp. 1-10; Edward Mead Earle, "Introduction," in Edward Mead Earle, ed., *The Makers of Modern Strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1943), p. vii; Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), p. 13; Richard Rosecrance and Arthur A. Stein, "Beyond Realism: The Study of Grand Strategy," in Richard Rosecrance and Arthur A. Stein, eds., *The Domestic Bases of Grand Strategy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 4-6; and Stephen M. Walt, "The Case for Finite Containment," *International Security* 14:1 (Summer 1989), p. 6. As David Lake points out, a grand strategy is distinct from national military, foreign, and economic policies; for the operational requirements of military planning, the art of diplomacy, and the economic policies of mobilization and extraction together comprise the overall concept of grand strategy. Moreover, there is a symbiotic relationship between a grand strategy and its economic, military, and diplomatic components. For example, military policy is not merely one part of a strategic plan; it is one of a complicated set of factors whose interactions with each other direct the formulation of a grand strategy, and that in turn is itself driven by the strategy of which it is a part. For more on this "strategic synthesis," see Alan S. Milward, *War, Economy and Society, 1939-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), p. 22. In this study, I focus exclusively on the external dimensions of grand strategy designed to meet different foreign threats. This is distinct from Lake's project which examines how states pool resources with partners in the face of a specific adversary.

reduce the costs of its international posture.²⁸ Moreover, a state can choose to bolster security preparedness in response to changes in the international balance of power through the mobilization of domestic might, creating a substitution effect between different international and domestic strategies.²⁹ In deciding among available strategies, a leadership must not only make trade-offs between various international costs and benefits, but balance those considerations against the domestic costs and benefits associated with each option. Thus, an optimal strategy balances the demand for international action prescribed by exogenous circumstances with a state's political will, war-fighting preparedness, and defense industrial resource base.

The empirical question of this study is, why are some states more prone than others to select sub-optimal grand strategies? Such a self-defeating strategy is defined here as one marred by a persistent asymmetry between foreign commitments and national capabilities. This is reflected in the degree to which different policy instruments are integrated in support of strategic objectives. An excessive reaction to international pressures stems from policies that work at cross purposes. In other words, the direct measure of self-defeat rests with the level of inconsistency between diplomatic, military, and defense industrial policies that comprise a state's grand strategy.³⁰ The efficacy of a

²⁸Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, pp. 187-198.

²⁹See especially David A. Lake, *Superpower Strategies: The State and the Production of Security*; Benjamin A. Most and Harvey Starr, "International Relations Theory, Foreign Policy Substitutability, and 'Nice' Laws," *World Politics* 36 (April 1984), pp. 383-406; Michael N. Barnett, *Confronting the Costs of War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 19-50; and James D. Morrow, "Arms Versus Allies: Tradeoffs in the Search for Security," *International Organization* 47:2 (Spring 1993), pp. 213-217.

³⁰Self-defeat should not be equated simply with a state's inability to stay the course demanded of strategic interaction. For example, a state may prove capable of realizing its potential power, but nonetheless suffer defeat at the hands of an adversary possessing superior strength. The concept, rather, is related to the efficiency of balancing the ends and means of its grand strategy for coping with international threats and opportunities. For similar discussions, see Charles A. Kupchan, *The Vulnerability of Empire*, p. 3, footnote 5; Arthur Stein, "Domestic Constraints, Extended Deterrence, and the Incoherence of Grand Strategy: The United States, 1938-1950," pp. 99-101; and Alan C. Lamborn, *The Price of Power: Risk and Foreign Policy in Britain, France, and Germany* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1991), 58-61.

strategy lies in the balance between a state's adopted and potential responses to international pressures, rather than on adverse outcomes or the reactions of an opposing state. The latter can derive from the superiority of an adversary or factors endogenous to its own decision-making process, rather than from strategic interaction. The reaction by an adversary matters only to the extent that it places additional requirements on a state's grand strategy that over-tax its resource base. Thus, the twin problems of over- and under-commitment directly reflect the internal coherence of a state's grand strategy.

At the domestic level, there are significant constraints that impede a frictionless convergence of international imperatives and potential power into a coherent grand strategy. Specifically, there exist domestic political factors that limit a state's capacities to mobilize national resources or to extend foreign commitments for international competitive or cooperative endeavors. These internal political constraints can cause a state to be over-zealous or under-achieving in its commitments to strategic engagement, irrespective of the cost-benefit ratio prescribed by the international environment. In this regard, while states remain free to choose among particular strategies for meeting international exigencies, their efficiency in doing so is circumscribed by prevailing domestic political constraints.

The potential balance between state capacities for extending foreign commitments and procuring national capabilities yields four possible variants of grand strategy. As delineated in Figure 1, these strategies differ with respect to the balance between commitments and capabilities. Cell 1 depicts *synchronized* strategies, characterized by internal congruence between foreign commitments and national capabilities. Such strategies emerge from unconstrained domestic capacities to formulate coherent strategic responses to international circumstances and to oversee their consistent implementation. Cell 2 depicts an *over-zealous* strategy that results from when a state's capacity to extend foreign commitments outstrips that to procure national military capabilities.

Alternatively, as captured in Cell 3, strategies of *under-achievement* arise in situations where there are constraints on the extension of commitments that exceed the national capacity to mobilize potential security assets. Finally, as reflected in Cell 4, *paralysis* is the consequence of an incapacitated political leadership, unable to extend foreign commitments or to mobilize potential national strength in response to prevailing international conditions. This study focuses exclusively on the twin problems of over-zealousness and under-achievement.

A Review of the Literature

Why do states choose particular grand strategies over others in the pursuit of security? Why do these variable responses to the exigencies of the international environment carry different consequences for the balance between power and policy? Systematic explanations for strategic choice and self-defeat can be classified into four categories, corresponding to primary emphasis on either the interaction between states, the political interaction within a state, the learning or cognitive disposition of a leadership, or some particular combination of the above.³¹

The International System

Explanations for patterns of state behavior found at the international level have three assumptions in common. First, states constitute the primary unit of analysis.

³¹For the most part, classic accounts of Soviet grand strategy parallel these analytical lines of division.

Second, they are treated as if they are unitary, rational actors, sensitive to the costs and benefits of action. Third, international anarchy serves as the overarching ordering principle that motivates state behavior. From these fundamental tenets several different approaches are derived for explaining state behavior.

The most prominent international level explanation is neo-realism.³² This ultra-parsimonious theory attributes general patterns of state behavior to the imperatives of the international system. In the anarchic international system, where survival is a constant consideration, states must adopt grand strategies to secure relative position. Great powers seek to balance against adverse changes in the distribution of power among states. In a bipolar context, superpowers pursue security internally with the extraction or mobilization of domestic resources. Secondary powers are not strong enough to make significant contributions to superpower security, compelling polar rivals to resort to unilateral countermeasures. In a multipolar setting, major powers externally balance against opposing states, tying their welfare to alliance commitments. In both scenarios, the general inference is that states *automatically* adopt balancing strategies for restoring international stability in the face of real or perceived shifts in power.³³

The parsimony of neo-realism, while appealing for its sweeping theoretical propositions based on assumptions of functional and motivational similarity of states,

³²See especially Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Relations*; and Joseph Grieco, *Cooperation Among Nations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 1-50.

³³See Walt's amendment that states respond directly to perceived threats rather than to objective shifts in the balance of power. Despite the fact that he introduces individual level explanations of perception into his calculus of alliance behavior, he remains an ardent proponent of structural realism. See Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*. Among Sovietologists, there is a school that attributes Moscow's foreign policy to the action-reaction dynamics of the external threat environment. See for example Arnold L. Horelick and Myron Rush, *Strategic Power and Soviet Foreign Policy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966); Robert Legvold, "The Nature of the Soviet System," *Foreign Affairs* 56:1 (October 1977), pp. 49-71; Charles Gati, "The Stalinist Legacy in Soviet Foreign Policy," in Robbin F. Laird and Erik P. Hoffman, eds., *Soviet Foreign Policy in a Changing World* (New York: Aldine Publishing, 1986), pp. 16-28; and Hannes Adomeit, *Soviet Risk-Taking in Crisis Behavior* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1982), pp. 267-274.

comes at significant costs for explaining the specific strategies adopted by states. First, neo-realism makes the problematic assumption that states are able to form timely, coherent responses to exogenous pressures for alignment or internal balancing. The translation of pressures for international balancing is presumed to be a frictionless process, irrespective of any domestic political or societal constraints on a state's capacity to mobilize resources or extend foreign commitments. Yet as the examples of self-defeat suggest, states do not necessarily respond immediately or adequately to shifts in the balance of power. Realists themselves apparently recognize the limits to their perspective by claiming that states must ultimately resort to war as a consequence of their tardiness in forming balancing alliances to resist aggressors.³⁴ Given the various patterns of adjustment, and the potential drain that this incoherence has on the international position of states, the neglect of self-defeat is a critical oversight.

The lasting Soviet experience with self-defeat poses an unambiguous example of the shortcomings of neo-realism. While it provides a rationale for the Soviet preoccupation with building-up its conventional and nuclear arsenal, as well as the Kremlin's unilateral commitment to the primacy of defense-industrial concerns, neo-realism fails to explain Moscow's persistent expansion into the Third World since the late 1950s.³⁵ If, as Kenneth Waltz contends, the periphery only marginally affects the balance of power among the dominant states in a bipolar system, then it is inexplicable

³⁴For this line of criticism of realism, see especially Arthur A. Stein, "Domestic Constraints, Extended Deterrence, and the Incoherence of Grand Strategy: The United States, 1938-1950," pp. 98-99; and Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire*, 10-13. It is important to note while even diehard structural realists, such as Waltz, acknowledge the potential for over- and under- commitments to alliances among states (manifest in strategies of chainganging and buckpassing, respectively), they claim that these pathologies occur only under multipolarity. See Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Relations*, p. 67.

³⁵For classic accounts of Moscow's costly adventurism in the Third World, see Bruce D. Porter, *The USSR in Third World Conflicts: Soviet Arms and Diplomacy in Local Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Moscow's Third World Strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); Francis Fukuyama, *Moscow's Post-Brezhnev Reassessment of the Third World* R-3337-USDP (Santa Monica: RAND, February 1986); and Stephen T. Hosmer and Thomas W. Wolfe, *Soviet Policy and Practice Toward Third World Conflicts* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1983).

from his structural perspective why the Soviets in the Third World both over-extended themselves, with highly concessionary terms of trade with client states, and confronted the U.S., risking conflagration of superpower hostilities. That the Soviets allowed this pattern to persist beyond the point of diminishing marginal returns to their international position is especially puzzling.

Second, neo-realism is indeterminate with regards to the substitutability of strategic responses to international pressures. Simply stated, there are different means available to states for achieving the same ends. As mentioned in the previous section, states select among a host of strategies for coping with international threats. Under certain conditions, a state may choose to bolster security preparedness by mobilizing national military capabilities rather than by shoring up external alliances, creating tradeoffs between the attendant consequences of arming and allying. As suggested by a growing strain in the literature, it is the substitution effect between alternative postures, defined by the relative balance between the costs and benefits attached to each option, that determines the particular strategy adopted by a state.³⁶

The indeterminacy of neo-realism is especially revealed when applied to the Soviet case. In general, the demands of the international environment permitted a wide range of Soviet responses. First, Soviet leaderships reacted differently to similar international conditions, as reflected in the distinct versions of *peaceful coexistence* and *new thinking*. In the 1970s, the Brezhnev leadership responded to strategic parity, economic stringency, and increased peace-offerings by the West with a highly competitive strategy for exploiting Soviet military power that was grossly over-zealous.

³⁶For discussion of the "substitution effect" between alternative grand strategies, see especially David A. Lake, *Superpower Strategies: The State and the Production of Security*; Benjamin A. Most and Harvey Starr, "International Relations Theory, Foreign Policy Substitutability, and 'Nice' Laws," pp. 383-406; and Michael N. Barnett and Jack S. Levy, "Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignments: The Case of Egypt, 1962-1973," *International Organization* 45:3 (Summer 1991), p. 370-379.

The Gorbachev leadership, in contrast, chose a strategy of reconciliation with Western rivals when confronting a similar strategic position. Leaders in the Kremlin embraced unilateral concessions as catalysts for a benign spiral of international cooperation that ultimately got out of hand and resulted in strategic capitulation and under-achievement.³⁷ Second, as demonstrated by the acrimonious disputes within each Soviet leadership (most overtly displayed during Gorbachev's tenure) there were no self-evident courses of action prescribed by the international structure. As discerned by prominent Western scholars, there were competing Soviet perspectives on the credible implications of the international changes for the definition of national security and utility of select policy tools.³⁸ In the Gorbachev period, for example, senior officials were in fundamental disagreement over the nature of power and threat in the international system that produced rival political platforms concerning Soviet foreign and security policy.³⁹

Moreover, the final episode of Soviet self-defeat is completely inconsistent with the neo-realist claim that an acute sensitivity to relative standing precludes extensive cooperation between great powers. The deepening Soviet commitment to international cooperation as the situation unmistakably began to jeopardize the regime's survival, highlighted by excessive unilateral concessions in strategic and conventional arms control

³⁷For a similar characterization, see William Curti Wohlforth, *The Elusive Balance: Power and Perceptions During the Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 252-292, and R. Craig Nation, *Black Earth, Red Star* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), pp. 321-327.

³⁸For a sample, see William Zimmerman, *Soviet Perspectives on International Relations, 1956-1967* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969); Franklyn Griffiths, "The Sources of American Conduct: Soviet Perspectives and Their Policy Implications," *International Security* 9:2 (Fall 1985), pp. 3-50; Allen Lynch, *The Soviet Study of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Margot Light, *The Soviet Theory of International Relations* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988); and Richard D. Anderson, *Public Politics in an Authoritarian State*, pp. 254-259.

³⁹For a succinct summary of the politically contested conceptual tenets and policy recommendations concerning Soviet national security under Gorbachev, see Stephen M. Meyer, "The Sources and Prospects of Gorbachev's New Thinking on Security," *International Security* 13:2 (Fall 1988), pp. 124-163; and Bruce Parrott, "Soviet National Security Under Gorbachev," *Problems of Communism* 37:6 (November-December 1988), pp. 1-36.

and the final acquiescence to a reunited Germany as member of a hostile military alliance, directly contradicts neo-realist expectations of "defensive positionalism" and preventive aggression in the face of relative decline.⁴⁰ That the dramatic end to the Cold War could be found in neither apocalyptic conflict nor mutual accommodation among the dominant states in the international system, suggests that strategic choices extend beyond narrow structural constraints.

In contrast to neo-realism lies a neo-liberal vision of the international system dominated by self-interested state actors engaged in mutually rewarding exchange.⁴¹ While neo-liberals accept structuralist claims that states, as unitary rational actors, occupy the primary unit of analysis and that state behavior is constrained by the absence of a central authority, they point out that cooperative strategies are the norm. For neo-liberals, anarchy connotes uncertainty regarding the enactment and enforcement of mutually beneficial bargains between states with common interests. Cheating, rather than defensive positionalism, is the major obstacle to international cooperation. This is not insurmountable, for states, as rational egoists, independently evaluate gains and losses. Because states seek primarily the greatest possible individual gains in mixed-interest interactions, strategies based on conditional cooperation reinforced by reciprocity,

⁴⁰See Joseph Grieco, *Cooperation Among Nation*, pp. 36-50.

⁴¹For classic neo-liberal accounts, see Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984); Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation* (New York: Basic Books, 1984); Stephen D. Krasner, "Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables," in Stephen D. Krasner, ed., *International Regimes* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983); and Kenneth A. Oye, "Explaining Cooperation Under Anarchy: Hypotheses and Strategies," in Kenneth A. Oye, ed., *Cooperation Under Anarchy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986). For critiques of neo-liberalism and the fundamental distinction between it and neo-realism, see Arthur Stein, *Why Nations Cooperate* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 3-24; Robert Powell, "Anarchy in International Relations Theory: The Neorealist-Neoliberal Debate," *International Organization* 48:2 (Spring 1994), pp. 329-344; and Joseph Grieco, "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation," in David A. Baldwin, ed., *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), p. 116-142. It is important to note the former two authors suggest that the debate between neo-realism and neo-liberalism is mis-specified, fixating on contrived differences at the expense of neglecting the various strategic settings that condition diverse behavior. Grieco, on the other hand, focuses on the different core assumptions concerning utility functions in the two dominant strains in contemporary international relations theory.

extended time horizons, and reduced verification and punishment costs are prescribed by the international system.

Despite sanguine expectations regarding the prospects for international cooperation, neo-liberalism too is at a loss for explaining the pathology of self-defeat. Recognizing the inherent prospects for conditional cooperation associated with mixed-interest interactions, neo-liberals fail to specify why certain states tend to overreact in their strategies for international cooperation. It is not clear why some states, as evidenced by the collapse of Soviet international power, transform opportunities for obvious gains from exchange into absolute losses.

A third approach broadens the focus on international structure to include the incentives for strategic behavior driven by the security dilemma.⁴² Under conditions of international anarchy, a state must prepare for the use of force to guarantee its own security. The problem is that self-help strategies for bolstering a state's security can simultaneously increase the vulnerability of other states, irrespective of the intentions of interacting parties. This creates a spiral of tension between rival states, as each, in the process of improving its own security, threatens the interests of the other, reinforcing mutual insecurity. The intensity of the security dilemma varies directly with the relative advantages of offensive, as opposed to defensive military technology, and with the objective difficulties of distinguishing between offensive and defense policies and weapons systems.

⁴²John H. Herz, *Political Realism and Political Idealism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), p. 4; George H. Quester, *Offense and Defense in the International System* (New York: John Wiley, 1977); and Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," pp. 167-214. According to some, the emphasis on "nonprovocative defense" and "defensive defense" under Gorbachev was driven largely by recognition of the need to extricate U.S.-Soviet relations from the security dilemma. See especially, George H. Quester, "The Soviet Opening to Nonprovocative Defense," in Robert Jervis and Seweryn Bialer, eds., *Soviet-American Relations After the Cold War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), pp. 133-147; and Jack Snyder, "Limiting Offensive Conventional Forces: Soviet Proposals and Western Options," *International Security* 12 (Spring 1988), pp. 48-77.

According to some, it is the perceived intensity of the security dilemma that determines the pathologies of over-zealousness and under-achievement in international balancing.⁴³ Perceiving offensive strategies to be dominant, as was the case on the eve of World War I, states value unconditional alignment with allies, entrapping themselves in a process of reckless escalation of hostilities. Conversely, the less sensitive states are to the security behavior of a rival and the more confident they are in being able to stalemate an aggressor, the more prone they are to "pass the buck" in their international commitments, free-riding on the balancing efforts of others. This was evident in the defensive military postures and concessionary diplomacy adopted by both Britain and France for coping with German expansion prior to World War II.⁴⁴ In either case, the intensity of the security dilemma intervenes to disrupt the efficiency of the international balancing process.

There are several flaws, however, in the logical underpinnings of the offense/defense balance approach. First, there is no clear distinction between offensive and defensive technologies or operations. The same military hardware can be deployed in both offensive and defensive modes, and strategies for combat consist of the simultaneous execution of offensive and defensive operations. This is compounded in the nuclear era, as technical criteria at the strategic nuclear level do not translate directly in shaping the intensity of the security dilemma at the conventional level. Second, there are no universal advantages accorded solely to offensive or defensive technologies or strategies. Variations in the nature of operations, degree of interdependence of hardware,

⁴³Christensen and Snyder present an argument for how different perceptions of the balance of offensive and defensive advantages determine the pathologies of over-commitment and under-commitment to strategic engagement. See Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity," pp. 137-168. Additionally, Van Evera demonstrates how the "cult of the offensive," incited by the security dilemma, precipitated over-extending strategies. See Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of War*.

⁴⁴See Barry Posen, *Sources of Military Doctrine*, pp. 232-233.

terrain of battle, and level of integration with doctrine and war plans, muddle any attempt to label operational advantage on the basis of technical criteria alone.⁴⁵

On the empirical plane, the record of Soviet self-defeat for the most part is not consistent with the expectations derived from the offense/defense balance. In a world of "mutual assured destruction," defense is unambiguously dominant. The balance of terror between opposing states renders their survival considerations perfunctory, making the costs of war prohibitive and reducing the salience of shifts in relative power.⁴⁶ The system-wide dominance of defense since the late 1960s, however, does not account for the excessively competitive grand strategy pursued by the Brezhnev regime in the 1970s. The competitive strategy of "peaceful coexistence" was premised on de-coupling the dominance of offensive concerns generated at the conventional level from the defense dominance stipulated by parity at the nuclear level. Moreover, in response to an ameliorated security dilemma, we would expect that any inefficiency in the Soviet reaction to international opportunities or threats would have taken a highly passive form, marked by Moscow's aloofness and disinterest in international engagement. That it took the Soviets almost two decades to exhibit such behavior suggests that something other than the security dilemma was driving Moscow's grand strategy.

⁴⁵For critiques of the offense/defense balance literature, see Jack S. Levy, "The Offense/Defense Balance of Military Technology: A Theoretical and Historical Analysis," *International Studies Quarterly* 28 (1984), pp. 219-238; Jonathan Shimshoni, "Technology, Military Advantage, and World War I," *International Security* 15:3 (Winter 1990/91), pp. 187-215; and Ariel Levite, *Offense and Defense in Israeli Military Doctrine* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990).

⁴⁶See discussion in Robert Jervis, *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), pp. 74-106; Charles L. Glaser, *Analyzing Strategic Nuclear Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 61-99; James M. Goldgeier and Michael McFaul, "A Tale of Two Worlds: Core and Periphery in the Post-Cold War Era," *International Organization* 46:2 (Spring 1992), p. 478; Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "The Changing Nature of World Power," *Political Science Quarterly* 105:2 (1990), pp. 177-192; and Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of War*. For some, MAD is a structural feature of the international system that induces superpowers to function as "joint custodians" in managing their relations. See Steven Weber, "Realism, Detente, and Nuclear Weapons," *International Organization* 44:1 (Winter 1990), pp. 55-82.

Cognitive Theories and Learning

Alternative explanations for self-defeat in grand strategy also can be found in the field of cognitive psychology. Proponents of this perspective find grist in the noticeable differences between the assumptions of rational decision-making and the attribution, estimation, and judgment processes that individual actors generally use in the formulation of grand strategy. They explain this discrepancy in terms of the need for devising mechanisms to cope with the extraordinary uncertainty and complexity of decision-making. The manner in which actors attempt to simplify decision-making may compel them to neglect balancing the ends and means of strategy, leading them down the path of self-defeat. According to cognitive theorists, this can be characterized broadly as the result of motivated or unmotivated bias in the processing of incoming information.⁴⁷

Adherents of cognitive dissonance theory contend that individual actors strive to maintain consistent belief structures, even in the face of incongruent information. In an effort to avoid the political or psychological pressures tied to amending pre-existing belief systems, they ignore contradictions between different goals in strategy. To facilitate avoidance of these tradeoffs, actors process only information that confirms pre-conceived notions and downplay the importance of discrepancies. As reinforcement of dissonance, they bolster rigid images with overwhelming confidence in the correctness of their vision, making them even more resistant to discrepant information.⁴⁸ The net result

⁴⁷For the distinction between motivated, or affect driven, and unmotivated, or purely cognitive, dimensions for understanding the role of beliefs in foreign policy, see Robert Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping With Threat," in Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and Janice Gross Stein, eds., *Psychology and Deterrence* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), pp. 13-33.

⁴⁸Richard Ned Lebow, *Between Peace and War* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), pp. 101-147.

is a steadfast commitment to a particular strategy, irrespective of any shortcomings or imbalances incurred by its implementation.

As applied to Soviet grand strategy, cognitive dissonance theory attributes self-defeat to the purposive neglect of information that was incongruent with pre-conceived images of international affairs. In an effort to avoid the pains of reform, for example, the Khrushchev and Brezhnev leaderships adhered to highly offensive strategies of *peaceful coexistence*. Soviet leaders ignored evidence of contradictions across concurrent policy strains that were undermining specified objectives by fostering resilience in the Western counter-balancing coalition. Cognitive dissonance encouraged the formulation and pursuit of tautological strategies without reconciling inconsistencies between the fundamental objectives of cooperating and competing with the West.⁴⁹ As a consequence, Soviet grand strategy remained characteristically self-defeating.

Other theorists point to the mental shortcuts that arise to help individuals cope with their limited capacities for coming to grips with uncertainty as the source of bias in the emergence and persistence of self-defeat. Overwhelmed by the complexity and uncertainty of decision-making, actors devise schemas to organize incoming information. Based on certain "causal ideas," these cold cognitive belief structures serve as road maps that show actors how to maximize their interests under uncertainty. Individuals draw on personal experiences and use historical analogies to process incoming information and to base their policy judgments. Accordingly, new information is incorporated to fit pre-existing images rather than synthesized to update cognitive maps.⁵⁰

⁴⁹As discussed by Snyder, Brezhnev's "correlation of forces" argument was non-falsifiable. Threatening international conditions reinforced militancy and militarism in Soviet strategy by overtly demonstrating the need for vigilance. Similarly, Western conciliatory gestures bolstered the credibility of hardline platforms by demonstrating the advantages associated with a strategy of "peace through strength." See Jack Snyder, "International Leverage on Soviet Domestic Change," *World Politics* 42:1 (October 1989), p. 15.

⁵⁰Deborah Welch Larson, *Origins of Containment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), pp. 24-65; Judith Goldstein, *Ideas, Interests, and American Trade Policy*, 1-22; Yuen Foong Kong, *Analogies at*

Schema theorists infer that Soviet self-defeat was a direct outgrowth of the resilience of causal ideas concerning the relationship between the ends and means of strategy. Brezhnev grossly overestimated the need to demonstrate commitment to advancing the socialist cause in the Third World as a lure for Western respect of geostrategic parity. Conversely, Gorbachev overestimated the need for making unilateral concessions to the West as a signal of his sincere commitment to international cooperation. In both cases, the imbalance in strategy persisted as interpretive guides remained entrenched.⁵¹

In a slightly modified application of schema theory, James Goldgeier posits that the different episodes of counterproductive foreign policy decision-making experienced by the four Soviet leaders of the Cold War period (Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, and Gorbachev) were the result of each's strict application of formative domestic political lessons to international bargaining. He argues that victory in key domestic political battles that brought each to the top of the Soviet political system created individual schemas that shaped respective strategies and tactics for coping with future political conflict in the international arena. For example, Gorbachev's repeated failure to seize opportunities for bargaining leverage and unwillingness to commit to a coherent and realistic package of proposals throughout the course of negotiations on German reunification were due to his "schooling" in domestic politics that taught him to avoid political commitments and employ coercive tactics in pressuring his adversaries. Deprived of a credible stick to wrangle concessions from the West, he simply chose to

War: Korea, Munich, Dien Dien Phu, and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

⁵¹ See especially discussions on the persistence of bandwagoning and balancing images among the Soviet elite that drove bouts with self-defeat during the Brezhnev and Gorbachev leaderships, respectively, in William Curti Wohlforth, *The Elusive Balance: Power and Perception During the Cold War*, pp. 184-222; and 252-292.

avoid staking out firm positions, thus bolstering the legitimacy of the US position and finally capitulating to a highly unfavorable result- a unified Germany with full membership in NATO.⁵²

A third alternative to expected utility as an approach to foreign policy decision-making is prospect theory. Proponents of this theory posit that "individuals evaluate outcomes with respect to deviations from a reference point rather than with respect to net assessment levels, that their identification of this reference point is a critical variable, that they give more weight to losses than to comparable gains, and that they are generally risk averse with respect to gains and risk acceptant with respect to losses."⁵³ In foreign policy, the way that decision-makers frame a predicament, as a potential gain or loss, thus dictates their propensities to undertake gambles in pursuit of overly competitive or cooperative policies. According to one author, the fear of avoiding geostrategic losses underpinned the recklessness in Soviet international behavior. Determined to defend the *status-quo* in the Middle East, which was perceived to hinge upon the preservation of a socialist-oriented Syrian regime aligned with the Soviet Union, the Brezhnev leadership wittingly accepted the risks of provoking an Arab-Israeli war in 1967 that undermined Moscow's standing in the region.⁵⁴

⁵²James M. Goldgeier, *Leadership Style and Soviet Foreign Policy: Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, and Gorbachev* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994).

⁵³Jack Levy, "An Introduction to Prospect Theory," *Political Psychology*, 13:2 (1992), p. 171. For a seminal piece in the field, see A. Tversky and D. Kahneman, "The Framing of Decisions and the Psychology of Choice," *Science* 211 (1981), pp. 453-458. For applications to foreign policy decision-making, see especially Robert Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," *Political Psychology* 13:2 (1992), pp. 187-204; Arthur Stein, *Why Nations Cooperate*, pp. 91-95; and Janice Gross Stein, "International Cooperation and Loss Avoidance: Framing the Problem," in Janice Gross Stein and L. Pauly, eds., *Choosing to Cooperate: How States Avoid a Loss* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

⁵⁴Audrey McInerney, "Prospect Theory and Soviet Policy Towards Syria, 1966-1967," *Political Psychology*, 13:2 (1992), pp. 265-281.

Despite growing interest, the causal connections between cognitive theories and self-defeat are analytically suspect. First, the strategic beliefs motivated by the need to avoid stress, fail to account for the lasting nature of images in non-crisis situations. The psychological barriers to tradeoffs between competing values induced by time and pressure constraints do not obtain in the formulation of long-term strategies for interaction. Second, cold cognitive limitations are unable to account for either conscious pursuit of self-defeating strategies, or eventual adjustment to balance beliefs with strategic realities. The use of inappropriate analogies, drawn from either international or domestic political experiences, as the basis for grand strategy can result not only from information deficiencies, but from purposive action. Leaders can cling to outmoded strategies in one realm in order to shore-up their political position in another issue area. In this regard, the stickiness of sub-optimal strategic images results from rational calculation by politicians seeking to maximize their utility in several arenas, either simultaneously or sequentially.⁵⁵ Moreover, it is logically indeterminate from schema theories why different "lessons" or analogies are applied to similar circumstances by a single individual. Beliefs that produce extremist behavior can change when repeatedly exposed to contradictory information. Finally, prospect theory generally fails to specify how a decision-maker identifies a reference point, assigns values and probabilities to each situation and course of action, and balances immediate versus future risks and gains.

Examination of the Soviet case exposes these analytical shortcomings. First, causal beliefs were not evenly distributed among the Soviet elite. While the leadership was careful to project an image of unanimity, there were many differences in the private beliefs regarding the consistency of strategy across the various policy strains.⁵⁶ Under

⁵⁵George Tsebelis, *Nested Games* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

⁵⁶For classic discussions of the different Soviet political "camps" associated with divergent visions of the character of international relations and the nature of the Western threat, see Stephen Gilbert, eds., *Soviet Images of America* (New York: Crane, Russak, 1977); Morton Schwartz, *Soviet Perceptions of the United*

Brezhnev's leadership these began to percolate upwards, as certain decision-makers began to challenge the effectiveness of the offensive détente strategy, pointing to the negative externalities for the Soviet economy and for the strategic relationship with the U.S. generated by activism in the Third World. Second, cognitive theories poorly specify the process of change in grand strategy. They do not clarify when certain schemas are either invoked or neglected, and fail to suggest why actors are able to reject some causal beliefs and not others. Gorbachev, on the one hand, stuck to his proven method of avoiding political commitments in bargaining over German reunification; on the other hand, he stood firm with concrete proposals for unilateral troops reductions in his oft-cited UN speech in 1988. Moreover, cognitive theories fail to explain why the Gorbachev leadership was adept at discarding those beliefs that wedded the Soviets to excessive competition, allowing for radical adjustment in the direction of grand strategy, but remained handcuffed by those schemas that perpetuated the legacy of self-defeat. Finally, prospect theory does not account for the Gorbachev leadership's willingness to retreat not only from outposts in the Third World, but from strategic positions in East-Central Europe and on the Russian border that carried extremely dire consequences for the Soviet Union's geopolitical standing.

Recently, attempts have been made to salvage cognitive/psychological explanations for stasis and change in strategy by focusing on the impact of learning at the elite level. The learning thesis proposes that the extent to which strategy changes is the direct outgrowth of the degree of cognitive re-evaluation among elites concerning the alignment of ends and means in past policy. Beliefs change in response to a sudden and

States (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); John Lenczowski, *Soviet Perceptions of U.S. Foreign Policy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982); Franklyn Griffiths, "The Sources of American Conduct," *International Security* 9 (Fall 1984), pp. 3-50; Michael J. Sodaro, *Moscow, Germany, and the West From Khrushchev to Gorbachev* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990); James Gerard Richter, *Khrushchev's Double Bind* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994); and Richard D. Anderson, *Public Politics in an Authoritarian State*.

overwhelming recognition of the failures of previous policies. Learning can be simple, involving a better understanding of the proper tactics for achieving a desired goal; or learning can be complex, entailing a change in the content and structure of beliefs and objectives.⁵⁷ In this capacity, ideas and intellectual frameworks matter tremendously for the persistence or redress of self-defeat in grand strategy. Conduits of cognitive re-evaluation range from the inevitable consequences of modernization and the emergence of an enlightened leadership, to the consensual knowledge communicated by transnational epistemic communities. In the realm of decision-making, learning theorists attribute the dramatic change in Soviet strategy under Gorbachev to a cognitive reconsideration of the utility of competitive objectives.

The focus on learning, however, does not explain the timing of change in a state's grand strategy. As evidenced by the Soviet case, the pattern of change in strategy does not conform closely to the predictions of the learning thesis. Cognitive re-evaluation within the leadership took place years before the dramatic turnabout in Soviet strategy. By the early 1980s, politicians began to echo publicly the concerns expressed in the early 1970s by academics and *instituchiki* regarding the efficacy of Soviet grand strategy.⁵⁸ Yet it was not until several years into the Gorbachev period that radical behavioral changes appeared in Soviet international posture.

Second, proponents of the learning thesis fail to account for divergent learning within a collective leadership setting. In the Soviet case, different elites tended to draw

⁵⁷See the compilation of articles assessing the strengths of and limits to applying the "learning thesis" for understanding international behavior, in George W. Breslauer and Philip E. Tetlock, eds., *Learning in U.S. and Soviet Foreign Policy* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991).

⁵⁸This was evidenced most openly by the outpouring of critiques concerning the negative balance between the economic, political, military, and ideological costs and benefits of Soviet involvement with Third World radicals. See especially, Elizabeth K. Valkenier, *The Soviet Union and the Third World* (New York: Praeger, 1983); Jerry F. Hough, *The Struggle for the Third World* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1986); and Francis Fukuyama, "Patterns of Soviet Third World Policy," *Problems of Communism* 36:5 (September-October 1987), pp. 1-13.

different lessons when presented similar evidence. Under Gorbachev, for instance, the foreign and defense ministers reached opposite conclusions from the history of U.S.-Soviet arms control concerning the nature of international relations and the utility of increased defense expenditures. Moreover, why was the leadership more sensitive to the failure of highly competitive policies than to the perennial inconsistency between ends and means of strategy?

Third, studies on learning are under-specified partly because they do not illuminate how actors can draw definitive lessons from ambiguous circumstances. For example, U.S. policy towards the war in Afghanistan was not clear cut, allowing Soviet politicians to learn divergent lessons concerning the "correctness" of their policy.⁵⁹ In general, strict learning approaches cannot account for the connection between ideas and behavior, and are unable to explain why certain ideas and constituencies win out over others. While learning provides an evaluative standard for change in the minds of leaders, its political relevance in collective decision-making settings remains under-specified.

Domestic Political Explanations

In an effort to address the conceptual and empirical deficiencies of international and cognitive/psychological arguments there is a popular trend in the study of policy-making to locate the sources of grand strategy in domestic political factors. Scholars emphasize the primacy of internal political dimensions of national security decision-

⁵⁹Sarah E. Mendelson, "Internal Battles and External Wars: Politics, Learning, and the Soviet Withdrawal From Afghanistan," *World Politics* 45:3 (April 1993), pp. 332-337; and Ted Hopf, *Peripheral Visions: Deterrence Theory and American Foreign Policy in the Third World, 1965-1990* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1994).

making for explaining divergent state responses to the exigencies of the international environment. This concentration on "domestic politics" broadly encompasses alternative explanations for strategic behavior nestled in different state-society relations, organizational politics, coalition-building processes, political succession cycles, and leadership authority-building stages.

A common domestic politics approach to the study of grand strategy focuses on the state-society relationship. This involves analysis of the institutional arrangements that channel public demands into the formulation of grand strategy. Differences among strategies are attributed to variations in the autonomy of government structures from societal demands.⁶⁰ Weak states, such as democracies, that are beholden to societal groups and the validation of its citizenry are traditionally understood to be restricted in their capacities to mobilize national resources and maneuver in the international environment. The state constitutes the aggregation of various and competing societal groups that pull strategy in different directions, thus creating gaps between power and policy. For example, the American foreign policy executive is commonly viewed as hamstrung in devising a balanced grand strategy by constitutional provisions for separation of the power, divided partisan control over the direction of the nation's foreign policy, and the loss of executive credibility in the aftermath of the Vietnam War.⁶¹ Classic accounts of imperialist expansion locate the driving force behind self-defeat in the capture of the state by self-interested private actors. It is asserted that certain sectors of society benefit directly from expansion and possess the financial capital to enlist

⁶⁰Peter J. Katzenstein, "Conclusion: Domestic Structures and Strategies of Foreign Economic Policy," in Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *Between Power and Plenty* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1978), pp. 295-336; and Stephen D. Krasner, "Approaches to the State," *Comparative Politics* 16:2 (January 1984), pp. 223-246.

⁶¹See, for example, discussion in John E. Chubb and Paul E. Peterson, "American Political Institutions and the Problem of Governance," in John E. Chubb and Paul E. Peterson, eds., *Can the Government Govern?* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1989), pp. 1-30.

government officials to protect their interests and to pass on the costs to society at large, thus saddling the state with extensive foreign commitments.⁶² Furthermore, others argue that weak states, because they remain open to public opinion and the broad welfare concerns of society, are less inclined to adopt competitive strategies, especially towards other democracies.⁶³ Grand strategy decision-makers in strong states, conversely, are considered to be the purveyors of encompassing national interests and above the diffuse interests of society, thus possessing an incentive to keep self-defeating impulses in check. But precisely because the leadership is not held directly accountable to popular interests, authoritarian regimes are more prone to embrace expansionist and competitive strategies for extracting greater political rents and diverting societal concerns.⁶⁴

Propositions generated on the basis of state autonomy are not theoretically imperative. First, the relationship between parochial-minded interest groups and the state is highly suspect. There is little evidence that private groups shape directly the major strategic decisions of policy-makers. Second, given the mobility of capital and the ease of redirecting investment, the business community, typically identified as the most ardent proponent of empire building, has little incentive to obstruct retrenchment to restore the

⁶²For classic accounts identifying parochial minded financial elites and their quest to export capital as the primary culprit for over-expansion, see J.A. Hobson, *Imperialism: A Study*; and V.I. Lenin, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*.

⁶³For discussion of the restraining effects of public representation and the checks and balances embedded in domestic institutional arrangements, see Carol Ember, Melvin Ember, and Bruce Russett, "Peace Between Participatory Polities," *World Politics* 44:4 (July 1992), pp. 573-599; and Clifton T. Morgan and Sally Howard Campbell, "Domestic Structure, Decisional Constraints, and War: So Why Can't Democracies Fight?" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 35:2 (June 1991), pp. 187-211. On the pacifying effects peculiar to democratic political institutions, see Michael W. Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs, Part I," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 12 (1983), pp. 205-235; "Kant, Liberal Legacies, Foreign Affairs, Part II," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 12 (1983), pp. 323-353; and Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 38-42.

⁶⁴On the relationship between rent-seeking and expansion, see David A. Lake, "Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War," pp. 24-37. For a classic account of the Soviet regime's use of competitive international strategies as diversionary tactics in their constant quest for political legitimacy, see X, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs* 25 (July 1947), pp. 566-582.

equilibrium in strategy. Third, the unequal distribution of influence among organized interests in democracies, the propensity of populations "to rally around the flag," and the variable costs of aggression may explain a counter-inclination of democracies to embrace competitive strategies, especially towards non-democratic states. Finally, the institutional explanation for the absence of war between democratic states is both incomplete and spurious. If domestic political institutions characterized by openness to the restraining effects of public opinion and "checks and balances" shape the war-proneness of states, democracies should be peaceful in their relations with all states, not only with other democratic states; then pacifism should be associated with all states possessing these decisional constraints and should not be exclusive to democracies.⁶⁵

Explanations rooted in classic weak state theories also do not hold up to empirical scrutiny. First, the evidence generally does not support the claim that democracies are less war-prone than other forms of government that enjoy more autonomy from respective societal elements.⁶⁶ While democracies are less likely to fight each other, the frequency and intensity to which they find themselves embroiled in international conflict are no less than that experienced by autocratic regimes.⁶⁷ Moreover, the radical shift to a

⁶⁵Christopher Layne, "Kant or Cant: The Myth of Democratic Peace," *International Security* 19:2 (Fall 1994), p. 12.

⁶⁶Steve Chan, "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 28:4 (December 1984), pp. 617-648; R. J. Rummel, "Libertarianism and International Violence," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 27:1 (March 1983), pp. 27-71; Zeev Maoz and Nasrin Abdolali, "Regime Types and International Conflict, 1816-1976," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 33:1 (March 1989), pp. 3-35; Melvin Small and J. David Singer, "The War-proneness of Democratic Regimes, 1816-1965," *The Jerusalem Journal of International Relations* 1 (1976), pp. 57-69; Randolph M. Siverson and Julliann Emmons, "Birds of a Feather: Democratic Political Systems and Alliance Choices in the Twentieth Century," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 35 (1991), pp. 285-306.

⁶⁷Jack Levy, "Domestic Politics and War," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18 (1988), pp. 653-673. For an important critique of the statistical irrelevance of the findings related to the absence of war between democratic states, see especially David E. Spiro, "The Insignificance of the Liberal Peace," *International Security* 19:2 (Fall 1994), pp. 50-86.

cooperative strategy by the Gorbachev leadership stands in stark contrast to the presumed imperial bias attributed to authoritarian regimes.⁶⁸

Second, the contrasting U.S. and Soviet experiences with waging the Cold War highlight problems with the adjustment argument traditionally linked to the strong versus weak state dichotomy. As suggested by Aaron Friedberg, it was precisely the vulnerability of the American state to diverse interest group pressures that eased the U.S. toward coherent containment strategies for protracted competition with the Soviet Union.⁶⁹ Powerful domestic pressures that placed effective limits on defense spending, military manpower, and national industrial policy, forced the government to manage its grand strategy over the long haul. Conversely, the strong Soviet state, lacking intrusive societal checks on its ability to mobilize national resources for external commitments, transformed itself into a "garrison state" and was sapped by an insatiable militarism that ultimately led to its implosion. In short, the definitive state-society relationship of a polity may not determine the specific content or direction of grand strategy.

Alternatively, rival domestic level models locate the sources of grand strategy and self-defeat in the degree of effectiveness and cohesiveness of government organizations. Distinguishing between a state's autonomy from societal influences and its capacity to implement its independent preferences, this approach fixates on the internal make-up of the government apparatus.⁷⁰ The state, from this perspective, is comprised of a set of organizations that are delegated responsibilities to define and implement national policy.

⁶⁸Despite its democratic rhetoric, the Gorbachev regime maintained strict limits on the level of public participation in decision-making.

⁶⁹Aaron Friedberg, "Why Didn't the United States Become a Garrison State?," pp. 109-142.

⁷⁰On the distinction between state autonomy and capacity, see Peter J. Katzenstein, "Conclusion: Domestic Structures and Strategies for Foreign Economic Policy," pp. 295-336; Stephen D. Krasner, "Approaches to the State," pp. 223-246; Stephan Haggard, "The Politics of Adjustment: Lessons from the IMF's Extended Fund Facility," in Miles Kahler, ed., *The Politics of International Debt* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986); and Barry Ames, *Political Survival* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

Members of these government agencies are likely to be preoccupied with the resources and prestige of their organizations at the expense of remaining committed to the pursuit of encompassing national preferences. As such, the power and preferences of these different state actors circumscribe the capacity of the state to respond appropriately to overarching national security objectives.

At the crux of the debate among this strain of domestic level explanations is organizational theory. According to the traditional model, overly aggressive grand strategies arise from the rigid parochialism of government agencies tasked with implementing foreign and security policies. Typically, the emergence of highly offensive military strategies is attributed to the insulated behavior of military organizations preoccupied with protecting their "essential cores"-- increased budget shares, morale, and autonomy. Toward these ends, military organizations become mired in standard operating procedures that tend to generate offensive doctrines and war-fighting strategies. Strict adherence to these routines, driven by the need to avoid uncertainty, leads to inflexible military mobilization and operational plans that are excessively provocative and poorly integrated with overarching foreign policy goals. Strategic adjustment is incremental at best, and prodded by defeat in war or civilian intervention into military policy.⁷¹

That all organizations, in particular the military, are inert and unresponsive to the security needs of the state, is belied by the empirical record of policy innovation. As evidenced by the different reactions to new technological imperatives for weapons

⁷¹For classic discussions of organizational theory and overly aggressive grand strategies, see especially Barry Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine*; pp. 47-51; Jack Snyder, *Ideology of the Offensive* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), pp. 15-40; Jack Levy, "Organizational Routines and the Causes of War," *International Studies Quarterly*, 30 (1986), pp. 193-222. For applications to the Soviet case, see especially Edward L. Warner III, *The Military in Contemporary Soviet Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1977); Dale Herspring, *The Soviet High Command, 1967-89: Personalities and Politics* (Princeton University Press, 1990).

acquisitions and employment strategies, and varying propensities to slide into inadvertent war exhibited by military policy-makers at the outset of World War II, military organizations do not uniformly drive a state to self-defeat. Rather, as suggested by new wave of organizational scholars, there are forces within each organization that shape the preferences and behavior of particular agents, and determine the implications of those activities for the coherence of a state's grand strategy.

Recently, there have been new challenges to the classic assumption that all military organizations behave similarly, attributing variation in self-defeat to factors endogenous to organizations. Stephen Rosen, for instance, takes issues with conventional organizational assertions that policy change occurs only in the face of civilian intervention or failure on the battlefield. Instead, he argues that internal rules that govern promotion within the organization determine the propensity for radical innovation and policy adjustment. In a slightly modified approach, Jeff Legro posits that organizational cultures-- ingrained beliefs and norms about the optimal means to fight wars-- act as heuristics for setting priorities and allocating resources. Different "organizational credos" lead to different propensities for self-defeat, and problems of over- and under-extension result from the advent of new means that are antithetical to the dominant war-fighting paradigm. Kimberly Zisk complements this new approach in a study of the development of Soviet military doctrine, where she asserts that military leaders can be coopted into broader national security policy-making communities. In other words, she contends that organizational leaders can be persuaded rather than coerced to redress counter-productive strategies and tactics. Variation in self-defeat depends on the degrees to which resistance to adjustment exists within the military organization, foreign threats challenge basic war-fighting tenets, and the defense policy community can be expanded.⁷²

⁷²Stephen Peter Rosen, *Winning the Next War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); Jeffrey Legro, *Cooperation Under Fire* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995); and Kimberly Martin Zisk, *Engaging the Enemy: Organizational Theory and Soviet Military Innovation, 1955-1991* (Princeton: Princeton University

The application of these theoretical amendments to traditional organizational explanations for self-defeat, however, is not without its problems. Though military organizations are not the same, there is a shared assumption among these approaches that the bias towards self-defeat in each is *sui generis*. Rosen's focus on military leadership and Legro's emphasis on culture both fail to examine the sources of corporate mind-sets and procedures that push a military organization at one point to retrench and at another to adjust in the face of policy excesses. Why, for example, did the Soviet military during the 1970s embrace highly provocative operational art and tactics, and then in the mid-1980s radically shift gears and accept nuclear deterrence and substantial modifications to its classic strategy? The integrity and predilections of a particular organization are not created and transformed in a political vacuum, but established over time through interactions with other political and functional actors involved in the policy-making process.⁷³ While Zisk and others are willing to entertain a decisive role played by activated policy entrepreneurs in restoring balance among foreign and security policies, they are unable to contend with examples of significant adjustment in grand strategy within a static policy-making community. Given the availability and seizure of a policy handle for coopting the defense industrial establishment, why was Gorbachev unsuccessful at integrating the different strains of operational art, diplomacy and conversion in the strategy of *new thinking*?

The literature on coalition-building and maintenance seeks to fill this void by focusing analysis on the political processes that shape the development of organizational

Press, 1993). Alternatively, Kaufman argues that the varying propensity of Soviet military doctrine to balance political and military objectives depended on the effective use by the political elite of available policy handles to force policy integration. See Stuart J. Kaufman, "Organizational Politics and Change in Soviet Military Policy," *World Politics* 46 (April 1994), pp. 355-382.

⁷³Deborah D. Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change: Lessons From Peripheral Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994).

bias and transmit specific domestic interests into grand strategy. Pluralist models, for example, treat grand strategy as the product of state mediation of the competition between autonomous and government interest groups.⁷⁴ In this vein, Soviet grand strategy emerged out of the pulling and hauling among important interest groups and bureaucracies. Corporatist models, alternatively, attribute grand strategy to the cooperation among functional interest groups brokered directly by governmental mechanisms. Self-defeat in Soviet strategy emerged as a by-product of political logrolls among elites or functional groups that preferred to maintain the cohesion of the political collective and to secure control over parochial issue areas rather than to synthesize competing claims into a coherent international strategy. As Snyder contends, it is the process of coalition-building and logrolling among competing political groups with vested interests in strategic assertiveness-- such as ideologues, colonial bureaucrats, and the military-- that produces more extreme programs of over-expansion than each group would individually prefer.⁷⁵ In both pluralist and corporatist models, it is the bargaining process located within the state that is presumed to distort the adaptation of strategy to objective international circumstances.

Other variants link strategic outcomes to cycles of leadership turnover and authority-building. Succession periods serve as vehicles for change in strategy, as contending elites during an initial honeymoon period cling to different innovative policy

⁷⁴H. Gordon Skilling and Franklyn Griffiths, *Interest Groups in Soviet Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971); and Theodore H. Friedgut, *Political Participation in the USSR* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979). See also the variant of "institutional pluralism," in Jerry F. Hough and Merle Fainsod, *How the Soviet Union is Governed* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979).

⁷⁵Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire*, pp. 212-254; Dennis Ross, "Coalition Maintenance in the Soviet Union," *World Politics* 32:2 (January 1980), pp. 258-280; Scott Allan Bruckner, *The Strategic Role of Ideology: Exploring the Links Between Incomplete Information, Signaling, and 'Getting Stuck' in Soviet Politics* (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1992); T. H. Rigby, "The Soviet Leadership: Towards a Self-Stabilizing Oligarchy?" *Soviet Studies* 22:2 (October 1970), pp. 167-191; and Valerie Bunce and John M. Echols, III, "Power and Policy in Communist Systems: The Problem of Incrementalism," *Journal of Politics* 40:4 (November 1978), pp. 911-932.

stances in their competition for political legitimacy.⁷⁶ Upon consolidating a position of political ascendancy, a leader then becomes satisfied with only incremental changes in policy priorities. Proponents of the succession thesis therefore attribute the persistence of self-defeating strategies to the stasis brought on by a leader's accumulation of power and authority. Alternatively, advocates of the "generational change" argument ascribe rigidity and subsequent discontinuous change in strategy to the formative experiences of a particular age cohort that creates a lasting disposition towards strategy.⁷⁷ The source of Soviet repeated bouts with self-defeat can be found in the lasting experiences during Stalin's dictatorship, and the enfeeblement of an aging elite. Others, who focus more specifically on the process of authority-building, attribute the origins and persistence of self-defeating strategies to the continuous vote trading among elites and their constituencies that placed a premium on the aggregation of inconsistent policy priorities.⁷⁸

The problem with these traditional "process" models is that they presume that leadership transactions arise out of a political vacuum. First, there is much confusion in the literature concerning the proper unit of analysis. For instance, some studies concentrate on the strategies produced by bargaining processes established among elites,

⁷⁶Valerie Bunce, *Do New Leaders Make a Difference?: Executive Succession and Public Policy Under Capitalism and Socialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981). For a slightly different perspective concerning the relationship between elite consolidation of power and policy innovation, see Philip G. Roeder, "Do New Soviet Leaders Really Make A Difference? Rethinking the Succession Connection," *American Political Science Review* 79 (1985), pp. 958-977.

⁷⁷Michael Roskin, "From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam: Shifting Generational Paradigms," *Political Science Quarterly* 89 (Fall 1974), pp. 563-588. For application of the "generational thesis" to the Soviet case, see Jerry F. Hough, *Soviet Leadership In Transition* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1980); Seweryn Bialer, *Stalin's Successors: Leadership Stability, and Change in the Soviet Union* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980); and Robert V. Daniels, "Political Processes and Generational Change," in Archie Brown, ed., *Political Leadership in the Soviet Union* (London: Macmillan Press, 1989), pp. 96-126.

⁷⁸George W. Breslauer, "Khrushchev Reconsidered," *Problems of Communism* 26:5 (September-October 1976), pp. 18-33.

but ignore the strategic implications of regularized bureaucratic interaction.

Alternatively, others discuss the influence of functional organizations in isolation of their relationship to political elites. Pluralist models generally do not show how decisions are made or how pressure groups precisely affect policy-making at the pinnacle of the leadership. What empowers certain groups and not others? By stressing the importance of leadership conflict or political interest groups, many studies miss the systematic connections between these two dimensions that are established by a state's overarching institutional setting. As demonstrated by one recent study, it was precisely the reciprocal bargaining arrangements spread across the different political tiers of Soviet decision-making that were crucial for explaining why policy innovation was so constrained throughout leadership succession cycles.⁷⁹

This neglect of the broader institutional context of policy-making also makes the precise nature of change in Soviet grand strategy inexplicable from a corporatist perspective. That political bargaining in the Soviet context was inclusive of divergent perspectives, as suggested by such models, stemmed from the political incentives rooted in the domestic institutional setting. This distinction between structure and process matters when thinking about the dynamics of preference formation and change in Soviet grand strategy. Without making the institutional context endogenous to explanations of bargaining we are compelled to impute rather than derive the sources of policy preferences that vied for inclusion in the ruling coalition. This is especially problematic when comparing different periods of Soviet grand strategy decision-making, given both the changes in substantive preferences of the same actors within the ruling coalition and the persistence of self-defeat. Moreover, without an appreciation for the basic structural

⁷⁹Philip G. Roeder, *Red Sunset: The Failure of Soviet Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). See also Richard D. Anderson, *Public Politics in an Authoritarian State*, pp. 34-86; and James G. Richter, *Khrushchev's double Bind*, pp. 1-29.

context we can derive neither the sources of political incentives that drive policy-making, the relative power of different political actors, nor their relationships to one another. This poses an additional problem for comparing the intensities and implications of policy-making processes across political systems.

Approaches that attribute stasis and change in grand strategy to generational features of a leadership fail to account for the significant diversity among the Soviet ruling elite on fundamental political issues.⁸⁰ The political attitudes of the ruling generation were not uniform, and lines of division cut across many different factors. That the octogenarian Soviet leadership was able to initiate the dramatic break with the previous strategy under Andropov's watch, and that the new age cohort associated with Gorbachev's ascendancy perpetuated the legacy of self-defeat in grand strategy, undermine claims of generational rigidity and cycles of change in political orientations.

Despite the elegance and prevalence of "process" models, they also remain problematic. First, group conflict models impute interests rather than derive them. The assumption that the interests of certain "imperialist" groups are static, fails to account for those occasions when these groups do not propagate expansionist programs. For example, Snyder cannot account for the occasional support found among military services for caution and retrenchment in Soviet international behavior.⁸¹ Second, there is no sound deductive reason why self-interested behavior that proves deleterious to the

⁸⁰For critiques leveled within the context of Soviet politics, see especially George W. Breslauer, "Is There a Generation Gap in the Soviet Political Establishment?: Demand Articulation by RSFSR Provincial Party First Secretaries," *Soviet Studies* 36:1 (January 1984), pp. 1-25; and Mark R. Beissinger, "In Search of Generations in Soviet Politics," *World Politics* 38:2 (January 1986), pp. 288-314.

⁸¹For discussion of the military's receptiveness to Gorbachev's reform program as a price for the future modernization of Soviet defense capabilities, see George C. Weickhardt, "The Soviet Military-Industrial Complex and Economic Reform," *Soviet Economy* 2:3 (July-October 1986), p. 193-220; Russell Bova, "The Soviet Military and Economic Reform," *Soviet Studies* 40:3 (July 1988), pp. 385-405; and Raymond L. Garthoff, "New Thinking in Soviet Military Doctrine," *Washington Quarterly* 3 (Summer 1988), pp. 131-158.

international standing of the state should be the exclusive preserve of imperialist groups. Snyder, for example, by confining the analysis of self-defeat to overly aggressive behavior, does not reveal the gross under-extension caused by the hijacking of the state by self-interested "isolationists."⁸²

Additionally, while most "domestic process" models ascribe perverse strategic outcomes to the dictates of coalition maintenance, they neglect to explain how specific bargaining arrangements, such as logrolls, arise in the first place. As noted by several authors, unwritten rules of the game emerged to regulate behavior between Soviet politicians within a system otherwise devoid of constitutional procedures specifying power and responsibility.⁸³ Yet, it is precisely this formal uncertainty that should have impeded the realization of such informal bargaining mechanisms, regardless of the joint interests in their creation. Under different conditions of uncertainty there are obstacles to collective action that prevent the realization of joint gains. As depicted in the game theoretical literature and by the free-rider dilemma, it is difficult for cooperation and coordination among self-interested rational actors to arise when interactions are not repeated (or if there is an end in sight), when information on the other parties is incomplete, and when exchange involves large numbers.⁸⁴ Even in contexts involving

⁸²It is important to note that even critics who point to logrolls as sources for moderating expansive tendencies, fail to account for the evolution of interests among political groups. Moreover, by committing the same error as their subjects in analyzing logrolls in an institutional vacuum, they fail to detect the deductive reason for linking logrolling to self-defeat. See especially critique in Charles A. Kupchan, *Vulnerability of Empire*, pp. 60-61.

⁸³On the functional importance of informal bargaining arrangements between Soviet political elites, see T.H. Rigby, "The Soviet Leadership: Towards a Self-Stabilizing Oligarchy?" pp. 167-191; Graeme Gill, "Institutionalisation and Revolution: Rules and the Soviet Political System," *Soviet Studies* 37:2 (April 1985), pp. 212-226; and Scott Allan Bruckner, *The Strategic Role of Ideology*, pp. 1-43; and Philip G. Roeder, *Red Sunset*, pp. 66-93.

⁸⁴Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation* (New York: Basic Books, 1984); Russell Hardin, *Collective Action* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982); Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965); and Michael Taylor, *Anarchy and Cooperation* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1976).

iteration and small numbers, the expected costs of being deceived by a coalition partner can mitigate interests in collective gains. Under conditions of extreme uncertainty, where the stakes of exchange include political survival, actors are acutely sensitive to any erosion of their relative position that can be turned against them, and are driven to eschew absolute gains derived from joint action that might benefit others more than themselves. Repetition, by itself, does not solve for this, since a relative loss in a single round of interaction can impede an actor's ability to interact in subsequent rounds.⁸⁵ Competitors are also discouraged from cooperating, given the prospects for monopoly profits associated with the future bankruptcy of an actor.⁸⁶ These problems are magnified in small groups, as the costs of defection have a greater proportional impact on deceived partners.⁸⁷ Also contrary to conventional wisdom, there are advantages to collective action in large numbers, as the prospects for side payments and policy linkages improve, and because the costs of being suckered decrease with the confusion associated with greater numbers.⁸⁸

Furthermore, temporal aspects of repeated exchange compound problems of collective action. The sequential character of elite bargains, where policy trades depend on promises of future support, create significant incentives for shirking, as one party can capture the fruits of exchange before another. Problems of credible commitment,

⁸⁵See especially the critique of the formalism of iterated games in Robert Powell, "Absolute and Relative Gains in International Relations Theory," pp. 1309-1311; and Robert Jervis, "Realism, Game Theory, and Cooperation," *World Politics* 41:2 (January 1989), pp. 321-322.

⁸⁶See especially the discussion of the implications for strategic interaction of different temporal considerations of gains and losses in Arthur Stein, *Why Nations Cooperate*, pp. 103-111.

⁸⁷Duncan Snidal, "International Cooperation Among Relative Gains Maximizers," *International Studies Quarterly* 35 (1991), pp. 396-399.

⁸⁸For critiques of the hypothesis advanced by Olson and Axelrod that "the prospects for cooperation diminish as the number of players increase," see Duncan Snidal, "Relative Gains and the Pattern of International Cooperation," *American Political Science Review* 85 (September 1991), pp. 716; and the succinct review in Helen Milner, "International Theories of Cooperation Among Nations," *World Politics* 44 (April 1992), pp. 473-474.

enforcement, and the potential for unforeseen events to alter asymmetrically the payoffs to the respective parties to an exchange inhibit compromise and collective action. As stated by Weingast and Marshall, "the long arm of the future is inadequate in settings in which agents have private information and in which it is impossible to or too costly to specify all contingencies."⁸⁹

Finally, functional approaches typically neglect consideration of alternative informal arrangements that can arise to generate collective gains. Informal institutions can take many different forms in prescribing stable expectations. For instance, there are different mechanisms and procedures for regulating leadership succession and allocating decision-making authority in parliamentary, as opposed to authoritarian systems. The criteria for resolving such problems differ under various conditions of domestic political uncertainty. In sum, there is generally more than one way to structure informal social institutions in order to produce gains from exchange within a leadership.

Internal-External Nexus

The current fashion among a growing number of scholars is to attribute the sources of grand strategy to the systematic interplay of international and domestic pressures confronting a leadership.⁹⁰ Building on earlier recognition of links between

⁸⁹Barry R. Weingast and William J. Marshall, "The Industrial Organization of Congress; or, Why Legislatures, Like Firms, Are Not Organized as Markets," *Journal of Political Economy* 96:1 (1988), pp. 142. For discussion of the problem of extending credible commitments to cooperation under conditions of domestic uncertainty, see especially Douglas C. North and Barry R. Weingast, "Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England," *The Journal of Economic History*, 49:4 (December 1989), pp. 803-832.

⁹⁰See for example, Otto Hintze, "Military Organization and the Organization of the State," in Felix Gilbert, ed., *The Historical Essays of Otto Hintze* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975); David A. Lake, *Power, Protection, and Free Trade* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 70-71; Robert D. Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," *International Organization* 42:3

these two arenas, recent efforts have advanced theoretically informed arguments for integrating international and domestic variables. Elites and functionaries tasked with grand strategy decision-making are treated as Janus-faced actors, pursuing international and domestic goals and strategies simultaneously. Situated at the nexus between international and domestic politics, entrepreneurial decision-makers must manipulate the costs and benefits of behavior in each realm when choosing simultaneously among strategic options. Statesmen must calculate, for instance, the domestic costs of extracting or mobilizing national resources when contemplating the extension of international commitments. Alternatively, politicians must remain sensitive to the fallout that the success or failure of foreign and security policies might have on their domestic political legitimacy. In the Soviet case, the interaction of domestic and international bargaining games explains the paradoxical pressures that compelled Brezhnev to placate domestic hard-liners with aggression in Africa and Asia as an attempt to reap the gains of Western economic cooperation; as well as Gorbachev's use massive unilateral concessions as part of an effort gain the Western economic aid needed to sell *glasnost* and *perestroika* at home.⁹¹

(Summer 1988), pp. 427-460; Andrew Moravcsik, "Introduction: Integrating International and Domestic Theories of International Bargaining," in Peter Evans, Harold K. Jacobsen, and Robert D. Putnam, *Double-Edged Diplomacy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 3-42; and Jeffrey W. Knopf, "Beyond Two-Level Games: Domestic-International Interaction in the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Negotiations," *International Organization* 47:4 (Autumn 1993), pp. 599-628. For recent formal models of linkage between domestic and international politics, see especially Keisuke Iida, "When and How Do Domestic Constraints Matter?" pp. 403-425; F. W. Mayer, "Managing Domestic Differences in Negotiations: The Strategic Use of Internal Side Payments," *International Organization*, 46 (1992), pp. 793-818; Goerge W. Downs and David M. Rocke, *Optimal Imperfection?*; Jongryn Mo, "Domestic Institutions and International Bargaining: The Role of Agent Veto in Two-Level Games," *American Political Science Review*, 89:4 (December 1995), pp. 914-924; and Susanne Lohmann, "Electoral Cycles and International Policy Cooperation," *European Economic Review* 37(1993), pp. 1373-1391.

⁹¹For discussion of the external-internal linkage in Soviet grand strategy, see especially Richard D. Anderson, *Public Politics in an Authoritarian State*; James G. Richter, *Khrushchev's Double Bind*; Jack Snyder, "International Leverage on Soviet Domestic Change," pp. 1-30; and Matthew Evangelista, *Innovation and the Arms Race* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988). For an earlier atheoretical approach, see Christer Jonsson, *Soviet Bargaining Behavior: The Test Ban Case* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979).

This new emphasis on synergy between domestic and international games, while infusing the theoretical debate with needed sensitivity to interactive sources of paradoxical strategic outcomes, tends at times to mask the separate dynamics of the two arenas. By focusing more on the outcomes of strategic bargaining conducted simultaneously in the two realms than on the formation of national preferences, these approaches often neglect the determinants of state preferences that, in many situations, stem from the powerful constraints emanating sequentially from one game to another. In the bargaining over Germany, for instance, Snyder demonstrates that synergistic agreements that strengthened the political position of proponents for cooperation in the Soviet Union were elusive. Both Khrushchev and Gorbachev were unable to craft strategies for detente that negatively reverberated on domestic opponents, but did face independent constraints on their policies posed by the international security dilemma and domestic veto groups that pushed each towards their final diplomatic gambit.⁹² In each case, the Soviet leader faced foreign policy issues that could not generate selective incentives to important swing groups in the domestic political arena, thus elevating the importance of the domestic political game over international considerations in decision-making.

Recently, scholarly attention has gravitated towards studying the tradeoffs that states confront between different options in their security strategies. Recognizing the substitution effect between strategies of confrontation, competition, coordination, and cooperation, these approaches focus on the balance between foreign and domestic costs and benefits tied to strategic alternatives. In an innovative work, Michael Altfeld presents a simple microeconomic model for measuring the marginal costs tied to alternative forms of balancing behavior, asserting that states pursue those strategies that

⁹²Jack Snyder, "East-West Bargaining Over Germany," in Peter Evans, Harold K. Jacobsen, and Robert D. Putnam, *Double-Edged Diplomacy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 104-127.

provide the cheapest fixed increment of security.⁹³ Building on this framework, Michael Barnett shows how leadership objectives and social, economic and political constraints affect the calculus of affordable costs concerning the arms-alliance tradeoff.⁹⁴ By expanding the conventional understanding of alliances as sources solely of external security guarantees to include their effects on regime stability, he highlights the powerful domestic incentives that shape a leadership's assessment of the arms-alliance tradeoff. Additionally, James Morrow specifies the costs and benefits of securing aid from allies versus building-up a national defense base, and discusses how these vary across different domestic and international situations.⁹⁵ A common underlying theme is that political leaderships weigh the international and domestic costs and benefits of each option and select the most efficient means of producing security.

What this second strain in the literature typically neglects, however, is that not all leaderships choose efficient strategies for bolstering security in the anarchic international environment. Some states are unable to balance the ends and means of their strategy: they fail to alter either their international commitments or national capabilities commensurate with overarching security objectives. As a consequence, they either over-react to exogenous pressures for international cooperation, coordination, competition, or confrontation; or pursue conflicting strains in different policy realms.

In sum, the theoretical and empirical shortcomings discussed above point to the need for a better explanation for self-defeat in great power strategies for responding to

⁹³Michael Altfeld, "The Decision to Ally: A Theory and Test," *Western Political Quarterly* 37 (December 1984), pp. 523-544. See also discussion of various internal and external political and policy costs to strategies of extraction in Alan C. Lamborn, *The Price of Power: Risk and Foreign Policy in Britain, France, and Germany* .

⁹⁴Michael Barnett, *Confronting the Costs of War*.

⁹⁵James D. Morrow, "Arms Versus Allies: Trade-offs in the Search for Security." For a slightly different discussion that emphasizes the costs of rent-seeking on the decision between alternative strategies for pooling resources with foreign partners given a specific adversary, see David A. Lake, *Superpower Strategies: The State and the Production of Security* .

threats and opportunities in the international environment. This requires first and foremost that we revisit the separate roles played by international pressures and domestic politics in determining the preferences and decision-making environments that mutually constrain actors involved in devising grand strategies. This entails investigation of the additive and sequential dynamics of the underlying international and domestic sources of grand strategy. Specifically, this includes study of how international factors push statesmen to adopt cooperative or competitive directions for grand strategy, and how domestic political structures and bargaining processes constrain their capacities to integrate the ends and means of their strategic responses.

Towards an Institutional Explanation for Self-Defeat

As mentioned above, bringing domestic political structures and institutions into the study of grand strategy is important for two purposes. First, domestic political institutions lay down the set of fundamental political and legal ground rules that empower political actors and establish the bases for interaction among national elites and bureaucrats charged with producing grand strategy. The web of formal structures and informal bargaining processes govern the distribution of political benefits and authority over national security decision-making. They introduce additional, yet distinct, costs that constrain a leadership's capacity to integrate efficiently different military and defense economic policy instruments with diplomatic commitments. Second, by specifying the *de facto* authority possessed by different political and administrative actors, political institutions are central to the formation of particular domestic preferences for responding to changes at the international level.

Chapter 2 presents an alternative theoretical framework for explaining how domestic political institutions affect the coherence of grand strategy. The primary focus is on the strategic implications of decisional uncertainty. Different regime types vary according to uncertainty along one dimension by the presence or absence of well-defined and upheld methods and procedures (such as legal norms, formal conventions, and constitutional practice) for resolving problems of authority and tenure among political elites; and along another dimension by the clarity and exclusivity of responsibility for implementing grand strategy distributed throughout the national security bureaucracy. Depending on the level of uncertainty, different types of informal conflict-regulating mechanisms emerge to facilitate exchange among politicians and administrators. In formal settings with high levels of uncertainty, politicians must construct informal bargaining processes to secure their collective interest in job security without undermining their relative position within the leadership. This gives rise to distributional coalitions, tailored to satisfying membership parochial concerns at the expense of generating coherent foreign commitments. At the administrative level, the more confusion over formal lines of authority and the diffusion of responsibility, the more competing bureaucratic interests and information asymmetries carry the day. In this context, politicians must induce compliance informally, empowering certain bureaucratic players and compartmentalizing authority. This limits the capacity of the leadership by generating micro-incentives that are inconsistent with balancing international commitments and national capabilities in grand strategy.

Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 test different parts of the theoretical argument against the record of self-defeat in Soviet and Russian grand strategies. Each chapter compares and contrasts the findings related to the sources of Gorbachev's grand strategy of under-achievement to those relevant for explaining the cases of Brezhnev's over-zealous strategy of "peaceful coexistence and the under-achievement embodied by contemporary

Russian grand strategy. Taken together, the chapters will provide a test of the argument across different regime types and different international settings.

Chapter 3 examines the link between domestic political decisions to cooperate or compete with an adversary and the overarching imperatives imposed by a state's security environment. It looks at how prevailing strategic, economic, and technological balances of power generate the stakes of international interaction that form the basis for domestic political consensus in favor of a cooperative or competitive international strategy. The chapter explicitly compares the implications of the respective security environments for the cooperative basis of Gorbachev's *new thinking* and nascent Russian grand strategy, against the consequences for the competitive impulse intrinsic to Brezhnev's strategy.

Chapter 4 describes the levels of decisional uncertainty in the Soviet and contemporary Russian regimes. It examines the formal constitutional structure of policy-making, detailing provisions for job security and the formal distribution of administrative authority. It traces the overriding political interests of politicians and bureaucrats in each case that guided their efforts to operationalize the basic domestic consensus for an internationally cooperative or competitive grand strategy.

Chapter 5 discusses the *de facto* policy-making process that emerged in the Soviet and Russian cases to govern grand strategy. The chapter focuses on the transition from structural uncertainty to the informal creation and maintenance of elite bargaining and administration with respect to national security. In particular, it examines the institutionalized parceling out of limited controls over foreign, military, and defense industrial policies among elites and bureaucrats that occurred out of their self-interests to stabilize power and authority within each regime. Finally, the chapter specifies the substantive policy preferences that were, in effect, empowered by the informal policy-making processes of the Gorbachev, Brezhnev and Yeltsin leaderships.

Chapter 6 evaluates the argument's ability to account for the empirical findings of self-defeat in Soviet and Russian grand strategies. It demonstrates a correlation between the rigid policy-making processes and empowered policy preferences, and the vexing problems of under-achievement in the Gorbachev and Yeltsin cases, and over-zealousness under Brezhnev. This is accomplished by detailing the inconsistencies in specific foreign, military, and defense industrial policy outcomes that were generated by respective informal institutional constraints.

Finally, Chapter 7 summarizes the argument and draws out the implications for international relations theory. It discusses the relevance of different regime types for explaining variable responses to the pressures of the changing international environment. In doing so, the chapter underlines the importance of bringing decisional uncertainty and institutional factors back into mainstream international relations theories of strategic interaction.

Figure 1.

Strategic Implications of Domestic Capacities to Extend Foreign Commitments and Mobilize National Capabilities

		<u>Commitments</u>	
		Strong	Weak
<u>Capabilities</u>	Strong	(Cell 1) Synchronized Strategy	(Cell 3) Under-Achieving Strategy
	Weak	(Cell 2) Over-Zealous Strategy	(Cell 4) Paralyzed Strategy

CHAPTER 2

A NEO-INSTITUTIONAL MODEL OF GRAND STRATEGY: The Strategic Implications of Decisional Uncertainty Over Power and Responsibility

In the preceding chapter, I reviewed prominent explanations for self-defeating grand strategies. I highlighted the general tendency among different approaches to short-shrift the systematic influence of domestic institutional constraints on national security decision-making. At both the international structural and individual psychological levels, there is an overriding assumption that the domestic political context serves as a transmission belt for the smooth translation of international pressures or cognitive predispositions into strategic behavior. Both perspectives typically fail to explain the coalescing of political interests, their empowerment inside the state bureaucracy, and their ability to control policy-making related to grand strategy. At the domestic level, state-society explanations and process models also traditionally under-specify the internal political environments that shape the emergence and evolution of particular policy-making processes. While domestic bargaining is the focal point, these analyses typically impute the political incentives, policy preferences, and relative position of the different actors empowered to formulate and implement grand strategy. Finally, the recent fashion with synergy between international and domestic level games generally neglects the separate and cumulative, though mutually constraining, pressures that each brings to bear on the formation of state preferences.

As suggested by this review, decision-making processes do not emerge or sustain themselves in political vacuums. Instead, they are formed within constitutional structures that vary tremendously with respect to the degrees to which they specify power and responsibility within national policy-making communities. Different political structures generate different political incentives that lead to different mechanisms for implementing policy preferences. Variation in domestic political structures bears directly on the different propensities among states to synchronize the ends and means of respective strategies for responding to the exigencies of the international environment.

This chapter explores the causal link between domestic institutions and self-defeat. The focus is on illuminating how uncertainties over domestic power and responsibility give rise to informal political institutions among actors charged with producing and maintaining security, that, in turn, circumscribe their capacity to align international commitments with national capabilities in grand strategy. Two central questions comprise the crux of the discussion. First, how do political incentives generated by different domestic conditions of uncertainty shape the formation of informal institutions? Second, how do these institutions constrain the efficiency of a state's response to prevailing international pressures?

The primary assertion of this chapter is that the coherence of a leadership's grand strategy for coping with international threats and opportunities depends on the domestic institutional setting of decision-making. International pressures, though important for generating a state's basic preference for either a cooperative or competitive grand strategy, are indeterminate for explaining its efficiency in exploiting such opportunities. Rather, the full effect of these outside pressures on strategy comes as they are filtered through an array of formal and informal domestic political institutions that lay down a set of fundamental legal and political ground rules that empower certain elites and bureaucrats and govern their political interaction. These domestic institutions create

political incentives that shape the way that politicians and functionaries perceive the interests of the state, and determine who has control over carrying out policies for responding to overarching international conditions. The specific combination of *de jure* and *de facto* institutional arrangements varies across states, with different implications for the distributions of political benefits, decision-making accountability, and substantive policy preferences. In this manner, the domestic institutional setting introduces additional, yet distinct, costs that define a leadership's capacity to integrate diplomatic, military, and economic policies in response to international pressures.

Self-defeat in grand strategy is the by-product of uncertainty in constitutional structures, defined by the absence of formal guarantees for job security and obscured lines of authority that place an informal premium on distributive politics. Leaders, beholden to their rivals among the ruling elite for political survival and to bureaucrats for information and policy implementation, must parcel out authorities over different policies among potential challengers and subordinates. By relying on the delegation of partial authorities for different policies to resolve problems of uncertainty, political leaders empower these actors with autonomous and narrow preferences that are beyond their control. This exacerbates problems of accountability that induce competing politicians and functionaries to optimize their parochial policy preferences, substantively defined by their narrow responsibilities, irrespective of the negative externalities for broad national interests. Thus, selective incentives and high agency costs impede the efficient allocation of resources and commitments in concert with overarching international pressures for cooperation or competition. The net result is a grand strategy prone to under-achievement or over-zealousness, depending on the overarching cooperative or competitive winds of the prevailing international security environment.

There are five parts to this chapter. The first section lays out the assumptions behind an alternative institutional approach for understanding self-defeat in grand

strategy. The second section discusses the political uncertainties attendant to specific constitutional structures that induce concerns for relative gains among rational, self-interested decision-makers. The third part, drawing on the *neo-institutional* literature, analyzes the informal bargaining arrangements that emerge from conditions of domestic political uncertainty to empower certain political actors and regulate their interaction. These institutional arrangements, while designed to reduce the transaction costs tied to political exchange, are politically determined and reflect the distributional concerns of key domestic political actors. Section four examines the logical connection between different institutional arrangements and the capacities to integrate substantive policy concerns, fleshing out the propensities of various regime types to adopt self-defeating grand strategies in response to prevailing international pressures. The concluding section presents a research design for testing deduced propositions against the records of under-achievement and over-zealousness in Soviet and Russian grand strategies.

Decisional Uncertainty and Self-Defeat: Institutional Constraints on Grand Strategy Policy-Making

Assumptions

The argument presented here, that the requirements for informal bargaining arrangements among elites and functionaries determine the coherence of a state's grand strategy, rests on three basic assumptions about decision-makers.

First, I assume that political actors are egoists.¹ Decision-makers maintain independent utility functions, making choices that are calculated to maximize their own

¹For discussion of egoism and the concerns for absolute gains, see Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 27.

welfare, not that of others. For politicians and bureaucrats alike, this translates into absolute concerns for job security. For politicians, holding office is vital to the realization of any policy preference. Similarly, functionaries strive to stay in office in order to retain control over their bureaucracies and to situate themselves better for appointment into the leadership. These concerns for absolute gains represented in individual utility functions, however, do not preclude the pursuit of strategies for bolstering relative position under certain institutional conditions.²

Second, I assume that decision-makers are rational actors. The rationality assumption stipulates that political actors seek to maximize their utility in accordance with a hierarchy of fixed objectives. Preferences are consistent and transitive. They are also lexicographic, sequentially evaluated to maximize basic concerns. Political actors choose to maximize their core objective of ensuring job tenure, regardless of the costs that these efforts pose to secondary goals, such as broad national welfare. As a result, political actors, under specific conditions, may eschew risks tied to maximizing expected payoffs in certain policies, preferring instead to maximize job security. They will undertake policy risks only after their political position is secured. Whatever additional interests they may have can only be accomplished while in office.³ In this regard,

²The key to the following discussion is an understanding that the primary concerns for political actors are for absolute gains, i.e. job tenure. The degree to which concerns for relative gains, i.e. positionalism, come into play is determined by the strategic setting confronting an actor. Thus, concerns for relative gains vary directly with changes in domestic institutional structure. By linking concerns for relative gains to the utility function of a political actor, scholars traditionally are unable to account for the variation in such concerns across different strategic environments. For distinction between preferences for absolute gains and the concerns for relative gains induced by strategic conditions facing decision-makers, see especially Robert Powell, "Anarchy in International Relations Theory: The Neo-Realist-Neo-liberal Debate," *International Organization* 48:2 (Spring 1994), pp. 334-338; and Arthur A. Stein, *Why Nations Cooperate* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990). For a contrasting view, linking concerns for relative gains to individual preferences, see Joseph Grieco, "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation," in David A. Baldwin, *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 116-142.

³For discussion of lexicographic preferences and the conditional nature of the acceptance of risk in the calculations of utility, see Arthur A. Stein, *Why Nations Cooperate*, pp. 90-91. The argument being made here is that once actors solve for their job security they will then move on to pursue other goals such as wealth, particular policy outcomes, etc... . For a separate but related discussion, see the literature on

individuals behave in the manner of *homo politicus*, pursuing their hierarchy of preferences within the boundaries prescribed by their political environment. Thus, there is an assumption that grand strategy executives are calculating political entrepreneurs, rationally responsive to incentives for staying in office dictated by political circumstances.

Third, I assume that delegated authority constitutes a specific property right that defines substantive policy concerns. In general, a property right is a socially enforced authority to select the use of a good or resource. It constitutes the entitlement of individuals or organizations to own, use, transfer, derive benefit, and exclude others from both material and intangible resources.⁴ "Property rights do not refer to relations between (people) and things but, rather, *to the sanctioned behavioral relations among (people) that arise from the existence of things and pertain to their use.*"⁵ In essence, property rights stipulate the norms of behavior that shape exchange relations. They do so by specifying the extent to which an individual or group internalizes the costs and benefits of

"framing," regarding risk-taking propensities under perceptions of assured losses or gains. See especially, Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk," *Econometrica* 47 (March 1979), pp. 263-291. For the purposes of this study, objective international, economic, and domestic political variables, rather than cognitive or psychological factors, structure the choice set and control the framing of issues. As is discussed below, they are more decisive than the norms, habits, and personal characteristics of the decision-maker in shaping perceptions of the probabilities and values of gains and losses surrounding an issue. Additionally, the distinction between policy risks, i.e. risks associated with the attainment of the substantive goals of a policy, and political risks, i.e. risks attendant to the political position of an actor, is informed by discussion in Alan C. Lamborn, *The Price of Power* (Boston: Unwin and Hyman, 1991), pp. 58-59.

⁴For seminal definitions and discussions, see Armen A. Alchian and Harold Demsetz, "The Property Rights Paradigm," *Journal of Economic History* 33:1 (March 1973), pp. 16-27; and Louis De Alessi, "The Economics of Property Rights: A Review of the Evidence," *Research in Law and Economics* 2 (1980), pp. 1-47; and R. H. Coase, "The Problem of Social Cost," *Journal of Law and Economics* 3 (October 1961), pp. 1-44. For a comprehensive review of this literature, see Thrainn Eggertsson, *Economic Behavior and Institutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), especially pp. 33-40.

⁵Eirik G. Furubotn and Svetozar Pejovich, "Property Rights and Economic Theory: A Survey of Recent Literature," *Journal of Economic Literature* 10 (December 1972), p. 1137. See also Eirik G. Furubotn and Svetozar Pejovich, *The Economics of Property Rights* (Cambridge: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1974), especially pp. 1-9.

exercising delegated authority. As such, property rights structures guide the incentives of actors seeking to maximize the value of their authority.

Property rights relate specifically to the various assignments to use a resource, rather than to the tangible traits of a resource. A property right refers to a number of distinct privileges that can be held either separately or simultaneously. The different categories traditionally take the form of either exclusive or attenuated entitlement, allowing individuals to exercise complete or partial discretion over decisions. The concept of property rights captures the permission or authority to do different things with a resource. Different property rights assignments lead to different cost-benefit structures; hence they determine the options that are open to utility maximizing individuals and groups. The distribution of these decision-making rights determines the range of policy preferences among empowered actors. Individual actors strive to exploit delegated authority as a means of conferring benefits to their primary political interest-- job security.⁶

In sum, I assume that political elites and functionaries are rational egoists, primarily concerned with staying in office. Delegated authority determines the incentives for political behavior and substantive policy preferences. These assumptions lead to an explanation of self-defeat grounded in the behavior of political actors-- politicians and bureaucrats will adopt self-defeating grand strategies under conditions that make it in their own career interests to do so. Specifically, I hypothesize that if politicians and bureaucrats operate within a constitutional framework where political power and authority are poorly delineated, then they will create informal bargaining arrangements to

⁶On the divisibility and restrictions of property rights, see Armen A. Alchian and Harold Demsetz, "The Property Rights Paradigm," p. 17; and Ellen Comisso, "Property Rights, Liberalism, and the Transition from 'Actually Existing' Socialism," *East European Politics and Society* 5:1 (Winter 1991), pp. 165-166; and Eirik G. Furubotn and Svetozar Pejovich, "Property Rights and Economic Theory: A Survey of Recent Literature," p. 1140. See also, Gary D. Libecap, *Contracting For Property Rights* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 10-28.

maximize their parochial distributional concerns, even at the expense of sacrificing coherence in grand strategy. This will result in an over-zealous strategy in a competitive security environment; and strategic under-achievement in a cooperative security environment. By applying this approach, different propensities for self-defeat can be predicted from institutional features of a regime, rather than inferred on the basis of strategic outcomes.⁷

State Structures and Decisional Uncertainty

The translation of international pressures into grand strategy is filtered through leadership and administrative realms that constitute the security-producing sector of the state. At the top, depending on the particular attributes of the state, rival executives and/or branches of the government vie for control over the grand strategy agenda.⁸ Beneath this elite level, bureaucratic functionaries compete for scarce resources to fulfill their respective tasks. These two tiers are inextricably linked, as the upper echelons of government must rely on the vast bureaucratic apparatus for support and for generating information, formulating options, and implementing directives; and as functionaries must solicit patrons for access to favored resources and advancement.⁹

⁷On the need for deriving, rather than inferring policy outcomes, see Barabara Geddes, *Politician's Dilemma: Building State Capacity in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 1-23.

⁸Within democratic states, division along these lines is reflected in the separation of powers between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. Within authoritarian regimes, divisions within a leadership traditionally cut across individual rather than institutional lines.

⁹This concept of a two-tiered grand strategy policy-making structure is adapted loosely from Philip G. Roeder, *Red Sunset: The Failure of Soviet Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 22-40. The basic point is that both political elites and bureaucrats play integral roles in the formulation and implementation of grand strategy. Thus, the central point of this chapter is that there are institutions that

The dual components of the grand strategy policy-making structure are comprised of different sets of formal, constitutional ground rules that establish the basis for political and economic exchange. Competition among political elites does not take place in a vacuum but, rather, against a backdrop of formal institutional and organizational structures that induce political behavior.¹⁰ Similarly, there are established procedures and regulations that govern the functions of bureaucratic agents. These formal institutions determine the distribution of domestic political power and authority, and spell out the system of incentives and disincentives that guide political activity.

While domestic political arenas are characteristically more law-ordered than the international system, they nonetheless vary with respect to the level of uncertainty that prevails within existing state structures. As is the case in the international environment, interaction among domestic political elites takes place within settings that are marred by incomplete information and inadequate safeguards for political position and cooperation.¹¹ Domestic political settings differ in the degrees to which formal procedures and obligations of the competitive game are established, defined, recognized, and enforced.

condition the interactions between and among these two levels, that, in turn, significantly affect the quality of grand strategy.

¹⁰Lance Davis and Douglas C. North, *Institutional Change and American Economic Growth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 6-7. This study adopts the distinction between institutional environment and institutional arrangements noted by Lance and North. The former, as mentioned above, refers to the property rights structures and formal rules governing political exchange embedded in the state. The latter consist of the bargaining arrangements between political actors that govern the manners in which they cooperate and compete. In contradistinction, organizations consist of the collective bodies that are subject to institutional constraints.

¹¹For discussion of the continuous nature of uncertainty that permeates both international and domestic political arenas making both less distinct, see Beth V. Yarbrough and Robert M. Yarbrough, "International Institutions and the New Economic of Organization," *International Organization* 44:2 (Spring 1990), p. 251; and Robert Powell, "Guns Butter and Anarchy," *American Political Science Review* 87:1 (March 1993), pp. 25-27.

Specifically, formal state structures differ with respect to the levels of uncertainty associated with job security among elites and the delineation of government decision-making authority.¹² In this regard, "uncertainty" refers to procedural matters rather than to substantive outcomes. The level of uncertainty pertains to the extent that risk-taking is tolerable and functional for political actors. In a "regulated" environment, for instance, competition and exchange among actors are bounded by formal rules and procedures, and buttressed by a legal enforcement mechanism. Conversely, highly uncertain settings are fluid, lack formal procedural guidelines for political interaction, and are typically characterized by *ad hoc* political exchanges. This is not to be confused with the concept of uncertainty in outcomes. For example, an essential feature of a democratic institutional environment is that the outcomes of political competition are indeterminate; actors cannot be certain that their interests will ultimately prevail, despite the fact that the process of their exchange is regularized. In contrast, authoritarian regimes are distinguished by the effective capacity of a political actor to exercise *ex post* control over political interactions, overturning the results of the political process.¹³

Focusing on procedural capacities, we can classify regime types according to uncertainty along one dimension by the presence or absence of well-defined and enforced procedures (such as legal norms, formal rules of the game, and constitutional practice) for

¹² As is argued below, in highly uncertain domestic political contexts, informal arrangements emerge to lend certainty to the political process. Alternatively, formally regulated conditions foster interaction without predetermining outcomes. For a discussion of uncertainty in domestic political procedures versus outcomes, see Valerie Bunce and Maria Csanadi, "Uncertainty in the Transition: Post-Communism in Hungary," *East European Politics and Societies* forthcoming (Spring 1993); and Adam Przeworski, "Democracy as a Contingent Outcome of Conflicts," in Jon Elster and Rune Slagstad, eds., *Constitutionalism and Democracy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 60-64; and *ibid.*, *Democracy and the Market* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 1-50.

¹³ This distinction between uncertainty in procedures versus outcomes is akin to the difference in economics between uncertainty and risk. The concept of risk, used in standard expected utility models, refers to probabilities assigned to specific outcomes. Alternatively, uncertainty pertains to the internal capacity to generate probabilities for outcomes. See Jack Hirshleifer and John R. Riley, *The Analytics of Uncertainty and Information* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 9-11.

resolving problems of tenure and authority among elites; and along another dimension by the clarity and exclusivity of authority distributed throughout the national security bureaucracy. This captures the different levels of uncertainty within leaderships concerning the prospects for political survival, the extent of authority, and the preferences of challengers. These uncertainties introduce transaction costs to political exchange that infuse friction into the internal process of adaptation to international conditions. Rather than fixating on a stringent dichotomy between democratic and non-democratic political structures, this taxonomy presents a standard for assessing the extent to which different regime types share certain characteristics. It presents a continuum along which domestic structures vary, irrespective of the absolute differences in public participation and state strength.

At the top, uncertainty within a domestic political environment varies according to the degrees to which job security and leadership succession are formally specified and guaranteed for political elites. At one extreme, there are highly under-regulated political arenas characterized by a dearth of well-defined and enforced procedures (such as legal norms, formal rules of the game, and constitutional practice) for resolving problems of power and authority within the leadership. The absence of formal, institutionalized relations between super- and subordination introduces an element of uncertainty into leadership politics, as incumbents are perpetually vulnerable to political challenge by aspirants.¹⁴

The formal institutional void regarding job security within the leadership induces concerns for relative position among competing politicians.¹⁵ The lack of job security

¹⁴As will be discussed below, job security in this context ultimately rests on idiosyncratic patterns of personal connections, performance evaluations, manipulation, and informal arrangements (such as bargains and routines) between relevant actors, rather than on established formal legal guidelines.

¹⁵The crucial point here is that institutional context matters for generating concerns for relative gains. The focus is not on individual preferences but on the constraints generated by an "extremely" uncertain and under-regulated political environment. For discussion of context-induced, as opposed to utility-driven

undermines any confidence in fairness of coalition play, and inclines politicians to engage in constant maneuvering to prevent threats to their position. Without guarantees against deceit or formal restraints to renegeing on policy promises, the potential for shirking always looms large in the background of policy bargains. The intensity of this process can be severe, given that the stakes involved in competition concern issues of political survival, whereby a single defeat suffered by an actor can risk ouster and the descent to political oblivion.¹⁶

Furthermore, the absence of constitutional provisions for job security tie economic welfare to political position. Lacking formal ownership rights over an occupied political position, an actor needs to muster all available political and economic resources in order to capture the full pecuniary and non-pecuniary benefits associated with a specific appointment within the government hierarchy. Moreover, a loss of political power deprives an actor of the economic benefits tied to political status. Therefore, in a highly under-regulated leadership environment, political elites must compete dearly for both political and economic security.¹⁷

concerns for relative gains, see especially Michael Mastanduno, "Do Relative Gains Matter?" *International Security* 16:1 (Summer 1991), pp. 73-113; Robert Powell, "Absolute and Relative Gains in International Relations Theory," *American Political Science Review* 85:4 (December 1991), pp. 1303-1320; and Arthur A. Stein, *Why Nations Cooperate*, pp. 4-13.

¹⁶The logic behind the assertion that concerns for political survival make actors responsive to relative position and advantage considerations derives from application of neorealist claims to the domestic political arena. As in the international context, there are overwhelming incentives confronting domestic political actors, who are constantly competing for their political survival (not merely a specific title), to be preoccupied with relative gains. Concerns for relative advantage are real, given that a rival may exploit disproportionate gains to undermine the political security of an actor. See especially, Joanne Gowa, "Anarchy, Egoism, and Third Images," *International Organization* 40:1 (Winter 1986), pp. 167-186; Joseph M. Grieco, *Cooperation Among Nations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 1-50, and Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Random House, 1979), pp. 104-106.

¹⁷For discussion of the marriage of economic wealth and political power under different property rights structures, see Svetozar Pejovich, *The Economics of Property Rights: Towards a Theory of Comparative Systems* (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1990), pp. 28-29. See also discussion in Janos Kornai, *The Socialist System: The Political Economy of Communism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); and Jan Winiecki, *Resistance to Change in the Soviet Economic System* (London: Routledge, 1991).

At the other end of the spectrum are formal and regular proceedings for job tenure and leadership succession that mitigate intensely competitive impulses and anxieties over political survival. Such formal constraints include term limits, formal succession procedures, and constitutionally mandated separation of governmental power. These formal arrangements establish a stable structure for elite competition that regulate and conform interactions to a prescribed *modus operandi*. They permit expectations among actors to converge, stipulate legal enforcement mechanisms, reduce the costs of interaction, and constrain the consequences of being deceived; thus, ameliorating concerns for political survival and diluting uncertainties associated with domestic political exchange. Moreover, formal arrangements are costly to alter, as amendments typically require broad based support and the expenditure of valuable political capital.¹⁸ Additionally, formal rules, such as constitutional procedures, add transparency to political behavior, linking political legitimacy to close adherence to these constraints. In sum, by adding predictability and credibility to political commitments, these formal provisions reduce anxiety over job security and allow more room for politicians to think about secondary policy concerns.

At the administrative level, decisional uncertainty is associated with the extent to which property rights are clearly defined and delineated within the respective formal setting.¹⁹ As mentioned above, property rights refer to a specific authority to make a

¹⁸Douglas C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 46-53.

¹⁹This study conceptualizes the state as a national government apparatus, characterized by the concentration and centralization of decision-making authority, penetration of centralized institutional controls throughout the territory, and the specialization of institutional tasks and roles within the government. Variation in these traits defines the strength of the respective state. See Eric Nordlinger, *On the Autonomy of the Democratic State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981); and Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 20. An explanation of the origins of specific state structures is beyond the scope of the argument. The focus, rather, is on the costs of exchange that exist within respective state structures. To do this, I view the state as consisting of a set of institutional arrangements designed to promote the self-interests of political actors and to reduce the transaction costs associated with the production of national security and welfare. It is viewed as autonomous from society. Interests,

decision and select the use of a resource. With respect to the composition of the state, property rights specify the authority of the different government branches and departments to make policy decisions, and determine the extent to which these organizations capture the benefits and shoulder the burdens of their policy actions. In essence, the distribution of property rights within the government apparatus affects the location of decision-making authority and the relationship between risk-taking and the bearing of costs, therefore shaping the incentives of political actors.

There are different categories of property rights that confer upon recipients either exclusive or circumscribed entitlement, allowing them to exercise complete or partial authority over an issue area. Authority within the state apparatus is defined by the rules and procedures that designate its appropriate uses and limits. The more exclusive the authority or permission to do different things with a resource, the more utility an owner can capture from its use.²⁰ Although the state exercises exclusive rights vis-a-vis society, as determined by its autonomy,²¹ authority within the hierarchical structure of the state is

however, are disaggregated to include the utility-maximizing preferences of key actors charged with producing and maintaining national security. This is discussed in the following section. For more on the predatory nature of the state and its elite, see especially Edward Ames and Richard T. Rapp, "The Birth and Death of Taxes," *Journal of Economic History* 37:1 (March 1977), David A. Lake, *Superpower Strategies: The State and the Production of Security* (unpublished manuscript); Frederic C. Lane, "The Economic Meaning of War and Protection," *Journal of Social Philosophy and Jurisprudence* 7 (1942), pp. 254-270; Margaret Levi, *Of Rule and Revenue* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Douglas C. North, *Structure and Change in Economic History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1981), pp. 20-32; and Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," in Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 169-191.

²⁰On the divisibility and restrictions of property rights, see Armen A. Alchian and Harold Demsetz, "The Property Rights Paradigm," p. 17; Ellen Comisso, "Property Rights, Liberalism, and the Transition from 'Actually Existing' Socialism," pp. 165-166; and Eirik G. Furubotn and Svetozar Pejovich, "Property Rights and Economic Theory: A Survey of Recent Literature," *Journal of Economic Literature* 10 (December 1972), pp. 1140.

²¹On defining state strength on the basis of autonomy vis-a-vis society, see Jeff Frieden, "Sectoral Conflict and U.S. Foreign Economic Policy, 1914-1940," *International Organization* 42:1 (Winter 1988), pp. 59-90; Peter J. Katzenstein, *Between Power and Plenty*, pp. 3-23; and Stephen D. Krasner, "Approaches to the State," pp. 223-246; and *ibid.*, *Defending the National Interest* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 5-93. In this literature, states are distinguished by their strength. "Weak" states, as defined by the extensive penetration of political institutions by societal forces, present fluid policy environments where

attenuated. In other words, decision-making authority is formally delegated to the different branches and functional bureaucracies of the government. These rights, however, are restricted as the different bureaucracies enjoy only limited discretion over decision-making and remain subordinate to the central executive. The extent to which rights are divided among these departments, as reflected in the degrees of centralization of decision-making authority and control over organizations concerned with policy implementation, specifies the capacity of the state.²² By retaining only partial authority over an issue area, bureaucratic agents bear different responsibilities for the risks and costs of decisions. An agent, unlike a principal, is not the sole residual claimant of independent decisions and, therefore, has divergent incentives. Thus, the attenuation of decision-making authority affects the value of functional positions, giving rise to distinct interests between principals and agents throughout the government hierarchy.²³

the outcomes on specific issues are the consequences of the varying abilities of societal interest groups to organize and assert their prominence in the policy process. The state, from this perspective, acts mainly as a conduit for constituencies and societal group pressures. Power over policy is contingent on the particular issue at stake rather than on the formalized position and interactions of the players. A "strong" state, by contrast, enjoys a significant degree of autonomy *vis-a-vis* society and acts as an enduring organized structure or set of institutional arrangements that specifies the players and their authority in the policy-making process. These institutions reduce uncertainty and regulate the relations between the state and societal groups by specifying and enforcing the mandates and functions of the different actors involved in a particular policy decision. For the purposes of this study, the focus is on the degree of uncertainty within autonomus state structures.

²²For discussion of state capacity defined in terms of the level of centralization, see G. John Ikenberry, David A. Lake, and Michael Mastanduno, "Introduction: Approaches to Explaining American Foreign Economic Policy," *International Organization* 42:1 (Winter 1988), pp. 3-14; G. John Ikenberry, "Conclusion: An Institutional Approach to American Foreign Economic Policy," *International Organization* 42:1 (Winter 1988), p. 219-243; Peter J. Katzenstein, "International Relations and Domestic Structures: Foreign Economic Policies of Advanced International States," *International Organization* 30:1 (Winter 1976), pp. 1-45; Stephen Krasner, "Approaches to the State," pp. 223-246; and David A. Lake, *Power, Protection, and Free Trade* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 68-74. See also discussion of the number of ways to evaluate the "strength" of the state in Matthew Evangelista, *Innovation and the Arms Race* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 25-28; and Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities* (New York: Cambridge University Press 1984), pp. 20.

²³On the different categories of property rights and the attenuation of ownership, see the discussions in Louis De Alessi, "The Economics of Property Rights: A Review of the Evidence," *Research in Law and Economics* 2 (1980), pp. 1-47; Yoram Barzel, *Economic Analysis of Property Rights* (New York:

Uncertainty within the domestic political setting varies inversely with the exclusivity of decision-making authority distributed throughout the government apparatus. Even in the most hierarchical circumstances, uncertainty percolates around the center as authority is delegated to agents, reducing the ability of principals to control decisions made by subordinates. The allocation of rights to the various functional organizations leads to the specialization of authority, imperfect flow of information, and conflicts of interests between the political leadership and its administrative bodies. Asymmetries in the distribution of information and responsibilities give rise to principal-agent problems, as the central executive incurs costs in the selection and monitoring of the government bureaucracy.

Specifically, the partitioning of authority, unobservability of behavior, and inevitable information asymmetries in favor of the agent create incentive problems between super- and subordinate, generating uncertainty within hierarchical governance structures. There is no guarantee that agents will choose to pursue the central executive's best interests in the formulation and implementation of policy. As self-interested actors, agents are induced to adopt a principal's objectives only to the extent that the incentive structure imposed on them renders such behavior advantageous. Therefore, the level of uncertainty within a state structure is contingent upon the extent to which there exist formal arrangements that constrain opportunism of agents by reducing the costs of central monitoring and inducing the free flow of information.²⁴

Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 1-12; Thrainn Eggertsson, *Economic Behavior and Institutions*, pp. 33-40; and Eirik G. Furobotn and Svetozar Pejovich, eds., *The Economics of Property Rights*, pp. 45-48.

²⁴For more on the limits of hierarchy and classic treatments of the principal-agent problem, see Eugene F. Fama, "Agency Problems and the Theory of the Firm," *Journal of Political Economy* 88:2 (April 1980), pp. 288-307; Michael C. Jensen and William H. Meckling, "Theory of the Firm: Managerial Behavior, Agency Costs and Ownership Structure," *Journal of Financial Economics* 3 (1976), pp. 305-360; Terry M. Moe, "The New Economics of Organization," *The American Journal of Political Science* 28:4 (November 1984), pp. 739-777; Paul Milgrom and John Roberts, *Economics, Organization, and Management* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1992); and Stephen A. Ross, "The Economic Theory of Agency: The Principal's Problem," *American Economic Review (Proceedings)* 63 (May 1963), pp. 134-139. See also Thrainn

The issue of uncertainty is not, however, associated solely with the problem of separation of power. Even holding a partial right, an agent can be effectively monitored and kept in line as long as accountability and behavior remain transparent. The critical dimension of administrative uncertainty, therefore, is the degree to which authority is clearly defined among the various players. Ill-defined mandates severely confuse the incentives for behavior. The distribution of similar functions across the different offices of government increases uncertainty. The proliferation of mandates and duplication of authority among these various state actors blur formal lines of jurisdiction and create coordination problems. This further obfuscates responsibility, allowing functionaries to spread the blame for their actions.²⁵ In this regard, it is the ambiguity concerning accountability rather than the pure division of duties that induces divergent behavior among principals and agents. Moreover, elements charged with performing similar tasks and making related decisions compete with one another to maximize the utility of their respective rights. Under extreme conditions, this fosters deadlock and governmental paralysis, as there are no formal procedures to settle disputes among actors retaining similar authority.

Eggertsson, *Economic Behavior and Institutions*, pp. 40-45, 333-348. For the purpose of identifying the fundamental sources of friction within domestic institutional environments and, subsequently, for exploring the informal means of mitigating these uncertainties, discussion is stylized and focused on isolated, independent principal-agent relationships. It is only by simplifying the explanation for the different incentive structures of respective political actors that the present discussion precludes explication of the complexities associated with multiple principal and multiple agent environments. In the discussion of specific cases, there is recognition that actors may serve both as principals and agents. Additionally, this logic informs much of the theoretical discussion surrounding discretion to delegate authority in hierarchical political structures. For a taste of this application of the principal-agent framework to the study of administrative oversight of bureaucratic decision-making in American politics, see especially D. Roderick Kiewiet and Mathew D. McCubbins, *The Logic of Delegation: Congressional Parties and the Appropriations Process* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 1-38; and David Epstein and Sharyn O'Halloran, "Administrative Procedures, Information, and Agency Discretion," *American Journal of Political Science* 38:3 (August 1994), pp. 697-722.

²⁵For discussion of how the delegation of ill-defined mandates enables actors to avoid responsibility in their policy choices, see David Schoenbrod, *Power Without Responsibility: How Congress Abuses the People Through Delegation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 3-24.

In sum, the uncertainties associated with job security and information asymmetries create additional costs to political exchange within hierarchical state structures. Depending on the nature of the embedded institutional context, a central executive can incur considerable transaction costs in the formulation and implementation of grand strategy. In particular, the cost of information and insecurities of position provide incentives for opportunism among functional bureaucrats and create barriers to cooperation among elites, respectively. Lacking formal mechanisms that link ownership with control in the government hierarchy, central executives encounter significant costs for ensuring that agents distribute complete information and fully implement directives. While the delegation of authority creates incentive problems, ill-defined mandates allow actors to avoid being held directly accountable for their policy advocacy. Moreover, the absence of predetermined procedures for job tenure and leadership succession inflate the costs of being duped and encourage unrestrained pursuit of self-interest, undermining confidence in reciprocity necessary for realizing mutual gains from compromise among elites. These transaction costs are non-negligible, given the potential costs of being deceived by a coalition partner in the ruling elite and the cost of information in an under-regulated political system.²⁶ Therefore, the transaction costs incurred within the internal political process increase the burden of producing and maintaining security.

²⁶For seminal discussions of transaction costs, see Armen A. Alchian and Harold Demsetz, "Production, Information Costs, and Economic Organization," *American Economic Review* (December 1972), pp. 777-795; R.H. Coase, "The Nature of the Firm," *Economica* 4 (November 1937), pp. 386-405; Douglas C. North, *Structure and Change in Economic History*, pp. 33-44; and Oliver E. Williamson, *The Economic Institutions of Capitalism* (New York: The Free Press, 1985), pp. 15-42. In economics, transaction costs refer to the measurement and enforcement costs necessary for specifying and monitoring exchange. In the political arena, transaction costs reflect the costliness of information needed to constrain opportunism among the elite and functional bureaucrats. Furthermore, states, like firms, represent the vertical integration of political exchange, designed to reduce the costs of transacting within society. In this regard, the focus of this study is on the limitations of formal institutional arrangements and on the transaction costs that persist within government structures. Thus, the argument is that national resources flow neither automatically nor efficiently to strategic demands, as if in response to a neo-classical price mechanism generated by prevailing international and economic conditions. Rather, there are considerable costs to political exchange, derived from the uncertainties of job security and costliness of information that disrupt the smooth translation of international and economic pressures into an efficient grand strategy.

Despite the costs of running the political system, leaderships *do* formulate and implement grand strategies in response to foreign threats. Indeed, coalitions among ruling elites emerge and bureaucratic agents perform assigned tasks. What is the nature of these political exchange relationships and how do they vary? Specifically, how are political actors able to mitigate political uncertainties and the costs of transacting in the production of grand strategy? The next section addresses this issue by explaining the implications of decisional uncertainty for the emergence and maintenance of informal institutional arrangements.

The Emergence of Informal Institutional Arrangements Under Different Conditions of Uncertainty

As discussed above, formal state structures do indeed matter. They do so by shaping the levels of uncertainty governing interactions among national politicians and functionaries. In the context of rational behavior, variation in the costs of transacting become critical determinants of political interaction. Put simply, there are barriers to political exchange tied to the uncertainties of job tenure and bureaucratic control. While parties comprising the leadership and government bureaucracy may have strong incentives to strike bargains and align policies, their incentives *ex post* are not always compatible with maintaining agreements. Depending on the nature of the formal institutional setting, political actors could find themselves in a tenuous position that requires constant attention to shoring up their political status within the leadership and securing compliance of subordinates tasked with implementing policies. Different structural uncertainties concerning political survival and responsibility generate different requirements for political exchange that, in turn, determine leadership capacities for formulating and implementing grand strategy.

As captured by the *neo-institutional* approach, informal arrangements emerge to reduce the uncertainty existing in formal settings. The lesson of this literature is that when *ex post* problems are anticipated *ex ante*, parties will attempt to alter *ex post* incentives by constructing informal institutions that regulate *ex post* compliance through bargains and codes of conduct. In other words, potential parties to an exchange will devise informal institutions-- defined as self-enforcing, non-legal, extra-constitutional bargains and conventions-- to regulate behavior and create stable expectations about how each will act.²⁷ Providing information and obligations, informal institutions serve as appendages to formal legal measures that ameliorate uncertainty by channeling behavior into predictable courses. They are nested within formal institutional structures, defining the *de facto* rights and duties of respective political actors. Informal bargaining arrangements facilitate political exchange by assigning exclusive and delineated rights, thus, altering what is rational for actors to do. In doing so, they can come to supplant formal governmental arrangements, having a more direct and operational impact on political behavior and substantive policy preferences.²⁸

Given the problems of collective action and the tradeoffs between alternate forms, how do informal institutional arrangements emerge and persist under various conditions

²⁷The neo-institutional perspective broadly subsumes the literature addressing transaction costs, property rights, uncertainty and institutions. Seminal pieces include Douglas C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*; Terry M. Moe, "The New Economics of Organization," *American Journal of Political Science* 28:4 (November 1984), pp. 739-777; Oliver E. Williamson, *Markets and Hierarchies* (New York: Free Press, 1975); Jack Knight, *Institutions and Social Conflict* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Gary Libecap, *Contracting for Property Rights*; John Umbeck, "The California Gold Rush: A Study of Emerging Property Rights," *Explorations in Economic History* 14 (1977), pp. 197-226; Barry R. Weingast and William J. Marshall, "The Industrial Organization of Congress; or, Why Legislatures, Like Firms, Are Not Organized Like Markets," *Journal of Political Economy* 98:4 (1988), p. 132-163; and Yoram Barzel, *Economic Analysis of Property Rights*.

²⁸ See especially, Elinor Ostrom, *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 50-55. For a related discussion of informal organizations, see Donald Chisholm, *Coordination Without Hierarchy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), pp. 20-39. For an empirical test of the primacy of informal institutions over formal, *de jure* structures in the Soviet context, see William A. Clark, "Crime and Punishment in Soviet Officialdom, 1965-90," *Europe-Asia Studies* 45:2 (Spring 1993), pp. 259-279.

of domestic political uncertainty? What is the relationship between specific informal processes and the degree of uncertainty? In particular, what are the micro-foundations of political and administrative behavior in these different contexts? What incentives do actors have for brokering informal arrangements within governing arenas, what resources are available to them in this regard, and how do they benefit from such arrangements? Moreover, how does the substantive content of an informal institution reflect the bargaining strength and distributional concerns of key players charged with formulating and implementing grand strategy? The answers to these questions lie in informal institutions.

Informal arrangements among rational political actors produce distributional effects that benefit some more than others. Situated within the context of formal state structures, actors are not equal and retain different degrees of authority. Informal institutions arise out of maneuvering and bargaining for these gains between actors with different incentives and political clout. Engaged in an interactive process, political actors pursue their self-interests while remaining sensitive to the fact that their choices affect the choices of others.

In this strategic setting, informal institutions emerge that reflect a specific share formula between winners and losers. Those bargaining from relative political strength exert their authority to structure informal arrangements that are advantageous to their own political interests, while compensating others to ensure deference and compliance. Informal institutions appear as long as politically strong actors are able to reap gains, such as the protection of political position and favored interests, that exceed the costs of enforcement; and only if potential losers derive benefits from the exchange, through the receipt of policy concessions and inducements, that exceed the costs of compliance. Thus, informal institutions originate from the incentives of both potential winners and losers to exchange, reflecting shared preferences for stabilizing job tenure and reducing

transaction costs, as well as private concerns for maximizing relative gains within under-regulated formal leadership and government structures.²⁹

As the ascendant political figure in the domestic arena, the central executive plays an integral role at brokering informal bargaining arrangements within the ruling elite and among subordinates. Acting as a political entrepreneur, the central executive provides services in exchange for political profit. The central executive invests political capital in a set of collective and selective benefits tied to informal bargaining arrangements that are offered to potential collaborators, in return for payoffs to his/her political position. Administratively, he/she takes on the roles of creating, selling, allocating, and enforcing bargaining packages and managing exchange so that participating political actors are able to realize their collective and private goals from interaction. Specifically, he/she acts as a power broker, parceling out limited authorities over discrete policy domains in return for establishing implicit rules to reduce political uncertainty.³⁰ Only if the value of the collective and private gains from participation exceed their price will potential members join and remain party to the institutions. Similarly, the political entrepreneur will continue to supply these benefits only as long as he/she is able to derive private political advantages that outweigh the costs of providing selective inducements to solicit membership contribution and of brokering the collective endeavor. It is this surplus-

²⁹This discussion is adapted from Jack Knight, *Institutions and Social Conflict*, pp. 21-48; John Waterbury, *Exposed to Innumerable Delusions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 1-30; Keith Krehbiel, *Information and Legislative Organization* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), pp. 23-60; Gary Libecap, *Contracting for Property Rights*, pp. 10-28; and Terry M. Moe, "Political Institutions: The Neglected Side of the Story," *Journal of Law, Economic, and Organization* 6 (Special Issue 1990), pp. 222-225.

³⁰Terry M. Moe, *The Organization of Interests* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 72-112; and Norman Frohlick and Joe A. Oppenheimer, "Entrepreneurial Politics and Foreign Policy," *World Politics* 24: Supplement (Spring 1972), pp. 151-178. A political entrepreneur is considered to be an individual who not only exploits profitable opportunities to supply collective goods, but who does so "without providing all of the resources himself/herself." See Norman Frohlick, Joe A. Oppenheimer, and Oran R. Young, *Political Leadership and Collective Goods* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 6.

maximization motive on the part of all political actors that underlies political exchange. Thus, an understanding of the formation and maintenance of informal bargaining arrangements involves analysis of the incentives and capabilities that determine political leadership and deference, and the varying conditions of uncertainty that shape entrepreneurial options and strategies for satisfying distributional concerns.

The central executive has a strong incentive to facilitate political exchange with potential political rivals and government bureaucrats. As the formally designated leader within the ruling elite, he/she has the most to gain from stability at the top fostered by informal cooperation. Tacit acceptance on behalf of potential challengers to respect political integrity lends security to a central executive's job tenure. As long as prospective rivals are tied into a cooperative arrangement there are fewer incentives for them to undermine the leader's privileged position. Moreover, as the actor formally responsible for devising a grand strategy, the central executive stands to gain the most from informal institutions that reduce agency costs and promote the dissemination of information, which in turn enhance his/her control over functionaries. It is precisely by stabilizing the expectations about how other actors will perform that informal mechanisms of exchange hold out potential benefits for the central executive.³¹

In addition to extracting these absolute benefits, the central executive derives relative advantages from the payments of tribute for brokering informal arrangements that are favorable to particular groups. Uncertainty concerning job security induces sensitivity to the relative political position of potential aspirants. The political legitimacy gained from "successfully" managing the formulation and implementation of grand strategy allows the leader to maintain distance between himself/herself and potential challengers. By forging a credible policy program that delivers desirable and attainable

³¹Jack Knight, *Institutions and Social Conflict*, pp. 48-83.

goals, a leader is able to convince the political establishment of his/her skill, efficacy, competence and indispensability, thus securing a relative position ascendancy.³² Hence, these absolute and relative gains to political position inspire the central executive to assume a leadership role in bearing the costs of mediating informal policy exchanges among the elite and between functional bureaucrats.³³

In conjunction with these motivating factors, the central executive enjoys a formal comparative advantage in interest inter-mediation. First, as chief executive he/she has privileged access to the media and other sundry communications channels. In this capacity, the leader retains advantages in advertising the benefits of his/her bargaining packages, providing selective information to solicited groups, and shaping the perceptions of the political world. Second, the central executive has the formal power and resources to administer selective inducements and collective goods. Through patronage networks and disproportional power over policy, the central executive is able to offer side payments, pressure and cajole potential rivals and administrators, present incentive packages, and allocate specialized information in order to distribute private benefits and increase the perceived value of a potential member's contribution to the collective enterprise. Possessing such resources, the leader is in an advantageous position to administer collective and selective benefits designed to co-opt others, preempt alternative platforms, redefine issues, and arrange and monitor policy exchanges. With

³²On the criteria and importance of leadership authority-building, see especially George W. Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev as Leaders: Building Authority in Soviet Politics* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982), pp. 4-8. See also Samuel L. Popkin, *The Rational Peasant* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), pp. 259-266.

³³In this regard, the central executive plays a crucial role in circumventing collective action problems both by acting as a privileged member (extracting a share of the benefits in the provision of the collective good sufficient to give him/her incentive to provide the good) and by reaping private profits (deference) in return for shouldering a disproportionate amount of the burden. See Norman Frolich and Joe A. Oppenheimer, "Entrepreneurial Politics and Foreign Policy," pp. 151-178; and Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action*, pp. 49-52.

these resources at his/her disposal, the central executive is able to manipulate private and collective benefits to induce and tie others to political interaction.³⁴

The central executive's interests extend beyond merely striking a balance between the costs and benefits of arranging and coordinating exchange among rivals and bureaucrats. As a political entrepreneur, he/she seeks to maximize private political profits from this enterprise. Retaining the authority to initiate and broker informal bargains, the leader does so on his/her own terms that are optimal from the perspective of his/her own interests. Benefiting from a comparative advantage in the terms of trade, the central executive pursues the maximum surplus from exchange. This is done either by restricting the supply of his/her contribution to the collective enterprise, or by increasing the extraction of political support through the pulling of rank and/or the exploitation of client networks.³⁵

It is this distributive motive, induced by formal conditions of uncertainty, that makes leaders predatory, constantly striving to exploit advantages in formal power to secure political position. Central executives devise and structure informal institutions that increase their bargaining power, reduce their transaction costs, and secure their political survival so as to capture gains from political exchange. This, in turn, generates a

³⁴Terry M. Moe, *The Organization of Interests*, pp. 36-59.

³⁵I distinguish this approach from others that emphasize the revenue maximizing functions of a political leader. Where others concentrate on the exchange of protection (including internal order, justice, and defense against foreign threats) for revenue (defined in a pecuniary sense), I substitute leadership power and authority for revenue, as the primary currency of exchange. Moreover, I focus on the central executive's interests in maximizing political profits from brokering informal institutional arrangements, involving strategies for both reducing the costs associated with the provision of collective and private inducements, and increasing the extraction of his/her own aggregate political resource base. As is discussed below, the particular strategy adopted for either maximizing revenues or minimizing costs is determined by the prevailing conditions of domestic political uncertainty. For discussions of the revenue maximizing functions of political actors, see Douglas C. North, *Structure and Change in Economic History*, pp. 20-32; David A. Lake, *Power, Protection, and Free Trade* pp. 70-72; Edward Ames and Richard T. Rapp, "The Birth and Death of Taxes: A Hypothesis," *Journal of Economic History* 37:1 (March 1977), pp. 161-178; Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," in Theda Skocpol, ed., *Bringing the State Back In* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 169-191; and Margaret Levi, *Of Rule and Revenue*, pp. 11-40.

form of rent-seeking, whereby the leader extracts payments of political support above and beyond that which those resources paid in tribute could command in any alternative use within the domestic political arena. Rents specifically appear in the form of the cultivation of "personality cults," and deference to the leader beyond the point of diminishing returns to the efficacy of the collective endeavor.³⁶

The predatory, extortionist, and rent-seeking behavior of the central executive does not, however, take place in a vacuum or proceed unbridled. Rather, there are significant constraints imposed on a leadership. First, the central executive, while ascendant, is not omnipotent. Despite advantages in formal power within the domestic political system, he/she must rely on the good services of others to carry out directives. The inefficiency of pulling rank and vast complexity of governance place a premium on establishing political legitimacy; requiring perpetual demonstration of political skill and co-optation, as well as the development of subtle coercive tactics.³⁷ As is the case with a hegemon in the international arena, central executives may lead, "but they need followers, and they must make concessions to gain others' consent."³⁸

³⁶This discussion draws liberally from Levi's definitive account of leadership predation. I distinguish the present conception of leadership predation from that of Levi's by emphasizing the rent-seeking nature of political exchange. See Margaret Levi, *Of Rule and Revenue* pp. 10-40. On the economic foundations and political implications of rent-seeking, see Richard D. Auster and Morris Silver, *The State as a Firm*, pp. 55-57; James M. Buchanan, Robert D. Tollison, and Gordon Tullock, eds., *Toward a Theory of the Rent-Seeking Society* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1980); John A. C. Conybeare, "The Rent-Seeking State and Revenue Diversification," *World Politics* 35:1 (October 1982), pp. 25-42; Anne O. Krueger, "The Political Economy of the Rent-Seeking Society," *The American Economic Review* 64 (June 1974), pp. 291-303; and Charles Rowley, Robert Tollison, and Gordon Tullock, eds., *The Political Economy of Rent-Seeking* (Boston: Kluwer, 1988). From the rent-seeking perspective, the concept of efficiency is applied to the leader's ability to maximize his/her private surplus, instead of the nature of the collective good. A leader is concerned with maximizing his/her own private interests (gains to absolute and relative position), irrespective to the efficient operation of coordinated action.

³⁷George W. Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev as Leaders: Building Authority in Soviet Politics*, pp. 3-8.

³⁸Adapted from Arthur Stein, "The Hegemon's Dilemma: Great Britain, the United States, and the International Economic Order," *International Organization* 38:2 (Spring 1984), p. 358.

Second, the central executive pursues strategies for maximizing relative position subject to the constraints on bargaining power *viv-a-vis* potential competitors and agents. An entrepreneurial leader faces a competitive constraint when there exist substitutes for his/her services as manager of political exchange. "The relative bargaining power of rulers is determined by the extent to which others control resources on which rulers depend and the extent to which rulers control resources on which others depend. Rulers will be better able to set favorable terms of trade the less they depend on others and the more others depend on them."³⁹ When enjoying a monopoly over the provision of collective and selective inducements, the central executive is able to control the price of his/her services. Alternatively, when there are close substitutes, the central executive possesses more limited discretion, and must offer more competitive prices for his/her leadership services. Therefore, the level of leadership predation and rent-seeking is contingent upon the opportunity costs facing potential parties to exchange associated with the availability of competitors and surrogate facilitators of political interaction.⁴⁰

Confronting competitive constraints on bargaining leverage within the leadership, central executives must pursue their private ends with sensitivity to the interests of potential challengers. In this regard, the ability to reap the political profits linked to the brokerage of informal institutions depends on the interests of other actors in deferring to the central executive. In particular, potential parties to exchange must be convinced that their contributions will make a difference, and that others are likely to participate in the collective action. Also, possible members, as is the case with the central executive,

³⁹Margaret Levi, *Of Rule and Revenue*, p. 17.

⁴⁰Douglas C. North, *Structure and Change in Economic History*, pp. 27-29. For a related discussion on the exit potential provided by competitors and substitutes, see both the seminal work, Albert Hirschman, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Response to the Decline of Firms, Organizations, and States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970); and the recent application of the rent-seeking state literature, David A. Lake, "Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War," *American Political Science Review* 86:1 (March 1992), pp. 24-37.

maintain both collective and private interests in engaging in exchange. They share the collective interest in obtaining the information necessary to stabilize expectations about the actions of others. With these expectations, actors are able to enjoy job security and to form strategies for maximizing their own private benefits. Depending on their relative bargaining strength, potential members look to exchanges to provide private expected gains, through compensation and side payments for participation from the central executive. Thus, the incentives confronting potential partners to exchange rest largely with the prospects for capturing distributional benefits.⁴¹

Given the limits to leadership coercion and the different private concerns of challengers, informal institutions must be structured in a manner reflecting the power and interests of the various parties to exchange. There must be incentives provided by the informal mechanism that encourage compliance from potential partners. Under highly uncertain conditions, informal institutions must reflect the relative bargaining strength of the different parties, allowing each to derive both private and collective benefits from interaction. In particular, they must satisfy the private distributional concerns of all parties to an exchange, tantamount to their relative bargaining strength, providing each with sufficient gains to offset expected losses tied to mutual accommodation. This prompts a leader to fashion informal arrangements to satisfy potential partners not only through the provision of collective benefits linked to the stabilization of expectations, but also by allocating side payments so that contending parties are assured of getting a measure of what they want. Thus, the ability of the central executive to mold informal institutions to meet his/her personal preferences is contingent upon the strategies of potential parties to exchange and their respective abilities to exert themselves.⁴²

⁴¹Jack Knight, *Institutions and Social Conflict*, p. 48; and Gary Libecap, *Contracting for Property Rights*, pp. 12-21; and Elinor Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*, pp. 94-100.

⁴²Jack Knight, *Institutions and Social Conflict*; and Terry M. Moe, "Political Institutions: The Neglected Side of the Story," pp. 225-230.

Third, the rent-seeking activity of the central executive is constrained by his/her capacity to monitor and supervise the behavior of bureaucratic agents. The leader is not omniscient. While retaining privileged access to valuable information vis-a-vis prospective competitors in the leadership, the central executive remains, nonetheless, dependent upon functionaries for the supply and dissemination of information. Regarding grand strategy, a leader relies on the bureaucracy for information pertaining to the nature of threats and the menu of plausible responses, as well as for implementing executive decisions. Given the magnitude and complexity of the issues and tasks involved, the amount of discretion that accrues to lower officials is substantial. This dependency impedes the leader's control and ability to manipulate information required for managing exchange relationships. In this context, the central executive must design informal institutions to facilitate low cost monitoring. Given the prohibitive costs of coercion and of gaining complete control, this involves further delineation of property rights among agents and the delegation of more authority (and thus responsibility) to subordinates in the formation and implementation of policies. The central executive also can hire third parties and create competitive markets for services provided by agents that discipline their structural incentives for diversionary behavior.⁴³ Alternatively, the leader can offer additional pecuniary and non-pecuniary rewards to induce agency compliance for the fulfillment of specific tasks. By pursuing either track, the central executive relinquishes some of his/her own authority and grants more autonomy to bureaucratic agents. Therefore, informal institutions are crafted to accommodate simultaneously the particular incentives of relevant political agents, and to secure

⁴³Armen Alchian, "Corporate Management and Property Rights," in H. Manne, ed., *Economic Policy and the Regulation of Corporate Securities* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1969), pp. 337-360.

compliance through a set of positive or negative inducements arranged by the central executive⁴⁴

Facing these constraints on predation and rent-seeking, strategies for brokering exchange are ultimately contingent upon the prevailing conditions of domestic political uncertainty. Competing elites traditionally find themselves locked in the proverbial "prisoners' dilemma," where their preference orders are as follows-- exploiting or taking advantage of others, mutual cooperation, mutual defection, and being exploited. As rational egoists, each has an incentive to exploit others no matter whether the rest choose to make gestures towards participating in a ruling coalition or to remain aloof. This produces an outcome where all political actors are worse off than if they cooperated to stabilize their rivalry. In this regard, they mutually prefer an outcome that is Pareto-superior to the equilibrium produced by adherence to their dominant strategies of defection.

Trapped in this prisoner's dilemma, the level of uncertainty bears heavily on the bargaining strategies of competing elites by determining time horizons, calculations of expected payoffs and values attached to reciprocity. Specifically, the degree of formal decisional uncertainty dictates whether absolute or relative gains considerations dominate the entrepreneurial calculations of the different political actors, especially the leader. The greater the uncertainty over job tenure, the more sensitive actors are to concerns for relative position. Conversely, institutional settings that solve for job security allow actors to pursue directly absolute concerns represented in their utility functions. The level of uncertainty is a critical condition for specifying the expected costs of being deceived and, thus, whether or not the prospects for iteration and repeated interaction incite or inhibit cooperation.⁴⁵ Hence, the nature of uncertainty embedded in a political environment

⁴⁴Terry M. Moe, "Political Institutions: The Neglected Side of the Story," pp. 230-235.

⁴⁵Robert Powell, "Absolute and Relative Gains in International Relations Theory," pp. 1310-1311.

conditions the propensities for taking risks and the strategies for promoting political compromise.

Under stable circumstances, where competing elites are formally secure in their positions, political actors are more apt to be risk acceptant in their calculations of gains versus losses through cooperation. A decrease in their power and authority relative to another's will not compromise their political position or lessen their ability to prevail in future policy disputes. Confident that interaction will continue and that the costs of being duped by a rival will not be prohibitive, an actor will adopt longer time horizons and a greater affinity towards deriving absolute gains from exchange. Enjoying formal protection, leaders will fear marginal fluctuations in relative power less than the absolute losses tied to ongoing mutual defection. Others also will share incentives for engaging in short-run cooperation, recognizing that the future prospects for outlasting a rival through immediate intransigence are non-existent.⁴⁶

The overwhelming attraction to absolute gains creates an environment conducive for the pursuit of a *tit-for-tat* bargaining strategy.⁴⁷ Under stable conditions, where interactions are ongoing and political survival is ensured, the main obstacle to exchange centers around the notion of equivalent reciprocity.⁴⁸ Information deficiencies regarding the intentions of others and the risks of cheating act as the fundamental impediments to

⁴⁶For an astute discussion of the rational strategies for accepting and eschewing risks tied to cooperation both when actors fear for their survival and when they are secure in their positions, see Arthur Stein, *Why Nations Cooperate*, pp. 87-112. For the seminal cognitive-psychological sister argument, see David Kahneman and Amos Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk," *Econometrica* 47 (1979), pp. 263-291.

⁴⁷A bargaining strategy of tit-for-tat consists of cooperation on the first move and reciprocal responses to the preceding plays of others on the next and all subsequent moves. Theoreticians classically refer to it as a "nice, forgiving, and retaliatory" strategy, because it eschews isolated defection on the first move, but responds to subsequent defection despite the benefits derived from previous interaction. See especially Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation* (New York: Basic Books, 1979), p. 46.

⁴⁸For distinctions between equivalent versus contingent reciprocity, see Robert O. Keohane, "Reciprocity in International Relations," *International Organization* 40:1 (Winter 1986), pp. 5-12.

cooperation. Able to absorb the initial costs of forgiveness and capable of retaliating after being deceived, the central executive is in a position to circumvent these problems by instigating conditional cooperation. Occupying a privileged position, the central executive can afford the start-up costs tied to a strategy of *tit-for-tat* that provides the basis for regularizing reciprocal exchanges and ensuring mutual accommodation for joint benefit among interacting parties. This strategy provides the cement that bonds other parties to exchange. By employing this strategy, the central executive provides the impetus for informally institutionalizing cooperation that, in turn, further promotes the credibility and durability of reciprocal interaction.

In contrast, under conditions of uncertainty, actors are more likely to be risk averse and to eschew mutual gains from cooperation. In this setting, relative gains matter. When political survival is uncertain and potentially at stake, political actors fixate on maintaining the gap between themselves and potential challengers. This is driven by the fear that losses can accumulate and can be subsequently used against oneself, undermining one's political livelihood. The omnipresent threat of ouster linked to any marginal loss in position biases an actor against gambles for expected absolute gains. The high costs of being deceived through exchange compel an actor to discount heavily future benefits of cooperation, and to focus on securing near-term political position.⁴⁹ This entails avoiding uncertain interactions that carry even remote prospects of leading to political ruin. Furthermore, with survival hanging in the balance, political actors are encouraged to deceive each other, hoping to outlast rivals in order to reap monopoly profits. As long as the domestic political environment provides limited formal guarantees for job tenure, political actors must preoccupy themselves with distributional concerns rather than with the prospects for realizing joint gains derived from mutual exchange.

⁴⁹David Kahnmen and Amos Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk."

In this context where relative gains matter, the requirements for brokering cooperation and exchange are more onerous. Strict *tit-for-tat* strategies are insufficient for inducing cooperation, given the prospective unacceptable costs of being suckered. Rather, the central executive must employ his/her leadership skills and superior resources to arrange policy trades among diverse political elements within the leadership. In other words, central executives must use side payments to broker exchange among rival elites. Competing elites must be coopted into bargains and presented with private enticements in return for their compliance to political exchange. In this regard, leaders must manage exchanges that satisfy the distributional concerns of other parties, in order to constrain opportunism and assaults on their relative position of ascendancy. They must use their clout to craft a series of bilateral and minilateral exchanges between rival platforms that simultaneously produce private concessions to different partners while embodying the collective interest in ensuring political survival.⁵⁰

These conditions of uncertainty induce leaders to logroll conflicting policies. Logrolls consist of vote trades among rival coalition members. Competitors exchange support for each's strongly preferred policies. This informal process of "you vote for my proposal and I will vote for yours," implies that the intensities of private policy preferences differ across actors. Logrolls arise as the central executive employs his/her clout to "package" these deals, set the policy agenda, and oversee the honoring of policy IOUs; thus satisfying the private and collective interests of conflicting membership of the ruling coalition. This brokerage by the central executive stabilizes a specific logroll, inducing compliance by distributing private gains and raising the potential costs of

⁵⁰For theoretical discussion of minilateralism and its application within a multilateral bargaining context, see Miles Kahler, "Multilateralism With Small and Large Numbers," *International Organization* 46:3 (Summer 1992), pp. 681-708.

defection.⁵¹ Premised on side payments, cooptation, and the maximization of distributional concerns, logrolls provide the foundation for the emergence of informal institutional arrangements in highly uncertain leadership settings.

The uncertainty associated with the degrees to which property rights are delineated and attenuated within the government apparatus also affects strategies for ensuring administrative compliance. Where authority is clearly specified among the different bureaucratic agencies, there are fewer incentives for shirking. The interests of principals and agents tend to overlap. The cheating that does take place is easily detected, and the costs of measuring agency performance and enforcing certain directives are nominal. Principals rely heavily on the competition among various agents as an inexpensive method for monitoring compliance and evaluating behavior. As long as the contracting relationships between principals and agents are unambiguous, agents themselves will also face incentives to bond their behavior against malfeasance, limiting their own decision-making power. Under these circumstances, negative sanctions, such as the threat of removal or displacement of subordinates serve as attractive measures for compelling agents to behave.⁵²

⁵¹For theoretical discussions of logrolls, see James M. Buchanan and Gordon Tullock, *The Calculus of Consent* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan, 1962), pp. 131-145; John A. Ferejohn, "Logrolling in an Institutional Context: A Case Study of Food Stamp Legislation," in Gerald C. Wright, Jr., Leroy N. Rieselbach, Lawrence C. Dodd, *Congress and Policy Change* (New York: Agathon Press, Inc., 1986), pp. 223-253; Joseph B. Kadane, "On Division of the Question," *Public Choice* 13 (Fall 1972), pp. 47-54; James B. Kau and Paul H. Rubin, "Self-Interest, Ideology, and Logrolling in Congressional Voting," *The Journal of Law and Economics* 22:2 (October 1979), pp. 365-384; and Barry R. Weingast and William C. Marshall, "The Industrial Organization of Congress; or, Why Legislatures, Like Firms, Are Not Organized as Markets," pp. 132-143. The leadership exercised by the central executive in inducing compliance, distributing private benefits, and setting the policy agenda, offsets the inherent vulnerability of logrolls to cycling and mitigates the attractiveness of alternative packages. In position to fulfill these tasks, the central executive is able to structure the voting sequence to stabilize simultaneously the process of vote trading while manipulating the outcome to his/her specific advantage. For discussion of the problems of cycling and of the crucial role played by a leader in ending the continuous process of searching out improved exchanges, see Dennis C. Mueller, *Public Choice* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 88-93.

⁵²As is the case in the corporate context, competition in various agency and output markets provide accessible and inexpensive information regarding agency behavior that facilitates monitoring and control. For comprehensive reviews of the various methods (including formal control systems, budget restrictions,

Alternatively, in formal structures where the authority of bureaucratic agents is severely attenuated and blurred, the incentives for shirking and costs of monitoring are significant. There are substantial agency costs as the interests of principals and agents significantly diverge. In this setting, a principal must devote greater efforts towards coopting agents by offering additional positive inducements for performance. Agents must be able to realize additional private pecuniary and non-pecuniary gains from compliance. They must be able to gain more perquisites from compliance than are available from opportunistic consumption. Methods for inducing compliance include enhanced prospects for obtaining higher wages, job promotion, access to privileged goods, and organizational autonomy. Moreover, principals rely on crude "success" indicators that target performance in general directions to facilitate monitoring and base rewards.⁵³

In sum, the nature of uncertainty existing within formal leadership and government structures shape the requirements for the emergence and maintenance of informal bargaining arrangements. The more uncertain are leadership politics, the more reticent are actors to engage in exchange, and thus, the more informal arrangements must conform to the distributional concerns of the respective parties to interaction. The emergence and stability of informal institutions critically depend on the skill of the central executive to fashion logrolls among competing interests. Conversely, under conditions where competing elites fixate exclusively on absolute gains, informal arrangements arise out of the efforts of the central executive to broker conditional

creation of competitive agency market; bonding arrangements, and the "establishment of incentive compensation systems which serve to more closely identify the agent's interests with those of the principal) for controlling the behavior of agents when propertyrights are clearly delineated, see Thrainn Eggertsson, *Economic Behavior and Institutions*, pp. 125-153; and Michael C. Jensen and William H. Meckling, "Theory of the Firm: Managerial Behavior, Agency Costs and Ownership Structure," pp. 323-343.

⁵³*ibid.*

responses. In particular, the central executive initiates a strategy of *tit-for-tat* that provides the foundation for ongoing reciprocal exchanges. With respect to the control over the government bureaucracy, the more attenuated the distribution of authority, the more the leadership must rely on positive inducements to foster agency compliance. Side payments and the cooptation of agents constitute the basis for these informal control arrangements. Alternatively, where authority is clearly delineated among agents, principals depend on negative sanctions and competition between agents to ensure compliance.

The Strategic Implications of Informal Institutions

What are the implications for the balance between the ends and means of grand strategy that stem from the emergence of different informal institutions? Specifically, how do informal bargaining arrangements among politicians and bureaucrats? How do self-imposed constraints on political competition and segmentation of control over specific policies affect state capacities for extending foreign commitments and procuring national capabilities? The answers to these questions hold the key to understanding the different propensities of states to under- or over-react to pressures generated by the international environment.

First, informal institutions impede the flow of information into the process of grand strategy decision-making. At the top, this constrains the ability of elites to detect either inconsistencies among international commitments or the failure of functionaries to implement directives. Politicians devise informal institutions in their own interests, as a means for reducing the transaction costs that inhibit the realization of their joint gains. As mechanisms for ensuring compliance, they permit information and expectations *within*

the ruling coalition to circulate freely among the participants, mitigating the uncertainty regarding intentions and stabilizing interaction. A by-product of these efforts, however, is the erection of barriers to *entry* of new information into the ruling coalition. The incentive consequences of these bargaining arrangements are to bind political actors tighter to their collective interests in cooperation, given the potential costs of defection and private gains to exchange. The premium placed on compliance and the constraints on competition simultaneously reduce the incentives for searching out new information and foster the neglect of issues that can potentially undermine group solidarity. This discourages the flow of information irrelevant to the compliance concerns of the leadership, including data needed to assess the performance of grand strategy. Thus, in the process of regulating elite competition informal institutions restrict the flow of new information into the ruling coalition.

Similarly, informal measures employed to deter agency opportunism inhibit the optimal distribution of information throughout the grand strategy decision-making process. Given that in most cases it does not pay to eliminate all opportunistic behavior, principals will incur agency costs. Depending on the degrees to which authority is formally attenuated, they must introduce informal arrangements that either induce or coerce compliance on behalf of their subordinates. These measures have mixed effects on the competition among bureaucratic agents and the attendant flow of information upwards. In general, informal institutional arrangements channel agency behavior toward the performance of narrow tasks and result in the cooptation of conflicting interests. Bureaucratic actors restrict their behavior to the pursuit of substantive policy preferences, as derived from assigned tasks, and contain inter-agency policy conflicts as they are each guaranteed a certain allocation of desired resources. Informal bargains limit the competition for scarce resources among functional groups, and reduce the incentives for pushing information up the hierarchical chain of command. As a result, they degrade the

capacity of the leadership to oversee the mobilization of national resources in concert with overarching strategic objectives. Therefore, the informal institutions within leadership and bureaucratic settings have the net effect of stifling both the demand for and supply of new information throughout the grand strategy decision-making process.

Second, informal institutions predicated on deriving private benefits and reducing transaction costs to political exchange divert leadership concerns with balancing the ends and means of strategy. Informal bargaining arrangements reflect the myopic intentions of contracting parties to realize individual and mutual gains from interaction. Specifically, concerns for efficiency and optimization are evaluated in terms of the distribution of benefits among members of the group, rather than from the perspective of national interests.⁵⁴ The objectives of maximizing the efficiency of leadership exchange and producing balanced grand strategies are not necessarily consistent. For instance, institutions can be Pareto optimal without maximizing social welfare, as is the case when the only path to greater social welfare requires reducing the benefits to some members of the group.⁵⁵ This has deleterious social consequences under conditions where political actors fixate primarily on distributional issues and on maintaining relative position. In this regard, the extent to which individual and social interests become inconsistent with broader national interests in balancing the ends and means of strategy, hinges upon the prevailing conditions of decisional uncertainty. Transaction costs determine the distributional requirements for brokering exchange, that, in turn, carry unintended consequences for the national referents for strategy. Thus, the particular level of degradation in the quality of grand strategy ultimately rests on the cost of transacting within the formal institutional setting, as well as on the nature of the attendant informal

⁵⁴See especially, Douglas C. North, *Structure and Change in Economic History*, pp. 24-26.

⁵⁵Jack Knight, *Institutions and Social Change*, pp. 28-38.

bargains that arise to regulate the interests and behavior of the parties charged with producing security for the state.

The logrolls that form and stabilize within highly uncertain leadership settings generate intensely self-defeating grand strategies. They consist of an accumulation rather than a synthesis of conflicting policy strains.⁵⁶ Under conditions where political survival is at stake, a central executive must accommodate the preferred platforms of opposing elites, based on their relative bargaining strength. In order to satisfy the relative gains concerns required to stabilize the logroll, a central executive must combine diverse and competing policy preferences into a grand strategy. As a consequence, grand strategies tend to be internally inconsistent, embracing contradictory policy commitments.

Furthermore, informal logrolls grant autonomy and discretion to political actors over the policy agenda in their favored issue areas, without holding them directly accountable for their actions. In essence, logrolls secure communal authority within the leadership.⁵⁷ Individual members retain control over their preferred policy domains, while the leadership, in particular the central executive, bears collective responsibility for the performance of grand strategy. The costs, in terms of national interests, are diffused throughout the ruling coalition and society. This generates incentives for coalition members to exploit their authority over respective issue areas and to avoid making

⁵⁶James M. Buchanan and Gordon Tullock, *The Calculus of Consent*, pp. 131-145.

⁵⁷Communal ownership exists when individuals and/or groups have the right to use freely property as they wish, without being excluded from doing so. Resources communally owned tend to be over-exploited, as users have little incentive to improve or even maintain them since any benefits derived from doing so cannot be "internalized." For further theoretical elaboration of communal property rights structures and the attendant propensity of individuals to make a specific unconstrained use of authority, see especially Richard Carson, "Property Rights," in Carmelo Mesa-Lago and Carl Beck, eds., *Comparative Socialist Systems: Essays on Politics and Economics* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Center for International Studies, 1975), pp. 318-319; Ellen Comisso, "Property Rights, Liberalism, and the Transition from 'Actually Existing' Socialism," pp. 167-168; and Louis De Alessi, "The Economics of Property Rights: A Review of the Evidence," pp. 5-9.

necessary tradeoffs among scarce resources and strategic priorities in devising responses to the exigencies of the international environment.⁵⁸

Compounding the bias toward self-defeat in leadership logrolls are the incentives embedded in informal institutions based on the cooptation of functionaries in the government bureaucracy. These informal arrangements undermine the mobilization of national resources in line with strategic objectives. First, bureaucratic actors possessing attenuated authority have little incentive to be concerned with the broad national implications of their policy prescriptions. Informally granted limited authority in a narrow issue area, an administrative agent can exercise considerable discretion in carrying out a specific policy without directly shouldering blame for its limited efficacy. Second, the distribution of side payments to agents as an inducement for compliance empowers their narrow preferences in the grand strategy decision-making process. This compartmentalizes decision-making for specific issues, allowing coopted functional actors to exercise significant control over resources and policies in their respective issue areas free from intrusive leadership oversight and extra-organizational competition. Concerned primarily with securing budgetary outlays and preserving organizational integrity, an administrative agent faces incentives for accumulating otherwise scarce resources. The cumulative effect of this behavior among empowered agents is the proliferation of conflicting priorities and the neglect of important tradeoffs among scarce resources.⁵⁹ Moreover, by coopting bureaucrats and granting them monopolies over the supply of information in their respective issue areas, the leadership reveals its demand for

⁵⁸Theodore Lowi, "American Business, Public Policy, Case Studies, and Political Theory," *World Politics* 16 (July 1964), pp. 677-715.

⁵⁹Willam A. Niskanen, "Bureaucrats and Politicians," *Journal of Law and Economics* 18 (December 1975), pp. 617-643. See also, *ibid.*, *Bureaucracy and Representative Government* (Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1971); and T.E. Borcharding, ed., *Budgets and Bureaucrats: The Sources for Government Growth* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1977).

the information provided by subordinates. This, in effect, cedes significant leverage to subordinates, allowing them to supply information to maximize their own parochial interests rather than promote national security.⁶⁰

Moreover, the necessary reliance on crude monitoring techniques and specific "success" indicators attendant to the parceling out of authority further distort the incentives confronting administrative agents. Recognizing that rewards depend on the fulfillment of certain tasks, agents channel their efforts towards these particular areas at the expense of satisfying other "unmeasured" assignments, such as integration with other policies, irrespective of the costs to grand strategy. The "crudeness" of the measures cedes considerable discretion to agents to pursue substantive policy preferences, with only nominal deference to outside concerns.⁶¹ Thus, by empowering certain functional groups and focusing their attention on specific tasks, informal institutions generate micro-incentives that are significantly inconsistent with national concerns for devising a balanced grand strategy.

The implication of this informal separation of power and responsibility is that domestic leaderships tend to respond to objective international pressures by fashioning grand strategies that allow them to maximize their parochial political and policy interests, irrespective of the overall effectiveness in promoting national security. Confronting pressures from the international security environment to compete against an opposing state, those politicians and bureaucrats in charge of managing diplomacy extend

⁶⁰Gary J. Miller and Terry M. Moe, "Bureaucrats, Legislators, and the Size of Government," *American Political Science Review* 77 (1983), pp. 302-305. Aware of the preferences of their superiors, as well as retaining informational monopoly and agenda control, bureaucrats are able to constrain leadership options so that they are able to attain the budgets and slack that they value, irrespective of the broader implications for inefficiency in grand strategy. Furthermore, by delegating exclusive jurisdiction to functionaries, the leadership diminishes the controlling influence associated with the *de jure* rights over appointments, budgets, oversight, etc... . See also discussion in Terry M. Moe, "The New Economics of Organization," pp. 765-773.

⁶¹See especially discussion in Thrainn Eggertsson, *Economic Behavior and Institutions*, pp. 43-44.

competitive foreign commitments that the leadership cannot honor with complementary military and defense industrial policies. Bent on optimizing informally delegated authority for meeting international political challenges, agents are concerned primarily with enacting aggressive foreign policies, with little regard for the military and defense economic capabilities available to support them that are controlled by other agents. In other words, as the domestic actors with the most to gain from meeting an international political challenge, but with little at stake regarding their effectiveness in doing so, those in charge of foreign policy have a strong preference for responding aggressively to ensure success vis-a-vis an opposing state. While the diplomatic community pursues its parochial preference for exacting wrenching concessions from an adversary, military and defense industrial actors pursue their own agendas, tailored to exploiting limited authorities over respective policies. The net effect is an over-zealous grand strategy, characterized by the extension of aggressive foreign commitments that confound available war-fighting and defense procurement capabilities.

Alternatively, in the face of overarching pressures for international cooperation, those tasked with formulating and implementing foreign policy tend to promise diplomatic concessions that under-employ available military and defense industrial capabilities, thus increasing the propensity for strategic under-achievement. Actors within the diplomatic community, who are sensitive primarily to exploiting the potential for reaching agreements with foreign rivals, are prone to extend international commitments for cooperation that exceed military or defense industrial imperatives for doing so. Responsible only for the immediate success in codifying international collaboration, and shielded from the negative fall-out tied to the specific content of signed agreements, the diplomatic community preoccupies itself with seizing opportunities for cooperation presented by the international security environment. Bound only by general domestic political expectations for achieving international accord and by crude measures

for demonstrating compliance with them, those empowered to conduct foreign policy face strong incentives to promote international cooperation at almost no cost to their relative political standing. In this regard, a political leadership finds itself compelled to grant concessions on outstanding international issues that its operational military strategy and available defense industrial base would otherwise dictate it resist. Thus, poorly integrated and extreme responses to exogenous demands for international cooperation or competition result as different actors combine their programs through the logrolling process rather than bear direct responsibilities for reconciling their conflicting interests.

In stark contrast, informal leadership institutions premised on the acquisition of absolute and collective gains of the membership produce more internally balanced grand strategies. These institutions, devised primarily to reduce compliance problems in domestic political exchange, rely on the principle of conditional cooperation to obtain mutual gains over an indefinite sequence of interaction. With survival secured through formal channels, political actors choose on the basis of individual calculations to cooperate in order to maximize their independent utility functions, irrespective of the advantages that accrue to others in the process.⁶² Moreover, they are free to concentrate on secondary goals, such as the impact of policy choices for broad national welfare. The preoccupation with absolute gains relaxes the requirements confronting the central executive for distributing proportional benefits from exchange that severely constrain policy options. Indifferent to the payoffs of others, participants make equivalent concessions to reconcile their policy differences across issue areas.⁶³ This fosters a synthesis of divergent platforms, generating more internally consistent grand strategies.

⁶²Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, p. 12. See also related discussion in Joseph M. Grieco, *Cooperation Among Nations*, pp. 37-41.

⁶³Robert O. Keohane, "Reciprocity in International Relations," pp. 5-8.

Also, informal institutions based on contingent cooperation reduce the incentives for exploitation within the leadership. The principle of specific reciprocity creates a setting equivalent to where the parties to an informal bargaining arrangement trade private leadership authority. The institutionalization of retaliation motivates members of the ruling coalition to compromise and oppose discordant unilateral action. The fear of retaliation instills a sense of accountability for actions that is absent in the communal setting perpetuated by logrolls. As a consequence of this retention of private leadership authority, where each actor bears both the costs and benefits of his/her policy prescriptions, actors pay close attention to the tradeoffs encountered in balancing capabilities with objectives in grand strategy. Therefore, the informal leadership institutions that arise under conditions of moderate uncertainty concentrate specific responsibility on the different parties and place less emphasis on side payments, producing more efficient and coherent international commitments than those that emerge from logrolls.

Complementing these informal leadership arrangements are the informal institutions for constraining "bureaucratic drift" that arise in stable constitutional structures. Where political authority is clearly delineated, bureaucratic opportunism is marginalized. Retaining exclusive authority over a particular policy realm and able to acquire favored resources in return for effective policy prescriptions, an organization must play an active role in efficiently utilizing its resources and performing its specified tasks in the formulation and implementation of grand strategy. The informal arrangements that arise to reduce agency costs provide strict oversight procedures stipulating criteria, standards, rules, and deadlines that govern bureaucratic behavior. These informal mechanisms of control, buttressed mostly by negative inducements, severely constrain the opportunism. By facilitating coordination among the different

policy realms of grand strategy, these informal institutions strengthen a state's capacity for procuring national resources commensurate with its foreign commitments.

In a stable constitutional setting, the informal arrangements that emerge to promote competition among bureaucracies also enhance the effectiveness of the grand strategy decision-making process. As organizations vie for scarce resources, there are incentives both to produce respective services efficiently and to point out shortcomings in the performance of rival government agencies. At the individual level, department heads directly appointed by their superiors face strong incentives to distance themselves from bureaucratic rivals. Engaged in atomistic competition for scarce resources, they need to demonstrate their managerial effectiveness and expose shortcomings in rival platforms. This imposes a constraint on bureaucratic opportunism and places a check on competing policy prescriptions, increasing the range of information on agency performance available to the political leadership. Furthermore, competition among bureaucracies allows the political leadership to conceal specific demands for the tasks provided by functional subordinates. This strengthens leadership oversight by restricting the opportunities for moral hazard, and inducing agents to perform their delegated tasks.⁶⁴ As a consequence, agency costs are reduced, diverting fewer resources for administrative purposes and making them more available for easing tradeoffs in strategy. Thus, the incentive effects of these informal arrangements augur well for the coordination of different policy strains and the alignment of policy tools with selected international commitments.

Recognizing the different implications for the quality of grand strategy associated with specific informal arrangements, why is it that political actors are unable to adapt their informal procedures immediately to improve any self-induced deficiencies in the

⁶⁴Moral hazard results when agents can exploit their information advantages to redirect their efforts towards proxy measures or even shirking, instead of fulfilling the specific task delegated by a principal. See discussion in Terry M. Moe, "The New Economics of Organization," pp. 755-756.

performance of attendant strategy? Why are reforms in grand strategy that are widely regarded as necessary difficult to initiate? In other words, what explains the "stickiness" of informal institutions?

The answer lies in the notion that informal institutions and the resultant qualitative constraints on grand strategy that arise under conditions of domestic political uncertainty are characteristically stable. Because political actors are able to derive distributional benefits from these informal arrangements they have little motivation to change them. The incentives that are built into an institutional framework via distributional consequences play a decisive role in the persistence of the structure and performance of informal bargaining arrangements. Moreover, informal institutions are self-generating because they permit actors to carry out the routine activities that dominate the process of grand strategy decision-making, "without having to think out exactly the terms of an exchange at each point and at each instance."⁶⁵ Stability is achieved by the intricate sets of formal and informal constraints that delimit choices and allow expectations to converge, restoring order and predictability to an otherwise uncertain environment. As a consequence, the qualitative aspects of grand strategy, which are by-products of informal arrangements, tend to remain constant. Only if exogenous changes in the environment alter the interests of domestic actors is there any reason to expect adjustment in the balance between ends and means of grand strategy.

Despite the general penchant for stability, institutions do change as the political interests of the relevant actors evolve. Maximizing behavior by a political actor can be consistent with decisions either to operate within the existing set of constraints or to alter established procedures, depending on the respective payoffs. Contracting parties will choose to restructure bargaining relations if the relative costs and benefits of re-

⁶⁵Douglas C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*, p. 83.

contracting present worthwhile distributional gains. Major institutional change occurs when existing arrangements fail to serve the interests of those who devised them and who possess the power to amend them. The incentives for institutional transformation arise in response to changes in the distributional consequences of existing rules. These shifts in the benefits to and interests of contracting actors are themselves the result of changes in the opportunity costs tied to existing bargaining arrangements. While changes in relative prices, provoked by exogenous forces, provide the fundamental impetus to institutional modification, it is the responsive endogenous efforts of key political actors in pursuit of distributional gains that directly precipitate institutional transformation.⁶⁶

Furthermore fundamental changes in the profitability of a particular informal arrangement alter the incentives for political exchange by shifting bargaining power within the membership. Shifts in the relative bargaining power of political actors, driven by the acquisition of new information and accumulation of side payments, provide the engines for institutional change among those disfavored by the informal *status quo*. "Losers" under the existing framework, who are able to create bargaining resources through their capacity to organize and withhold compliance, can stimulate revision in the informal rules of exchange.⁶⁷

Different informal arrangements embody different incentives for institutional and policy change. Premised on specific power asymmetries and generating particular distributional effects, different informal institutions are predisposed toward distinct paths of change. For instance, informal arrangements based on contingent cooperation are

⁶⁶See especially, Barbara Geddes, "A Game Theoretic Model of Reform in Latin American Democracies," *American Political Science Review* 85:2 (June 1991), pp. 371-392; Jack Knight, *Institutions and Social Conflict*, pp. 145-147; Douglas C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*, pp. 84-89.

⁶⁷Margaret Levi, "A Logic of Institutional Change," in Karen Schweers Cook and Margaret Levi, eds., *The Limits of Rationality* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), pp. 413-414.

conducive for continuous, incremental change. These arrangements are flexible and responsive to exogenous pressures for change. Institutions evolve so that political actors maintain a framework allowing them to capture the full benefits of their individual authority and to reconcile their policy differences. The informal institutionalization of equivalent retaliation makes it possible for new bargains and compromises among contracting parties to emerge, by ensuring that the initial steps toward gradual change will be reciprocated. As such, these informal structures are efficient at adapting, retaining the incentives for exploring alternative ways of reducing uncertainty and solving problems of political exchange. The embedded principle of reciprocity provides enough security to exchange to encourage evolutionary development in institutions that increases the efficiency of interaction. This directs incentives towards weeding out maladaptive parts of existing bargaining relations, thus providing an opportunity for incremental qualitative improvements in grand strategy. ⁶⁸

In contrast, informal institutions that arise under severe conditions of uncertainty experience discontinuous change. Logrolls are rigid and inflexible, and inhospitable to incentives for evolutionary change. Because concerns for relative gains serve as the primary constraint on exchange, it is only in response to dramatic exogenous shocks that political actors confront incentives to restructure their forms of interaction. Crises and other forms of revolutionary pressures- such as war, economic collapse, and technological innovation- exogenous to bargaining relations, act as catalysts that uproot entrenched interests and foster a demand for radical reform. It is only under revolutionary conditions that threaten to undermine the distributional consequences linked to existing arrangements and present alternative paths for relative advantages, that

⁶⁸Douglas C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*, pp. 80-81.

political actors are driven to revise prevailing informal rules of engagement.⁶⁹ With the absence of individual accountability and a meaningful intersection of interests, political actors encounter few incentives to alter their modus of exchange, except when facing the prospects for greater distributional gains. In this regard, institutional transformation is episodic and revolutionary.

As a consequence of the discontinuous path to institutional change, adaptation to outside pressures involves re-contracting among actors within the existing bargaining framework. Actors respond to exogenous pressures by altering the center of gravity within the logroll, in accordance with asymmetric shifts in the balance of power among bargaining parties. In short, the equilibrium changes while the structure of interaction stays the same. An implication is that the quality of grand strategy tends to remain constant, taking a "backseat" to the political concerns of decision-makers. As exogenous pressures intensify, the quest for entitlements leads members of the old institutional arrangement to beggar thy neighbor. The result is the implosion of the old informal arrangement, paralyzing the grand strategy decision-making process until new institutional arrangements emerge.⁷⁰ It is only after this final blow to informal institutions is complete that the legacy of self-defeat can be significantly redressed.

⁶⁹Mancur Olson, *The Rise and Decline of Nations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), pp. 181-237. For more on the exogenous sources of change in relative prices, see also Armen Alchian and Harold Demsetz, "The Property Rights Paradigm," pp. 16-27; and Douglas C. North, *Structure and Change in Economic History*, pp. 29-30.

⁷⁰John Waterbury, *Exposed to Innumerable Delusions*, pp. 23-28.

Hypothesis Testing and Research Design

About the Cases: Soviet and Russian Grand Strategies.

The argument presented here, that decisional uncertainty regarding power and responsibility causes states to form incoherent and excessive responses to prevailing international pressures for cooperation or competition, will be examined against grand strategies adopted by the Soviet Union and contemporary Russia. Particular attention will be devoted to testing the argument against the strategy of *new thinking* promulgated by the Gorbachev leadership, which constituted the intellectual and practical driving force behind the ignominious Soviet strategic retreat at the end of the 1980s. This will be supplemented by comparisons against the strategy of *peaceful coexistence* under Brezhnev and the evolving integrationist strategy pursued by the early Yeltsin leadership in contemporary Russia.

The Soviet grand strategies pursued by the Brezhnev and Gorbachev leaderships, respectively, are "least likely" cases for the persistence of self-defeat.⁷¹ First, classic interpretations of Soviet politics typically treat decision-making for national security as either highly centralized or devoid of informal conflict-regulating mechanisms. For most traditionalists, national security was the domain of the top leadership, where competition among rival elites was continuous, as there were no formal rules for job tenure and an omnipresent threat of political challenge by aspirants to power and position. There were high stakes involved in policy contests, as losers on any particular issue not only deferred to rival preferences, but frequently fell to political oblivion. "Top-down" approaches tend to assume away the support from constituencies and downplay the influence of

⁷¹Harry Eckstein, "Case Study and Theory in Political Science," in Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, *Handbook of Political Science 7* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1975), p. 109.

functionaries on elite politics. They posit that policy directives came from above and that bureaucratic opinion lacked formal avenues for influencing decision-making. Concerned with maximizing their own legitimacy and political skills, Soviet elites should therefore not have incurred bureaucratic impediments to a balanced grand strategy, or at least, not have been prevented from circumventing them. Alternatively, "bottom up" approaches generally fail to analyze the political mechanisms that systematically translated parochial bureaucratic preferences into strategy. From this perspective, one would not expect elite bargains to derail the smooth flow of pressures from prominent interest groups into grand strategy.

Second, given the superpower status of the Soviet Union, the persistence of self-defeat in strategies for coping with its polar rival is truly remarkable. For both the Brezhnev and Gorbachev leaderships, strategic engagement with the West was the priority of grand strategy. Success or failure in grand strategy was measured directly in reference to its effectiveness in meeting threats or seizing opportunities vis-a-vis relations with the West. In this regard, it is plausible to expect that both Soviet leaderships would have been extremely sensitive to the costs of self-inflicted wounds in grand strategy. Given the high stakes involved in the global rivalry, one would expect that the demands for preserving international position would override domestic political impediments encountered in formulating an efficient balance between the ends and means of grand strategy.

The Soviet and Russian cases are useful for testing the hypothesis also because they present variation in both the independent and dependent variables. During the periods investigated, grand strategies were formulated under prevailing international pressures for competition and cooperation, as well as under various conditions of decisional uncertainty. Moreover, selected grand strategies varied between being over-

zealous and under-achieving with respect to the extension of international commitments and mobilization of national capabilities.

On the international plane, the overarching pressures for constrained competition facing the Brezhnev leadership were dramatically different from the cooperative security environment that confronted the Gorbachev and Yeltsin leaderships. Under Brezhnev, while the emergence of "mutual assured destruction" (MAD) allayed national security concerns for survival and increased the need for regulating superpower behavior, continuous economic growth (albeit at lower and declining rates than during the preceding decade) and fluidity in the Third World combined to promote an irresistible temptation to compete against the West . These factors generated impulses for a mixed collaborative-competitive grand strategy, tailored to avoiding nuclear confrontation and exploiting low-cost opportunities for expansion. In contrast, the Gorbachev and Yeltsin leaderships operated under strategic, economic, and technological settings that promoted international cooperation. For both, the constraints imposed by economic stringency and technological inferiority complemented overriding interests in strategy cooperation that were prescribed by the prevailing reality of MAD. As a result, the last Soviet and first Russian leaderships were able to reach basic consensus on the need for pursuing benign grand strategies.

On the domestic plane, the Soviet and Russian cases present different constitutional orders with similar levels of decisional uncertainty. The communist regimes of the Soviet Union, while classically authoritarian in their strength vis-a-vis interest groups in society, were nonetheless marred by formal structural uncertainty. Both the Brezhnev and Gorbachev leaderships operated in political environments where formal rules of the game and clearly delineated lines of authority were absent. Formal structures for national security decision-making inadequately provided for job security or hierarchical control of administrative agencies, and had to be buttressed through the

development and of a wide array of informal institutions. The continuity of these formal characteristics in the Soviet setting stands in contrast to the evolving institutional arrangements in post-communist Russia. Upon assuming the reins of leadership, Yeltsin and his team initially exercised near-authoritarian power, after having been granted power to rule by decree in November 1991. With the subsequent campaign launched by the Russian Supreme Soviet and its parliamentary successor to reassert authority as the "highest state organ," and revisions in electoral laws and growing popularity of political parties and social groups, the president's autonomy from society dramatically weakened by 1993. Yet within the context of this democratic transformation in state-society relations, formal institutional arrangements and constitutional order have been slow in coming to stabilize relations between the newly established arms of the state, including the president's office, the government, and the parliament. Furthermore, formal lines of authority among respective administrative offices, ministries, and bureaucracies subordinate to these three bodies have remained under-specified and subject to constant revision.

Finally, the dramatic cases of Soviet and Russian under-extension brokered with Gorbachev and Yeltsin at the helms, respectively, remain noteworthy not only for their scope and peacefulness, but because they stand in stark contrast to the record of over-zealousness embraced by the Brezhnev leadership. Under Gorbachev, the Kremlin opted to retreat unilaterally not only from its strategic outposts in the Third World, but from its core interests in East-Central Europe, as well as in nuclear and conventional arms control fora that formed the basis of its relationship with the West. At base, this grand strategy was marred by the dogged pursuit of international accommodation that far surpassed the defense industrial necessity to do so. This episode of full-scale global retreat differs only slightly from the evolving integrationist strategy pursued by the post-communist regime in Russia. While the Yeltsin team initially adhered closely to the Gorbachevian legacy of

excessive conciliation to the West, reaching its nadir at the end of 1992 with near-complete geostrategic abnegation, the leadership in Moscow subsequently began the prolonged process of adjustment to its status as a regional power with a more balanced grand strategy along the Russian perimeter. This adjustment notwithstanding, Moscow's foreign policy in 1993-1994 remained marred by under-achievement as compared to its lasting war-fighting and defense industrial capabilities. In contrast to both of these cases of under-extension, however, the Brezhnev leadership embraced an overly aggressive strategy of detente with the West. The strategy of peaceful coexistence, intended to bolster security through expansion, was rife with inconsistent diplomacy structured towards coupling bilateral regulation of the superpower rivalry with an aggressive arms build-up and intervention in Third World conflicts, that not only provoked a hostile American response, but confounded Soviet military strategy and overheated the defense industrial base.

Methodology

The test of the argument rests on a set of measures for the independent and dependent variables. First, in order to determine the extent of decisional uncertainty in the Soviet system, there is examination of the *de jure* allocation of power and authority between and among elites and functionaries, as specified by constitutional and formal party procedures. Second, as an indication of informal mechanisms, I compare this with the *de facto* distribution of portfolios, technical expertise and information, and control over financial and policy resources among different elites and bureaucratic organs charged with the formulation and administration of Soviet foreign, military, and defense industrial policies. Together, the factors represent the critical property rights necessary

for decision-making for grand strategy. Third, as a test of the bind of informal arrangements, I examine the consistency of alternative elite policy recommendations to the strategy finally adopted. At the organizational level, this entails investigation of the channels and procedures for processing information upwards, as well as for facilitating elite monitoring of bureaucratic activity. Finally, in an effort to assess the direct connection with self-defeat, there are analyses of the consistency of strategy within specific policy domains. This will entail case examination of the balance between the ends and means in designated issue areas, as well as comparisons across different policy strains in grand strategy. I will analyze specifically the internal consistency of Soviet foreign policies, as well as examine the continuity of this diplomacy with military and defense industrial policies that were being pursued in tandem.

Research will focus on the domestic political structures and processes that shape national security decision-making in the specific cases. Focus groups will include those politicians and functionaries that were directly involved in the option generation, decision-making, and implementation phases of grand strategy decision-making. At the elite level, this will include politicians that were ultimately engaged in setting the course in the policy realms of grand strategy. At the administrative level, this will include the attendant ministries, departments, agencies, and commissions that constituted the national security bureaucracy of a state.

Primary and secondary sources provide grist for the research on the independent variables. For all the cases, I synthesize traditional secondary accounts to describe the prevailing pressures for international cooperation or competition, as well as to characterize levels of decisional uncertainty. To capture the overarching nature of a state's security environment, I focus specifically on strategic, economic, and technological measures of relative standing vis-a-vis a foreign rival. On the domestic plane, the existing literature on constitutional provisions for leadership tenure and

succession, and on the formal allocation of job assignments and decision-making authority among governmental organs provide the empirical springboard for capturing the uncertainty permeating formal state structures. In searching out informal institutional arrangements, I rely heavily on primary sources. For the Soviet and Russian cases, I collected data on the informal distribution of political and administrative power and responsibility from extensive personal interviews with former insiders and participants across the broad spectrum of national security decision-making. These statements were checked for consistency against additional data gleaned from detailed reading of recent memorial accounts by former Soviet policy-makers, as well as from published sources that included Soviet policy journals, government and party newspapers, and proceedings of party congresses, conferences, and plenary sessions.

Evidence that decisional uncertainty circumscribed the balance between international commitments and national capabilities in grand strategy, rested on several observations. Among elites, I first expected to see a narrow range of discussion of available policy commitments for coping with a foreign rival. Second, I expected to witness severe political punishment of elites who dared to challenge such constraints with novel policy recommendations. At the administrative level, I anticipated that the different bureaucracies and government organs would pursue their own agendas without reference to each other, claiming sole authority in their respective policy domains. I expected to see confusion abound with the distribution of overlapping and ill-defined bureaucratic mandates, witnessing organizations working at cross purposes in their mobilization of policy resources. In the absence of such formal uncertainties over power and responsibilities, I anticipated compromises between competing politicians regarding international commitments and strict oversight of the functional bureaucracy that ensured the implementation of specified strategic directives.

CHAPTER 3

INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES AND DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSENSUS: External Sources of Cooperative and Competitive Strategic Orientations

The central question of this study is not *whether* but to *what extent* do political leaderships respond to threats and opportunities presented by the international security environment. In the preceding chapter, I offered an explanation for the empirical and theoretical enigmas of over- and under-reaction rooted in domestic institutional constraints on the translation of international pressures. In this chapter, I begin to test the argument by exploring the connection between a leadership's calculation to cooperate with or compete against a foreign adversary and the incentives imposed by a state's prevailing security environment. If, indeed, the international security environment--defined by the existing strategic, economic, and technological balances of power--establishes the fundamental stakes of interacting with an adversary, we would expect it to inform basic considerations of a state's absolute and relative standing. These critical dimensions of the security environment should combine to present an inescapable fact of life for decision-makers, forming the basis for a domestic political consensus on the general cooperative or competitive goals of grand strategy. The findings of this chapter suggest that this expectation holds for the Soviet and Russian cases.

The purpose of the chapter is not to focus on the debates over specific tactics and policies, this has been successfully accomplished by other authors. Instead, it illustrates

how "objective" factors made it both necessary and less costly politically for ascendant Soviet and Russian leaders to endorse fundamental dispositions for their grand strategies. This will be demonstrated by reviewing the basic interpretations of foreign threats and opportunities that informed the leadership consensus for international competition or accommodation in the Brezhnev, Gorbachev, and Yeltsin regimes. In the ensuing chapters, I will show that while these pressures set the overarching objectives for grand strategy, they do not translate smoothly into an integrated set of national security policies. Rather, the implementation of basic strategic goals is subject to corruption by the institutional context of decision-making that carries, to varying degrees, deleterious consequences for a state's international standing.

The Prelude to Cooperative Engagement: The "Correlation of Forces" and Detente Under Brezhnev

By the early 1970s, it became accepted dogma within the Soviet leadership that the fundamental tide of international relations had turned in Moscow's favor. The deep-seated insecurity that permeated the halls of the Kremlin following the exposure of Nikita Khrushchev's boastful doctrinal pronouncements of Soviet superiority as woefully exaggerated, subsided with the emerging fruits of the all-azimuth build-up in Soviet national capabilities that occurred during the latter part of the 1960s.¹ By the end of the decade, members of the Soviet elite began to speak with confidence about favorable shifts in the balance of world power. In the Soviet vernacular, the changing "correlation of forces"-- defined broadly in terms of promising trends in the military, economic, and

¹For detailed discussion of the domestic political fall-out and anxiety sparked by the failure of Khrushchev's 1958 Berlin ultimatum and the gambit to deploy missiles in Cuba, see especially James G. Richter, *Khrushchev's Double Bind: International Pressures and Domestic Coalition Politics* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University, 1994).

political power balance with the West-- created a strong sense of self-assurance among the political elite that the Soviet Union's superpower status had finally arrived. This confidence was aptly reflected in foreign minister Gromyko's oft-cited dictum in 1971 that "today there is no question of any significance that can be decided without the Soviet Union, or in opposition to it."²

This optimism served as the linchpin for a strategic consensus that emerged within the Brezhnev leadership in 1970-72. The combination of respect for the dire costs of direct confrontation with the "other" superpower, and confidence in the continued ascent of Soviet international prestige and influence triggered a basic leadership commitment to a mixed cooperative-competitive relationship with the West.³ Despite differences over specific tactics and policy responses, members of the Soviet elite spoke in unison of an objective imperative for reaching a *modus vivendi* with rivals in the West in order to avoid the outbreak of nuclear war.⁴ Yet, as a result of the neutralization of US strategic power, they were simultaneously emboldened to exploit cheap near-term opportunities to compete against the West.

²XXIV s'ezd Kommunisticheskoi Partii Soviet Soiuz: *Stenograficheskii otchet*, vol. 1 (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Politicheskoi Literatury, 1971), p. 211.

³For succinct analyses of this mixed motive Soviet strategy, see George W. Breslauer, "Why Detente Failed: An Interpretation," in Alexander L. George, *Managing the U.S.-Soviet Rivalry* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1983), pp. 319-340; and Margot Light, *The Soviet Theory of International Relations* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), pp. 53-68.

⁴On the basic leadership consensus for an "offensive detente" grand strategy, see especially revelations by Brezhnev's former foreign policy advisor in Andrei Aleksandrov-Agentov, "Semero iz politiburo," *Novoe vremya*, 23 (Iyun' 1993), pp. 38-44. Aleksandrov-Agentov maintains that the differences over detente between Brezhnev and the other Politburo members at the time were purely "tactical." For detailed discussion of the competitive politics of the time and the diversity of policy responses bantered about within the leadership, see especially Richard D. Anderson, Jr., *Public Politics in an Authoritarian State* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 195-234; and Dale Herspring, *The Soviet High Command, 1967-1989* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 51-116; and Harry Gelman, *The Brezhnev Politburo and the Decline of Detente* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984). Anderson's detailed account suggests that despite the existence of a wide range of leadership perspectives regarding the sources of parity; utility of bilateral versus multilateral diplomatic initiatives; objectives of arms control; and priority of security over economics in East-West negotiations, an overarching consensus existed on the need for regulating the international competition with Western adversaries.

This basic domestic political consensus for a mixed-motive grand strategy was ultimately embodied in the collective leadership's approval of Brezhnev's "Peace Program" in 1971. In his address to the 24th Communist Party Congress, Brezhnev laid down the basic vision for Soviet international engagement, striking a conciliatory tone in his characterization of the rivalry with imperialist foes. In particular, he underscored the importance of *peaceful coexistence* with the United States -- and with the West in general-- that was premised on an "objective" imperative for the "relaxation of tensions." In contrast to previous speeches that fixated exclusively on the aggressive instinct of imperialism (noted especially for their branding of political leaders in the West as "revanchists" and "militarists"), Brezhnev commented on the potentially cooperative face of ideological adversaries in the West that shared interests in avoiding war and strengthening peace.⁵ Acknowledging pragmatism in the West, he averred:

We proceed from the premise that the improvement of relations between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. is possible. Our principled line with respect to the capitalist countries, including the USA, is consistently and fully to implement in practice the principles of peaceful coexistence, to develop mutually advantageous ties and-- with those states that are ready to do so-- to cooperate in the field of strengthening peace, making mutual relations with these states as stable as possible.⁶

At the same time, Brezhnev did not pull his punches with respect to asserting the Soviet Union's prerogative for strengthening its international position vis-a-vis the West. Despite the ideological restraint showed in the political approach to the West, Brezhnev

⁵For a taste of Brezhnev's earlier belligerent disposition towards the West, see especially his report to the 23rd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in L. I. Brezhnev, *O vnesnei politike KPSS i Sovetskogo goudarstva* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Politicheskoi literatury, 1973), pp. 36-67.

⁶*Pravda*, 31 March 1971, p. 1. According to Georgii Arbatov, a political "insider" at the time, Brezhnev, like other political leaders "understood on a gut level" that the chief priority of the nation was the preservation of peace with rivals in the West. Brezhnev "saw clearly that significant progress towards that goal was a reliable means of guaranteeing popularity for his policy and himself." See G. A. Arbatov, *Zatyanuvsheesya vyzdorovlenie: Svidetel'stvo sovremennika* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1991), p. 191.

devoted a complete section of his speech to confirmation of "socialist internationalism" as the overriding priority for Soviet diplomacy. Similarly, he vigorously endorsed a doctrinaire commitment to support national liberation movements in the Third World, especially in those instances where Moscow's national security interests were directly involved. The General Secretary resolutely declared that "while consistently pursuing its policy of peace and friendship among nations, the Soviet Union will continue to wage a decisive struggle against imperialism, and to rebuff firmly the evil designs and subversions of aggressors." To underscore this commitment, there were repeated references to the lasting promotion of "anti-imperialist, revolutionary movements in the developing world" in the final resolutions of the congress.⁷ Thus, in no way did acceptance of the strategic balance imply retardation in the Soviet quest to exploit favorable shifts in the correlation of forces.

That Brezhnev uncharacteristically took the initiative in presenting the "Peace Program" at the 24th Party Congress, should not obscure the fact that his views on a basic collaborative-competitive relationship were shared in principle by the other members of the collective leadership. Despite the ambiguity fostered by the final resolutions of the congress-- which omitted specific references to the "Peace Program" and to extensive concern with the process of disarmament-- the leadership did approve all of the proposals and conclusions contained in Brezhnev's report to the Central Committee.⁸ The broad acceptance of the "Peace Program" was subsequently affirmed with unprecedented

⁷*Pravda*, 10 April 1971, p. 1. According to Arbatov, the pragmatism exhibited towards relations with the West only emboldened the unwavering desire on the part of all members of the Politburo to take part in the "anti-imperialist" struggle throughout the 1970s. See G. A. Arbatov, *Zatyanuvsheesya vyzdorovlenie*, p. 226. The dual strains of cooperation and competition embraced by the collective leadership were reiterated throughout this period. See especially the comments by Georgii Arbatov in *Pravda*, 4 May 1971, pp. 1-3.

⁸*Pravda*, 10 April 1971, p. 1. According to Shevchenko, this version of offensive detente was finally accepted by the collective leadership at a special Central Committee plenary meeting that took place on the eve of President Nixon's visit to Moscow in 1972. See Arkady N. Shevchenko, *Breaking With Moscow* (New York: Ballantine, 1985), p. 211-214.

candor in the November 1971 plenary meeting of the Central Committee. According to the official record of the session, the senior party body "unanimously and fully approved" the conclusions drawn by the foreign policy program put forward at the 24th Party Congress, "instructing" the Soviet elite "to abide" by it in formulating the specifics of Soviet grand strategy.⁹

For the Soviet elite, the crucial factor driving the imperative for regulating international competition was the USSR's achievement of nuclear parity with the U.S.. Between 1965 and 1970, the Brezhnev leadership directed a rapid build-up of second generation strategic nuclear systems, and initiated deployment of more survivable and powerful third generation systems. Despite evidence of problems in the design and production of weapons throughout the period, difficulties became increasingly overshadowed by the impressive rate of weapons deployments. In 1970 alone, for example, the Soviets added 1000 third generation ICBMs (SS-9s, SS-11s, and SS-13s) to the nuclear arsenal that were designed primarily to serve as the strategic reserve for the Soviet land-based missile force. Moreover, by the late 1960s, Moscow began expanding its own sea-based ballistic-missile force, capped by the arming of the Yankee-class submarine with the SS-N-6 *Sawfly* missile that significantly increased the strategic retaliatory capabilities of the Soviet nuclear force. Thus, by all indicators, the Soviets attained parity with the United States by 1970, possessing an arsenal that contained over 1800 nuclear warheads that were capable of being delivered over strategic distances upon detection of a Western first-strike.¹⁰

⁹*Foreign Broadcast Information Service (hereafter FBIS)* 24 November 1991, pp. J2-3.

¹⁰In order to compensate for technical problems pertaining to intelligence collation and the survivability of the ICBM force, the Soviet military adopted in the late 1960s a "launch under attack" policy to ensure the ability to retaliate launch a retaliatory strike. See Raymond L. Garthoff, *Deterrence and the Revolution in Soviet Military Doctrine* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1990), pp. 78-80. For detailed discussion of the static and dynamic indicators of the strategic balance at the time of the 24th Party Congress in 1971, see especially Robert P. Berman and John C. Baker, *Soviet Strategic Forces*

In contrast to the insecurity provoked by the earlier unfavorable strategic balance, the advent of parity by the end of the 1960s instilled confidence in Moscow that the Soviet Union's survival was no longer at stake in the international arena and that it no longer would have to worry about interacting with Western rivals from "a position of weakness."¹¹ This optimism was specifically linked to a tacit appreciation for "existential deterrence." By the time of the 24th Party Congress, for instance, Soviet political and military leaders ceased calling for strategic superiority. They frequently stressed that the Soviet Union's newfound potential to unleash an "annihilating retaliatory attack" rendered perfunctory earlier anxiety concerning the likelihood of incurring a premeditated American nuclear attack.¹² In fact, there was a prevailing view that recently acquired Soviet capabilities to mount such a strategic response were irreversible and fostered pragmatism on the part of erstwhile adversaries in the West.¹³ As one political insider at the time observed, the emergence of strategic parity provided "convincing proof of the powerful rise of Soviet influence throughout the world," and of

(Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1982), pp. 50-65; and James Hansen, *Correlation of Forces* (New York: Praeger, 1987), pp. 55-129.

¹¹For discussion of the burgeoning Soviet confidence, grounded in the achievement of strategic parity in 1970, in the "objective" bankruptcy of America's "position-of-strength" diplomacy and the shift to a dialogue on the basis of a "position of equality," see especially William B. Husband, "Soviet Perceptions of U.S. 'Position-of-Strength' Diplomacy in the 1970s," *World Politics* 31:4 (July 1979), pp. 495-513.

¹²See especially comments by the then-Soviet Minister of Defense, in A. A. Grechko, "V. I. Lenin i sstroitel'stvo Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil," *Kommunist* 3 (February 1969), p. 22. See also detailed discussion of the general Soviet civil-military elite consensus regarding the acceptance of "mutual assured destruction," in Seweryn Bialer, *Stalin's Successors* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 248-253; Raymond L. Garthoff, *Deterrence and the Revolution in Soviet Military Doctrine*, pp. 49-94; Dale Herspring, *The Soviet High Command, 1967-1989*, p. 60-62.

¹³Soviet military officials, in fact, pointed with pride and confidence to the increased attention in the US to conventional warfare, as an indicator that Soviet nuclear retaliatory capabilities bolstered Moscow's control over the escalation ladder. In other words, Washington's resort to a doctrine of "flexible response" provided affirmation of Soviet security at the strategic level. See especially discussion in William C. Wohlforth, *The Elusive Balance: Power and Perceptions During the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1993), pp. 201-203.

the unmistakable prospects for security attendant to the favorable shift in the correlation of forces.¹⁴

This acceptance of deterrence and its implications for Soviet survival was not merely rhetorical, but deeply resonated among the Soviet political and military elite. Within the General Staff, the widely recognized "brain" of the Soviet Army, there was an "overwhelming" sense of confidence that with the achievement of strategic parity, Moscow acquired for the first time "all that was necessary" for guaranteeing the defense of all members of the Warsaw Pact.¹⁵ Moreover, at the highest military level there was no expectation of nuclear war with the West, and a firm belief that America's growing vulnerability to a Soviet retaliatory strike would compel Washington to be a more pliant international adversary.¹⁶

Because nuclear parity made direct confrontation between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. suicidal for both, the Soviet elite began to extol the virtues of exploiting mutual interests in reducing tensions.¹⁷ Brezhnev, for instance, observed that the prevailing strategic predicament not only repudiated the conventional dictum that "if you want peace, then prepare for war," but necessitated a push for establishing a "constructive" relationship for containing the global rivalry.¹⁸ Concern that a nuclear war could still

¹⁴See Arkady N. Shevchenko, *Breaking With Moscow*, p. 211.

¹⁵S. F. Akhromeyev and G. M. Kornienko, *Glazami marshala i diplomata: Kriticheskii vzyglad na vneshnyuyu politiku SSSR do i posle 1985 goda* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1992), pp. 12-13.

¹⁶G. A. Arbatov, *Zatyanuvsheesya vyzdorovlenie*, p. 106.

¹⁷According to both then-Minister of Foreign Affairs, A. A. Gromyko and Arbatov, Brezhnev's foreign policy advisor, there was no debate in the leadership over the connection between the achievement of strategic parity and the need to embark on detente in relations with the West, which would allow the Soviet Union to assume its rightful place as a global equal of the U.S., competing for influence in the world without the fear of direct nuclear confrontation. See especially their reflections on this issue, in A. A. Gromyko, *Pamyatnoe*, Vol. 2 (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1988), pp. 201-203; and G. A. Arbatov, *Zatyanuvsheesya vyzdoroblenie*, p. 179.

¹⁸L. I. Brezhnev, *Leninskom kursom*, vol. 5, p. 120.

occur through reckless action, accident, or crisis escalation generated an overriding interest in undertaking political initiatives to buttress deterrence. Even the Minister of Defense, Grechko, a committed believer in the perfidy of the West and staunch critic of a concessionary detentist line, endorsed in principle the need for undertaking such a diplomatic endeavor to prevent the unintentional outbreak of nuclear war.¹⁹

That there was a strategic imperative to contain the arms race and regulate competition with the United States did not, however, presage widespread support among the Soviet elite for a robust strategy of cooperative engagement. Backed by strategic parity, the Soviet leadership became increasingly confident that the U.S. would be deterred from engaging in direct confrontation and careful to take Moscow's security interests to heart. Moreover, the deployment of second-strike nuclear capability provided the Kremlin with a strategic cover to exploit with relative impunity favorable circumstances to neutralize the political utility of Western military power across the globe. Thus, under the security of the nuclear umbrella, Moscow sought to employ the fruits of absolute growth in Soviet conventional military, economic, and technological dimensions of power to advance Moscow's relative international standing.²⁰

Surveying the strategic landscape, the leadership concluded that because Western military power was held in check, economic and political contradictions would come to the fore in the opposing camp that, while not likely to alter the basic stability of the bipolar rivalry, would provide fertile ground for Soviet exploitation. At the 24th Party Congress, for example, Brezhnev remarked on the potential benefits of an increasingly

¹⁹See especially his neutral reference to the SALT I arms control process in *Pravda*, 30 September 1972, p. 1. For complete discussion of Grechko's limited support for arms control and political approaches to regulating the U.S.-Soviet rivalry, see especially Richard Anderson, *Public Politics in an Authoritarian State*, pp. 201-204; and Dale Herpsring, *The Soviet High Command, 1967-1989*, pp. 106-112.

²⁰See especially succinct accounts of the Soviet leadership's competitive aspirations for detente in Harry Gelman, *The Brezhnev Politburo and the Decline of Detente*, pp. 105-146; and Coit Blacker, "The Kremlin and Detente," in Alexander L. George, ed., *Managing U.S.- Soviet Rivalry*, pp. 121-129.

acute "competitive struggle" among the major capitalist rivals.²¹ Throughout the period, he pointed to the success of bilateral relations with various Western European countries in establishing "principles of cooperation" as valuable means for not only resolving fundamental security issues in the overall East-West competition, but for legitimating Soviet political and military superiority in the theater and exerting diplomatic leverage over the U.S..²² Similarly, while exuding "cautious optimism" concerning the revolutionary prospects for "socialist oriented" Third World states, members of the Soviet elite looked optimistically at the prospects for exploiting local conflicts without incurring the risks of military confrontation with the West. Emboldened by the realities of Soviet global military power, the leadership harped on the natural antagonisms between developing states and the West, and the opportunities that they presented for consolidating and expanding Moscow's influence in the Third World.²³

The basic urge for opportunism also derived directly from the actual performance of the domestic economy. In absolute terms, the Soviet economy was growing at an impressive rate. As compared to the previous Soviet record, 1970 marked the climax of the most successful five-year plan for the leadership measured in terms of gross national

²¹*Pravda*, 31 March 1971, pp. 2-3.

²²See especially discussion in William C. Wohlforth, *The Elusive Balance*, pp. 196-201. For discussion of the opportunities for exploitation presented by contradictions between Western Europe and the U.S., see especially John Van Oudenaren, *Detente in Europe: The Soviet Union and the West Since 1953* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), pp. 73-84.

²³During the latter part of the 1960s, Soviet power projection capabilities greatly expanded. In particular, there was steady increases to the size, firepower, and range of operation of its naval forces that provided Moscow impressive capabilities to maintain a continuous presence in over a dozen Third World countries. For discussion of the renewed activism in Soviet policy towards the Third World prompted by Moscow's enhanced power projection capabilities, see especially Mark Katz, *The Third World in Soviet Military Thought* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982); and Francis Fukuyama, "Patterns of Third World Policy," *Problems of Communism* 36:5 (September-October 1987), pp. 1-13; and Stephen T. Hosmer and Thomas W. Wolfe, *Soviet Policy and Practice Toward Third World Conflicts* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1983), pp. 27-52. For detailed analysis of the Soviet political elite's increasing intransigence in linking behavior in the Third World to the need for regulating the strategic arms race, see especially Richard A. Anderson, *Public Politics in an Authoritarian State*, pp. 218-223.

product (GNP), national income produced, and national income utilized. Growth in total factor productivity, as well as in the size of the labor force and capital stock also improved at significant rates in comparison to the preceding 7th (1961-65) Five-Year Plan. Despite the hints in 1971 of what in hindsight turned out to be the beginning of a sharp downward secular trend in growth rates, the 8th (1965-1970) Five-Year Plan marked the peak of Soviet economic performance.²⁴

The picture of Soviet economic growth at the beginning of the 1970s was also rosy in terms of world standards. Reliable Western sources estimate that Soviet real GNP increased approximately 4.5 percent annually between 1950 and the mid-1980s. Over approximately the same period, GNP in the US, while constituting over twice the size of the Soviet Union, rose only 2.7 times.²⁵ This performance was all the more impressive when measured against the collapse of the postwar international monetary order that occurred during the first years of the Nixon Administration. Thus at the time, Soviet economic growth, measured in both absolute and relative terms, was holding steady and showing only faint signs of the dramatic deceleration that was to set in by the middle of the decade.

This success inevitably fostered optimism among the Soviet elite. According to the former director of the State Planning Commission, N. K. Baibakov, all of the Soviet leaders took great pride in the "unprecedented rate of growth in the economy in 1966-

²⁴For a detailed breakdown of Soviet economic performance indicators covering the period, see especially Ed A. Hewett, *Reforming the Soviet Economy: Equality Versus Efficiency* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1988), p. 52. While the long-term deceleration in GNP growth rates began after the sixth (1956-60) Five-Year Plan, the sharp drop occurred in the ninth (1971-75) Five-Year Plan. For detailed *post mortem* assessment of the debate surrounding Soviet and Western estimates of Soviet GNP growth, see Abraham C. Becker, "Intelligence Fiasco or Reasoned Accounting?: CIA Estimates of Soviet GNP," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 10: 4 (1994), pp. 291-329.

²⁵Ed A. Hewett, *Reforming the Soviet Economy*, p. 38. See also discussion of the debate in the West surrounding the size of the Soviet economy compared to that of the United States in Abraham C. Becker, "Intelligence Fiasco or Reasoned Accounting?" pp. 307-319.

1970." They fully expected a trend launched by the "best five years" to continue throughout the following decade.²⁶ In contrast to the mere lip-service paid to Khrushchev's earlier bold projections for economic preponderance of the socialist economy, by 1970 the Soviet leadership evinced sincere confidence in the success reflected in key quantitative indicators of economic performance. Even Prime Minister A. Kosygin, an earlier skeptic of the lasting vitality of Soviet economic growth and proponent of major industrial re-organization and expansion of East-West trade to redress economic shortfalls, by the 24th Party Congress expressed solace in the "adequately high and stable rates" of growth against the backdrop of Western economic crisis.²⁷ For the most part, fundamental economic issues were rarely discussed among the top elites, as there was "no sense of an impending crisis."²⁸ Moreover, it was generally accepted that the further mobilization of unexploited resources and expansion of the capital stock, as well as the removal of administrative bottlenecks and bureaucratic inertia would compensate for qualitative deficiencies related to the productivity of factor inputs. There was a shared conviction that these results could obtain from a renewed effort at administrative reform, tailored specifically towards rationalizing central planning, streamlining bureaucratic oversight of production, and increasing material incentives for efficiency.²⁹ In sum, modest increases in the labor pool and capital investment engendered by the 8th Five-Year Plan affirmed the collective leadership's confidence in

²⁶N. K. Baibakov, *Sorok let v pravitel'stve* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo respublika, 1993), pp. 116-127.

²⁷*XXIV s'ezd*, II, p. 19. For detailed discussion of Kosygin's earlier pessimism and stated preferences for altering investment priorities and administrative reform, see especially George W. Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev as Leaders* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982), pp. 138-178.

²⁸G. A. Arbatov, *Zatyanuvsheesya vyzdorovlenie*, p. 214.

²⁹For detailed discussion of the Soviet leadership's general endorsement of the vitality of the extensive growth model, and the "qualified consensus" for relying on administrative reform to resolve productivity maladies in the economy, see especially George W. Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev as Leaders: Building Authority in Soviet Politics*, pp. 179-199.

the success of the extensive growth model for sustaining the vitality of the Soviet economy.

This optimism provided the impetus for building-up and asserting Soviet power. This was manifest first-and-foremost in a uniform commitment to steady growth in military expenditures. With the economy continuing to expand at a sufficiently vigorous pace, the leadership was generally confident that moderate rates of increase in defense spending could be sustained without jeopardizing growth in consumption and investment. In public speeches, for instance, Brezhnev repeatedly promised to maintain national defense "on the highest level" and to uphold the "sacred duty" to protect continued strategic and conventional weapons deployments and modernization.³⁰ When taken in conjunction with the platform for increasing investment in agriculture and consumer-oriented production laid down at the 24th Party Congress, it becomes clear that the leadership maintained a deep-seated conviction that all of the chief claimants on the national output could be satisfied by increasing absolute allocations.

Second, by the end of the 1960s there was basic accord within Kremlin leadership for utilizing economic assets to reinvigorate Soviet engagement in the Third World. By 1967, with the political demise of A. Shelepin, the Politburo fully endorsed a policy for expanding trade and aid to communist and non-communist states in the developing world as an effective means for countering the influence of rivals in the West. There was prevailing interest in wielding economic levers to broaden the base of Soviet ties among non-revolutionary, liberated states in the Third World.³¹ Despite the obvious burden linked to the diversion of scarce resources and the loss of valuable hard-currency earnings through concessionary terms of trade, the leadership downplayed concerns for tight-

³⁰*Pravda*, 8 June 1969, p. 1; and *Ibid.*, 27 May 1970, p. 1. See also reference to the protection of military spending in the proceedings of the 24th Party Congress cited in footnote 2.

³¹Richard D. Anderson, *Public Politics in an Authoritarian State*, pp. 178-181.

fistedness in Soviet economic and military involvement in the Third World and banked on the continued vibrancy of the domestic economy to ameliorate the tradeoff.³²

Finally, the performance of the domestic economy undoubtedly lessened the impact of Soviet technological inferiority vis-a-vis the West. Despite the attention devoted to increasing innovation and economic productivity, by the beginning of the 1970s the country was increasingly falling behind its foreign adversaries in the West from a technological perspective. Confronting ominous signs of an emerging technological gap with the U.S., the Soviet elite remained convinced that shortcomings in Moscow's scientific-technological competitiveness did not pose dire problems and could be overcome with vigilant pursuit of administrative reform and the infusion of greater resources towards science and industry. The leadership was not alarmist, and remained fundamentally wedded to traditional extensive measures, such as "self criticism" and "principled administrative solutions," for narrowing the gap. While there was begrudging acceptance of a Soviet technological lag vis-a-vis the US, members of the Soviet elite expressed confidence in socialism's "inherent" advantages over capitalism in innovation, and were self-assured that any relative disadvantages were fleeting and paled in comparison to those experienced by the Soviet Union in the past. One candidate member of the Politburo conveyed this tempered anxiety when he stated that "we do not deny that a few highly developed capitalist countries still surpass the Soviet Union in particular

³²According to G.A. Arbatov, there was widespread support for heavily subsidizing Soviet economic and military assistance in order to woo potential allies in the Third World. Personal interview with G.A. Arbatov, Brezhnev's foreign policy advisor, in Moscow, on 13 August 1992. For the Soviet leadership's apparent estimation of the productivity and affordability of Soviet military and economic assistance to clients in the developing world, see for example, Abraham S. Becker, "The Soviet Union and the Third World: The Economic Dimension," in Andrej Korbonski and Francis Fukuyama, *The Soviet Union and the Third World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), pp. 67-93; Orah Cooper and Carol Fogarty, "Soviet Military and Economic Aid to the Less Developed Countries, 1954-78," in Morris Bornstein, *The Soviet Economy: Continuity and Change* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1981), pp. 253-268; Rajan Menon, *Soviet Power and the Third World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986); and Carol R. Saivetz and Sylvia Woodby, *Soviet-Third World Relations* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), pp. 147-158.

branches of science and technology, but this hardly demonstrates that the capitalist system is superior in any way."³³ According to Arbatov, this confidence was widely shared among the leadership, and contributed directly to the indefinite postponement of the scientific-technological plenum of the Central Committee that was originally promised at the 24th Party Congress.³⁴

This consensus on the fleeting nature of the scientific-technological gap had significant implications for the build-up of Soviet military power. The key to redressing this temporary lag, argued the Soviet leadership, was the steadfast strengthening of Soviet defense industry. In a slight modification of earlier investment priorities, the collective leadership called on heavy industry, and especially the defense sector, to produce more consumer goods and provide the engine for restoring Soviet technological dynamism. In particular, the leadership summoned the Soviet defense industry *en mass* to employ a larger percentage of its ever-expanding resources to non-military pursuits, and to take the lead in diffusing high technology throughout the civilian economy. At the 24th Party Congress, for example, Brezhnev remarked that spin-offs from the military to civilian sector of the economy "had acquired paramount importance."³⁵ Thus, there was considerable confidence that the "magic" of Soviet military R&D and production would transfer over to the civilian economy, and general agreement that greater, rather than fewer resources should be channeled to the military-industrial complex in order to stem the adverse technological lag in the competition with the West.

³³P. Demichev, "Razrabotka aktual'nykh problem stroitel'stva kommunizma resheniyakh XXIV s'ezda," *Kommunist* 15 (1971), pp. 21; and *Pravda*, 7 June 1970, p. 2. For detailed analysis of the different domestic and international tactics for redressing the short-term technological gap with the U.S. that were bantered about in the Soviet leadership at the time, see especially Bruce Parrott, *Politics and Technology in the Soviet Union* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), pp. 211-255.

³⁴G. A. Arbatov, *Zatyanuvsheesya vyzdorovlenie*, pp. 160-161.

³⁵XXIV s'ezd, I, pp. 70-71.

Similarly, there was consensus among the Soviet elite by the end of the 1970s that extensive measures of growth would compensate for short-term technological shortcomings in the conventional military sphere. In short, there was clear agreement among the Soviet elite that advances in American conventional military technology could be neutralized by shifts in war-fighting strategy and increased numerical deployments of Soviet forces, rather than by a fundamental qualitative improvement in the Soviet arsenal.³⁶ Moreover, this evolution in Soviet operational planning paved the way for the all azimuth build-up in conventional forces as a counter to Western "qualitative" advantages. By the early 1970s Soviet political and military leaders, in rejecting the logic of technological determinism, began to speak in unison of the importance for allocating more resources to the development and production of Soviet armaments as a hedge against Western scientific-technological advances in weaponry. In the short run, at least, there was overwhelming confidence that the pursuit of "quantitative indicators, such as the number of tanks," and improvements in the technical proficiency of Soviet troops to operate existing weapons systems would negate Western scientific-technological advances in military affairs.³⁷

³⁶For example, in reaction to NATO's ratification of a new military doctrine, "flexible response," in 1967-- the virtual embodiment of the West's reinvigorated emphasis on high-technology in conventional deployments and war-fighting strategy-- a Soviet civil-military consensus began to emerge for doctrinal innovations that favored planning for limited non-nuclear wars. This shift in Soviet war-fighting strategy to allow for the possibility of a conventional pause in a East-West conflict was prompted by the burgeoning requirement for fighting modern Western forces in a variety of conventional military scenarios. Michael McCWire, *Military Objectives in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1987), pp. 29-35; James M. McConnell, *The Soviet Shift in Emphasis from Nuclear to Conventional* Volumes 1 and 2 (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses Research Contribution, June 1983); Edward L. Warner, III, *The Military in Contemporary Soviet Politics: An Institutional Analysis* (New York: Praeger, 1977), pp. 156-157; and Kimberly Martin Zisk, *Engaging the Enemy: Organizational Theory and Soviet Military Innovation, 1955-1991* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 55-81. For a contrasting perspective that stresses the static nature of Soviet military doctrine and unchanged fixation on planning for nuclear confrontation with the U.S. in the aftermath of NATO's ratification of flexible response, see especially Benjamin S. Lambeth, "On Thresholds in Soviet Military Thought," *Washington Quarterly* 7 (Spring 1984), pp. 69-76.

³⁷See for example the prescriptions for offsetting Western advances in conventional military technology discussed in Dale R. Herspring, *The Soviet High Command, 1967-1989*, p. 66. For detailed discussion of

The Advent of Cooperative Engagement: Gorbachev's *New Thinking*

With Gorbachev's political ascendance in 1985, a new leadership came to power with radically different strategic goals from those evinced by its predecessor during the Brezhnev period. During the period leading up to the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in March 1986, Soviet political elites collectively recognized the need for fundamentally improving relations with Western adversaries by infusing grand strategy with an overwhelmingly cooperative spirit.³⁸ According to E. Ligachev, a traditional "hardliner" within the new Politburo, there was uniform support at the highest level for striking a conciliatory tone with rival states in the West, especially the United States.³⁹ As observed by Gorbachev's closest foreign policy advisor, A. Chernyaev,

the Soviet political, military, and industrial consensus for incremental technological innovation to weapons development, and reliance on quantitative measures for strengthening the arsenal during this period, see especially Arthur J. Alexander, "Decision-Making in Soviet Weapons Procurement," *Adelphi Papers* 147-148, (Winter 1978/79).

³⁸The new leadership seemed to gain momentum following initial personnel changes, including the removal from the ruling Politburo of Grigorii V. Romanov in July 1985 and Viktor V. Grishin in February 1986. At the time of their political demise both remained ardent critics of improving relations with the West, and were committed to the view that confrontation was the norm in the global rivalry with the U.S.. For Romanov's hardline critique of the international climate, see *Leningradskaya pravda*, 15 February 1985, p. 1; for a sample of Grishin's competitive views on coexistence and his preoccupation with military strength as the bulwark for Soviet security vis-a-vis ideological foes in the West, see *Moskovskaya pravda*, 15 May 1985, p. 3. Also in July 1985, Shevardnadze joined the ruling Politburo and became foreign minister, kicking long-time guardian of Soviet foreign policy, Andrei Gromyko, up to the ceremonial post of head of state. At the same time, Boris N. Yeltsin and Lev N. Zaikov began their respective ascendancy into the inner political circle, with appointments as secretaries of the Central Committee.

³⁹E. K. Ligachev, *Zagadka Gorbacheva* (Novosibirsk: Interbuk, 1992), p. 106. Ligachev's acknowledgement of the imperative for change in grand strategy is particularly revealing given his general conservative approach to reform throughout the Gorbachev period. As is discussed below, despite his cautious stance on foreign affairs and committed belief in the class character of international relations, he shared in the rejection of the military nature of the class struggle and in the promotion of peaceful resolution of international conflicts. During this period, he omitted reference to the necessity of forcibly resolving international class antagonisms and expounded on the importance of making political gestures to class rivals as a means of undercutting their claims of confronting a "Soviet threat". See E. Ligachev, "Sovetuias' s partiei, s narodom," *Kommunist* 16 (November 1985), pp. 82. Nikolai I. Ryzhkov, former Soviet Prime Minister during this period, dates the origins of the leadership consensus to Andropov's 1983 reformist agenda. See Nikolai Ryzhkov, *Perestroika istoriya predatel'stva* (Moscow: Novosti Press, 1992), p. 156. For concurring claims, see Georgy Arbatov, *The System: An Insider's Life in Soviet Politics* (New York: Random House, 1992), pp. 274-286; and E.K. Ligachev, *Zagadka Gorbacheva*, p. 16-28.

"during this initial period *perestroika* in foreign and domestic affairs did not meet any opposition at the highest political echelon; these efforts were interpreted as inextricably linked to the renewal of Soviet international competitiveness."⁴⁰ This theme was reiterated by Politburo member and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Eduard A. Shevardnadze, who upon reflecting on the circumstances in 1985, stated that:

We in the Soviet leadership were acutely aware of the need for fundamental change in policy and the search for another path... No matter where we turned, we came up against the fact that we could achieve nothing without the normalization of Soviet-American relations.⁴¹

This general sentiment was formally expressed at the first reported convening of the Politburo following Gorbachev's accession, as the political leadership affirmed a collective willingness to compromise with the United States on outstanding strategic issues.⁴²

Evidence of the political leadership's initial understanding of the need to imbue Soviet grand strategy with a conciliatory spirit also can be found in the leadership's early critique of the costs and benefits of previous Soviet strategies. In a closed door session with leading diplomats, Gorbachev castigated the "excessively paternalistic and

⁴⁰Personal interview with Anatoli C. Chernyaev, Gorbachev's foreign policy advisor, in Moscow, on 11 October 1993. See also Anatoli S. Chernyaev, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym: Po dnevnikovym zapisiam* (Moscow: Progress, 1993), p. 253.

⁴¹Eduard A. Shevardnadze, *Moi vybor: v zashchitu demokratii i svobody* (Moscow: Novosti Press, 1991), p. 146-147; 68, 121. He also notes that the leadership, only months after Gorbachev's appointment as General Secretary, was in full agreement on the need for scrapping the Brezhnev doctrine and "completely ruling out" the possibility of military intervention in Eastern Europe.

⁴²*Pravda*, 21 March 1985, p. 1. On the same day, Gorbachev for the first time informally communicated his desire to American government officials for arranging a summit meeting. See especially discussion in Raymond L. Garthoff, *The Great Transition: American-Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1994), p. 207. This overture followed directly from Gorbachev's early acknowledgement of the intrinsic connection between economic resurgence and Soviet global stature as a superpower. For one of his earliest remarks along these lines, several months before his appointment as Communist Party leader, see Mikhail S. Gorbachev, *Izbrannyye rechi i stat'i*, Vol. II, p. 86.

prejudiced" policies of his predecessors towards Eastern Europe, and called for a relaxation of Moscow's grip over the region.⁴³ Similar considerations underpinned Prime Minister N. Ryzhkov's, calls for "reckoning" with the political and economic costs of the earlier Soviet push towards attaining strategic parity.⁴⁴ Shevardnadze followed suit by imploring his contemporaries to redress the excessive costs attached to Moscow's earlier opportunism in the Third World and confrontation with the West that were "draining resources from the effort to ensure a high technological level of peaceful production, education, and health, and maximum satisfaction of the population's needs."⁴⁵

Supplementing this general acceptance of the net costs of previous approaches was basic agreement on the expected benefits of changing strategic course. In his first year as General Secretary, Gorbachev repeatedly underscored the necessity for establishing political reconciliation with foreign adversaries. He suggested that it was mutually beneficial for the two opposing international camps to reach accommodation, despite the perceived aggressiveness of Western imperialists and ominous political trends linked to the American aggravation of the arms race on land and in space.⁴⁶ These general sentiments resonated widely among the leadership, as was revealed by the

⁴³This scathing criticism was published a year after its initial airing in *Vestnik Ministerstva Innostrannykh Del SSSR*, 5 August 1987, pp. 4-6.

⁴⁴William C. Wohlforth, "Realism and the End of the Cold War," *International Security* 19:3 (Winter 1994/95), p. 113.

⁴⁵Eduard A. Shevardnadze, *Moi vybor*, p. 106. According to Shevardnadze, by 1986 the Soviet leadership was in general agreement that the previous approach to national security, predicated on the deep-seated belief that the Soviet Union must be stronger than any possible coalition of opposing states, was counterproductive and threatened to undermine the long-term vitality of the state.

⁴⁶Mikhail S. Gorbachev, *Izbrannyye rechi i stat'i*, Vol. II, pp. 134, 168, 205. "Otvety M.S. Gorbacheva: Amerikanskomu zhurnalu 'Taim'," *Kommunist*, 13 (September 1985), p. 18. Given Ligachev's revelation of the critical role played by members of the Central Committee in securing Gorbachev's election, we can infer that this general agreement on the need for a cooperative grand strategy extended beyond the narrow ruling coalition within the Politburo. See *Pravda*, 2 July 1988, p. 11.

Communist Party's endorsement at the April 1985 Central Committee Plenum of Gorbachev's general plea for "building bridges of cooperation" to the West.⁴⁷

The resolutions of the 27th Party Congress clearly embodied the new leadership's early collective conviction for placing grand strategy on a cooperative footing. Gorbachev's calls for "new approaches" to foreign and security problems in his political report struck a chord with the rest of the leadership, and were codified in the final proceedings.⁴⁸ Specifically, there was general acceptance that the growing trend of interdependence among capitalist and socialist systems necessitated an easing of international tensions. Moreover, the leadership collectively acknowledged that the omnipresent threat of nuclear war associated with the unrestrained arms race made it fundamentally imperative for the Soviet Union to seek out political means for ensuring mutual security beyond mere parity with ideological rivals. Although some of Gorbachev's more novel twists were not reiterated in the final document, the leadership closed ranks behind a general campaign that rejected the politics of force and featured dynamic reconciliation as the linchpin of Soviet foreign and security policies.⁴⁹

⁴⁷Mikhail S. Gorbachev, *Izbrannyye rechi i stat'i*, Vol. II, p. 171. In this report, Gorbachev noted the Politburo consensus for rejecting the "fatal inevitability" of confrontation with the West, and for building upon detente to smooth East-West relations. As was indicated in subsequent remarks by Marshal Akhromeyev, the decisions reached at this Plenum provided the impetus for a major reassessment of the threat of nuclear war facing the Soviet Union. This suggests that the leadership was united not only in its acknowledgement of the need for changing strategy at this time, but also in its commitment to acting on these observations. See Bruce Parrott, "Soviet National Security Under Gorbachev," *Problems of Communism* 37:6 (November-December 1988), p.3, footnote 14. One possible ardent critic of this cooperative line on security affairs in the leadership throughout the initial period was V. Shcherbytskyi, who on several occasions commented on the United States' quest for military superiority and on the necessity for continued Soviet vigilance in restraining aggressive ideological foes in the West. See especially, *Pravda*, 8 March 1985, p. 3; and *Izvestiia*, 28 November 1985, p. 3.

⁴⁸According to Shevardnadze, the foreign policy section of Gorbachev's report was well received. It was met with resounding applause, "a signal of unanimous support and approval in Soviet writing and speaking." Furthermore, he conceded that at the time he viewed this "expression of agreement as proof of the universal support for the new standards of our foreign policy and for the principles of *new thinking*." See Eduard A. Shevardnadze, *Moi vybor*, p. 98.

⁴⁹Excluded from the final resolutions were Gorbachev's assessment of the incompatibility of the goals of the American military industrial complex with broader U.S. national interests and his direct assault on Brezhnev's confrontational legacy. For the resolutions of the 27th Party Congress, see "Rezolyutsii XXVII

The conceptual reassessment of Soviet strategy stemmed largely from confirmation of the reality of MAD, and a basic apprehension regarding its prospects for guaranteeing international stability. On the one hand, as reflected in Gorbachev's political report to the 27th Congress, there was formal consensus on the "complete unacceptability of nuclear war," and on the practical realities associated with the whole world being held hostage to nuclear war. The Soviet leader reiterated Brezhnev's paean that "the character of contemporary weapons does not permit any state hopes of defending itself by military-technical means alone, even by creating the most powerful defense."⁵⁰ According to one of Gorbachev's advisors, there was widespread agreement that the capacity to commit suicide by initiating nuclear holocaust dictated new thinking and the search for "qualitatively new approaches to the entire problematic of war and peace."⁵¹ In the context of mutual vulnerability, the political leadership no longer considered confrontation with the West to be either inevitable or within the realm of reason, despite widely shared perceptions of America's belligerence.⁵²

On the other hand, the leadership collectively maintained that while the threat of nuclear retaliation rendered moot military advantages between adversaries, mutual

s'ezda Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza po politicheskomu dokladu Tsentral'nogo Komiteta KPSS," *Kommunist*, 4 (1986), p. 81-98. For Gorbachev's foreign and security policy report to the Congress, see Mikhail S. Gorbachev, *Izbrannye, rechi i stat'i*, pp. 243-258. For an insightful discussion of the political implications of the two reports, see Charles Glickham, "New Directions For Soviet Foreign Policy," *RFE/RL Research Report 2* (1986), 6 September 1986, pp. 1-26.

⁵⁰Mikhail S. Gorbachev, *Izbrannye, rechi i stat'i*, p. 245.

⁵¹A. Bovin, "Novoe myshlenie-trebovanie yadernogo veka," *Kommunist* 10 (July 1986), p. 114. This was supported by the High Command, independently of Gorbachev's initiatives. On this point, see S.F. Akhromeyev and G.M. Kornienko, *Glazami marshala i diplomata*, p. 121.

⁵²According to Chernyaev, the new Soviet collective leadership arrived on the scene convinced of Soviet international security. By 1985, there was no fear of any U.S. initiative, no matter how belligerent, since there was no real threat of a premeditated attack by the U.S.. He recollected, for example, that Gorbachev, in soliciting a proper response to the US SDI threat, refused to entertain any proposal that was premised on the assumption that direct confrontation with the US was possible. Personal interview with A.C. Chernyaev.

deterrence alone could not provide for lasting security. There was uniform anxiety within the leadership over the prospects of war resulting unexpectedly from technical malfunction, political miscalculation, unauthorized control, or unpremeditated action. Moreover, the political leadership collectively acknowledged that in a MAD world security is primarily a diplomatic problem that extends beyond national borders to encompass broader international concerns. There was also general agreement that any effort to demonstrate credibility through intimidation fostered insecurity among rivals, ultimately making the resolution of conflicts more difficult to achieve. As a result, the Soviet leadership rallied around calls for moving beyond a reliance on military parity and deterrence for averting war. Priority was placed squarely on infusing grand strategy with conciliatory gestures towards reducing arms and providing political reassurances to the West.⁵³

While MAD was a hold-over from the previous period, its strategic prescriptions intensified in part due to the obvious stagnation of the Soviet economy that occurred during the mid-1980s.⁵⁴ The political leadership at the time of Gorbachev's ascendance collectively joined the ranks of the economy's sharpest critics. As early as the April 1985 Plenum, the top leadership collectively affirmed that the fate of the Soviet Union ultimately hinged upon its ability to turn the economy around.⁵⁵ There were stark

⁵³For select Gorbachev speeches along these lines, see Mikhail S. Gorbachev, *Izbrannye, rechi i stat'i*, Vol. 3, pp. 133-144, 245; Vol. 4, pp. 383-385. For detailed analysis of the leadership's rejection of deterrence as a means for managing the superpower relationship, see especially discussion in Raymond L. Garthoff, *Deterrence and the Revolution in Soviet Military Doctrine*, pp. 94-101; and Stephen M. Meyer, "The Source and Prospects of Gorbachev's New Thinking on Security," *International Security* 13:2 (Fall 1988), pp. 133-143. While the relative importance and specific policy implications of these concepts were in dispute, especially between civilian and military officials (as referenced by Meyer), the political leadership remained united in its commitment to giving them greater play in Soviet grand strategy than was previously the case.

⁵⁴For detailed analyses of the sharp multi-dimensional slowdown of the Soviet economy during the mid-1980s, see Anders Aslund, *Gorbachev's Struggle for Economic Reform* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 12-24; and Ed A. Hewett, *Reforming the Soviet Economy*, pp. 31-93.

⁵⁵*Pravda*, 24 April 1985, p. 3. According to Ryzhkov, Soviet arms control policies in 1986-1988 were informed by the leadership's collective understanding that the country could not bear the share of state

realizations among the new leaders that the country was in the throes of an acute "pre-crisis" situation, as the economy that had once grown by 5 percent until the early 1970s was growing at a much more sluggish pace of 2 percent by 1985, with little sign of reversing its downward trajectory. There was widespread appreciation that this slowdown was multi-dimensional; the result of the declining availability of capital and labor inputs and a precipitous drop in factor productivity. This was attributed directly to faltering technical efficiency, technological backwardness, and the poor quality of Soviet production.⁵⁶ While the leadership was initially careful not to paint too dire a picture of immediate economic chaos, there was a clear, overriding preoccupation with improving the long-run performance of the economy on all fronts. These economic considerations, in turn, generated a strong urge to conserve on strategic aims.

The clearest manifestations of the political leadership's burgeoning commitment to economy in grand strategy were the initial references to the close-ended resource requirements for security. While the details remained ambiguous and devoid of operational meaning, the leadership collectively endorsed the need for containing defense resource allocations within necessary and sufficient parameters. Several months prior to the 27th Party Congress, for instance, Gorbachev introduced the concept of "reasonable sufficiency," asserting that the Soviet Union would not seek a greater amount of security than other nations, limiting its defensive efforts to the lowest possible level without

expenditures that were demanded of a confrontational strategy. See discussion in William C. Wohlforth, "Realism and the End of the Cold War," *International Security* 19:3 (Winter 1994/95), p. 113.

⁵⁶Evidence of the leadership's acute anxiety over the poor performance of these indicators can be found in the planned increases in economic efficiency specified in the 12th Five Year Plan for 1986-1990. For a breakdown of the "acceleration" program, see *Pravda* 19 June 1986, p. 3. Despite this collective acknowledgement of the imperative for improving efficiency, there was little substance behind the initial economic "acceleration" campaign, as the leadership settled on traditional quantitative and administrative reform measures. For a succinct analysis see Anders Aslund, *Gorbachev's Struggle With Economic Reform*, pp. 70-90.

risking inferiority.⁵⁷ In subsequent discussions he went beyond merely echoing Brezhnev's earlier promises for "sufficiency," stressing that the existing defense budget was adequate and alluding to the primacy of advanced technological development of the civilian economy as the harbinger for Soviet security in the long run. These initial references to reasonable sufficiency conveyed the political leadership's general impression that "more was no longer better" for security, and that the marginal returns from the arms race were diminishing and becoming particularly onerous in the face of economic stagnation. According to Ryzhkov, by 1986 "we clearly understood that the country could not bear the share of state expenditures that existed up to that time."⁵⁸ The leadership's endorsement of finite limits to defense needs were reflected by the increased attention devoted to downsizing Soviet military capabilities both in the proceedings of the 27th Party Congress and in the subsequent radical revamping of Warsaw Pact military planning in May 1987.⁵⁹ This view extended to the upper echelon of the military, where by the beginning of 1988 there was general support for unilateral force reductions in response to the prevailing security situation and the country's economic condition.⁶⁰

⁵⁷*Pravda*, 4 October 1985, p. 2.

⁵⁸N. Ryzhkov's interview with Michael McFaul in 1992, cited in William C. Wohlforth, "Realism and the End of the Cold War," p. 113.

⁵⁹For detailed analyses of the general support for limiting defense outlays within the political leadership, albeit in vague and non specific terms, see especially Anatoli Chernyaev, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym*, pp. 255-256. For Western accounts, see especially Raymond L. Garthoff, "New Thinking in Soviet Military Doctrine," *Washington Quarterly* 11:3 (Summer 1988), pp. 137-149; Stephen M. Meyer, "The Sources and Prospects of Gorbachev's New Political Thinking on Security," pp. 144-150; Bruce Parrott, "Soviet National Security Under Gorbachev," pp. 3-14; and R. Hyland Phillips and Jeffrey L. Sands, "Reasonable Sufficiency and Soviet Conventional Defense," *International Security* 13:2 (Fall 1988), pp. 164-178. Two probable dissenting voices within the political leadership were Romonov and Shcherbytskyi. On separate occasions each spoke of the necessity for surging ahead with defense expenditures as a hedge against renewed Western belligerence. According to Parrott, Shcherbytskyi went so far as to demand that the defense budget receive higher priority than the growth of the economy in balancing against Western attempts to gain superiority. Given the rapid fall from grace of both politicians, we can presume that these opinions were neither widely shared nor appreciated within the political leadership as a whole.

⁶⁰S.F. Akhromeyev and G.M. Kornienko, *Glazami marshala i diplomata*, p. 211.

Economic considerations also underpinned the leadership's collective support for re-focusing the Soviet agenda in the Third World. From the outset, the new leadership downgraded attention to the Third World. At the 27th Party Congress, for instance, references to the significance of the Third World for Soviet foreign policy were made only in passing and were dominated by lament over the "bleeding wound" of the war in Afghanistan. Additionally, the new leadership vented frustration with the rising political and economic costs tied to Soviet support for "progressive" change ushered in by indigenous national liberation movements. This marked the political crescendo of the critique of worsening Soviet terms of foreign assistance to clients in the Third World that had been ubiquitously circulating within quasi-official and academic circles since the mid-1970s.⁶¹ While clinging carefully to the traditional Marxist-Leninist vernacular, characterized by close adherence to the class basis of foreign relations, the new leadership initially expressed the importance of infusing economic pragmatism into Soviet policy towards the developing world. Shevardnadze, for example, declared point blank that the priority of Soviet foreign policy in the developing world was to reduce the burden on the Soviet economy of mutual relations with regional actors, and to "enhance the profitability" of its local contacts.⁶² There was also agreement on the imperative for

⁶¹See especially Jerry F. Hough, *The Struggle for the Third World* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1986); and Elizabeth K. Valkenier, *The Soviet Union and the Third World: An Economic Bind* (New York: Praeger, 1983). For a dissenting view, emphasizing the fundamental continuity in Soviet policy towards the Third World from Khrushchev to Gorbachev, see especially Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Moscow's Third World Strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988). For discussion of benchmarks for measuring change in Soviet policy, see especially Francis Fukuyama, *Gorbachev and the New Agenda for the Third World* R-3634-A (Santa Monica: RAND, June 1989).

⁶²"Vystuplenie E.A. Shevardnadze na sobranii aktiva diplomaticheskoi akademii, instituta mezhdunarodnykh otnoshenii i tsentral'nogo apparata MID SSSR," *Vestnik Ministerstva Innostrannykh Del SSSR*, 2 (26 August 1987), pp. 30-34. While Shevardnadze subsequently became an ardent advocate of jettisoning the class character of Soviet foreign policy, prior to 1988, he, like other political leaders confined his calls for pragmatic change to the parameters of the traditional Marxist-Leninist analysis of the character of the modern epoch. For another example, see *Pravda*, 2 March 1986, pp. 3-4. Furthermore, as Scott Bruckner points out, this statement was neither novel nor extreme for the political leadership. Prior to Gorbachev's ascendancy Andropov and Gromyko were even more direct in asserting the economic limits to Soviet support of national liberation. Proponents of reducing the material commitments to movements to

broadening Soviet ties to include the more developed capitalist states of the Third World. Rather than basing relations on overly concessionary foreign aid and military packages to "vanguard" parties, the leadership was collectively interested in soliciting larger, advanced, non-socialist regional clients through the pragmatic use of economic and political levers.⁶³

As a result, there was an overarching imperative for becoming more selective in its goals and commitments to regional actors. Soviet political elites started counseling clients in the Third World to seek "national reconciliation" with their local adversaries. This, at minimum, contributed to a more conciliatory approach to East-West relations, as the leadership in the Kremlin coalesced around commitments to dilute Soviet association with the extremism of several radical clients, to broaden the base of its contacts in the developing world, and to downgrade the importance of aggressive military and economic instruments in forging regional ties.⁶⁴

Finally, the elite reappraisal of Soviet grand strategy represented a straightforward response to the widening technology gap. The new leadership acknowledged with remarkable candor Soviet technological backwardness vis-a-vis advanced Western states.

socialist or non-capitalist movements in the developing world spanned the political spectrum of conservatives and liberals within the political leadership. See especially discussion in Scott Allan Bruckner, *The Strategic Role of Ideology: Exploring the Links Between Incomplete Information, Signaling, and 'Getting Stuck' in Soviet Politics* (Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1992), pp. 214-223.

⁶³Some argue that the push for multilateralization of Soviet Third World policy reflected a more confrontational stance. While this formulation retained several elements of the traditional ideological competitive vernacular, the specific emphasis on economic instruments rather than military aid, suggests that the changes were more benign. See Francis Fukuyama, *Gorbachev and the New Agenda for the Third World*.

⁶⁴See especially *Ibid.*, David E. Albright, "The USSR and the Third World in the 1980s," *Problems of Communism* (March-June 1989), pp. 50-70; and S. Neil MacFarlane, "The Soviet Union and Southern African Security," *ibid.*, pp. 71-74. This shift in leadership rhetoric emphasizing the priority of economic considerations in Soviet strategic objectives in the Third World began in earnest in 1988. By 1990, the formal emergence of the "Gorbachev Doctrine" codified Soviet strategic concerns for resolving regional conflicts through negotiated recognition of "balances of interests," and for establishing economically rational ties to the developing world.

According to Ryzhkov, the top leadership was collectively committed to revitalizing the Soviet scientific-technological base as early as 1984, but delayed taking action until health was restored to the office of the General Secretary.⁶⁵ In his address to the April 1985 Party Plenum, Gorbachev called for an increase in social and political progress by "making use of the achievements of the scientific-technological revolution." As an indication of the acute anxiety over the growing technological inferiority, he subsequently stated that:

the most worrying thing is that we have started lagging behind in scientific-technical development. At the same time as the Western countries have begun a restructuring of their economies on a broad scale with the emphasis on the conservation of resources, exploitation of new technologies and other achievements of science and technology, our scientific progress has slowed down.⁶⁶

In general, Gorbachev maintained that global interdependence prompted by the scientific-technological progress in communications, transportation, and modes of production compelled national leaderships to jettison parochial blinders and pursue strategies designed to promote mutual interests.

In an effort to stem the tide of technological inferiority, the political leadership rallied in support of a program for reinvigorating the machine-building sectors of the economy. L. Zaikov, for example, stressed the decisive importance of increasing investments to and accelerating development in every branch of machine-building in order to redress Soviet technological backwardness.⁶⁷ Gorbachev lectured his peers that "prime attention must be paid to improving machine-tool construction, to accelerating the

⁶⁵Nikolai Ryzhkov, *Perestroika*, p. 74.

⁶⁶*Pravda*, 26 June 1987, p. 3.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 29 April 1986, p. 2.

development of computer hardware, to instrument building, to electric equipment and electronics as catalysts for scientific and technical progress."⁶⁸ In presenting the 12th Five Year Plan, Ryzhkov revealed that the leadership was bent on translating these concerns into significant investment increases for the energy and machine-building sectors, at the direct expense of growth to consumer and agricultural investment.

With the turn inward to redress the lag in the Soviet scientific-technological base, political elites began to advocate a general defensive orientation for grand strategy. First, in an effort to increase outlays for capital investment, the new political leadership arrived on the scene with a collective commitment to containing military expenditures. According to an eyewitness account, Gorbachev secretly met with senior military leaders in Minsk in July 1985 to inform them of the united front within the leadership for "trimming the fat" out of the arsenal and for confining military capabilities within the bounds of reliable defense, at least over the short-run. In the process, the political leadership took great pains to stress the military's potential gains from a resurgent economy that was capable of producing high-tech weaponry.⁶⁹

Second, in recognition of the growing vulnerability of Soviet forces to Western attempts at exploiting emerging conventional technologies, political elites and their academic minions began to impress upon military leaders the political, economic, and international stability benefits that were expected to accrue from jettisoning the predominant offensive nature of Soviet war-fighting plans. While intense debate ensued over the proper balance between offensive and defensive strategies in response to the

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 24 April 1985, p. 2.

⁶⁹Personal interview conducted with General N. Chervov, in Moscow, on 26 August 1992. This interview confirmed earlier cited rumors that the senior military was told to be prepared to do more with less at this meeting in Minsk. See Dale R. Herspring, *The Soviet High Command*, p. 245. This is also consistent with the reflections of the former Chief of the General Staff. See S.F. Akhromeyev and G.M. Kornienko, *Glazami marshala i diplomata*, pp. 66-67.

growing Soviet technological vulnerability, discussion outside of professional military circles concentrated on alternatives designed to reduce simultaneously the prospects for the outbreak of major war, the nature of strategic confrontation, and the level of military expenditures.⁷⁰

Finally, a by-product of the machine-building campaign was the leadership's general push for increasing the contribution of the military industrial complex to the development of the civilian economy. As pronounced by Zaikov, "it (had) been decided that the military sectors of industry (would) not only take an active part in the production of civilian production and nationally needed goods, but also (would) combine it with the technical retrofitting of light industries, food industries, public services, and trade."⁷¹ The net result was that elites began to devote ever-increasing attention to the defense industrial establishment, but in a way that diverted it from performing traditional offensive tasks ascribed to military art and enlisted it to upgrade the scientific-technological foundations of the civilian economy.

In hindsight, it is clear that factors attendant to the security environment confronting the Gorbachev leadership prompted a basic revision in Soviet grand strategy by the mid-1980s. It is also evident that Moscow's new affinity for diplomacy and political compromise with its potential adversaries was deliberate and motivated by concerns for maintaining Soviet international prestige over the long haul. The secular increase in political and economic pragmatism was inextricably tied to the leadership's collective determination for preserving the international *status quo*, albeit at lower costs. The top leadership uniformly rallied behind *new thinking* as a corrective strategy for

⁷⁰For a concise and focused analysis of the political and military debates over the proper response to advances in Western military technology and planning during this period, see Kimberly Martin Zisk, *Engaging the Enemy*, pp. 141-177.

⁷¹*Pravda*, 19 November 1986, p. 2.

meeting the practical needs of Soviet security while simultaneously preserving Moscow's status as a great power. Thus, it was only following the emasculation of Soviet power, precipitated by the cascade of concessions and fragmentation of the empire linked to Gorbachev's *new thinking*, that the strategy of accommodation became epiphenomenal, merely reflecting inevitable responses to the realities of decline.⁷²

Cementing Cooperative Engagement Under Yeltsin

The end of the Cold War, punctuated by the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, deepened the strategic imperative for cooperation among Gorbachev's successors in the newly independent Russia. Though Russia's relative standing as a superpower suffered in the transition, the new leadership came to power in a security environment where strategic parity remained a robust reality, rendering the state's survival in the face of external threats a perfunctory concern. Moreover, the precipitous decline in the domestic economy and the widening technological gap between great powers in the West generated overwhelming incentives to forsake opportunistic impulses and embrace strategic cooperation with erstwhile international rivals.

The impact of the security environment took hold immediately as the new leadership began by accepting the Gorbachev legacy of cooperative engagement as the linchpin for grand strategy. During the first three years of statehood, amidst the

⁷²See especially the the succinct discussion of the leadership's leitmotifs behind *new thinking* in William Curti Wohlforth, *The Elusive Balance*, pp. 272-292. The leadership's long time horizons concerning international threats and its undying commitment to bolstering Soviet international prestige by reducing the costs of foreign policy and seizing immediate opportunities for promoting mutual interests were also stressed in a personal interview with A. C. Chernyaev. This point was also reiterated in a personal interview with N.A. Kosolopov, foreign policy advisor to Poliburo member Alexander Yakovlev, in Moscow, on 30 July 1992.

geostrategic, economic, and psychological confusion associated with the dismantlement of the Soviet empire and the re-drawing of Russia's centuries old boundaries, the political elite in Moscow unanimously endorsed good neighborliness and accommodation as the leitmotifs for international interaction at the regional and global levels. Despite a divergence of opinion over what constituted Russia's vital interests or its rightful place in the international arena, politicians of all stripes eschewed a hostile backlash and took for granted that close cooperation with great powers in the East and West was in Moscow's best interest over the long haul. Internal debates between Atlanticists and Eurasianists, and between mainstream liberal integrationists, realists, and nationalists, for instance, did not conceptualize Russia's foreign relations in zero-sum terms, as conciliation was treated as a basic goal across the gamut of foreign and security policy issues. According to several critics of the government's strategy, differences between rival political factions were over emphasis not direction, as each subscribed to a "general orientation toward rapprochement with civilized society."⁷³

⁷³See comments by V. Lukin, the Russian ambassador to the United States and subsequent chairman of the State Duma International Affairs Committee, in *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 10 September 1992, p. 4. This point was also stressed in an interview conducted by the author with E. Pain, member of the Analytical Center of the Russian President, in Santa Monica, on 15 May 1995. Similarly, former State Counselor S. Stankevich, an ardent proponent of concentrating Russia's international efforts in Asia and downplaying ties with Europe, was careful to stress that Moscow's global mission must not be conducted against the interests of other states or risk alienating Western partners. See *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 28 March 1992, p. 4. Typically within Russian political discourse, "Atlanticists" believe that the dominant strain in Russian foreign policy is cooperation with the West premised on shared values regarding democracy, human rights and a market economy, and mutual threats stemming from the developing world; "Eurasianists" claim that the focal point of cooperation in grand strategy should be balanced between Europe and Russia's traditional Asian and Southern borders; "realists" argue that international cooperation must be tailored primarily toward upholding Russia's national interests; "liberal integrationists" maintain that cooperation must be aimed at incorporating Russia into the global political and economic community and realizing a new world order; and "nationalists" argue for political re-integration of the former Soviet republics under Russian control. For summaries of the conceptual underpinnings of the dominant variants in Russian strategic thinking, see especially Hannes Adomeit, "Russia as a 'Great Power in World Affairs: Images and Realities," *International Affairs* 71:1 (1995), pp. 35-68; Alexei G. Arbatov, "Russia's Foreign Policy Alternatives," *International Security*, 18:2 (Fall 1993), pp. 50-43; and Neil MacFarlane, "Russian Conceptions of Europe," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 10:3 (July-September 1994), pp. 234-269.

The coalescence of this official consensus for pragmatic cooperation was codified in a series of documents on Russian foreign policy that were vetted through competing bureaucracies and branches of government in 1992-1993. According to the official "Concept of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation," originally submitted by the foreign ministry and amended by the parliament in early 1993, the basic task of Russia's grand strategy was to "take a decisive course toward developing relations with those countries whose cooperation may be a help in resolving first-priority tasks of national rebirth, primarily-- with neighbors, with economically strong and technologically developed Western states, and with new industrial countries in various regions." The document took *a priori* the absence of a specific enemy and described as the main guiding principle of Moscow's foreign behavior the "search for political means of security for Russia in all dimensions."⁷⁴ These fundamental tenets were affirmed in a subsequent inter-agency review of foreign policy conducted under the auspices of the Russian Security Council in April 1993. Notwithstanding the obvious shift to a more assertive tone in defining Russia's national interests and potential threats, this document reiterated basic commitments to fortifying "mutually beneficial" mechanisms for integration with former Soviet states "on the basis of a mandate by the U.N. or Council for Security Cooperation in Europe," "partnership" with the United States and West Europe, and "normal relations" and multilateral security arrangements with states in the Far East.⁷⁵ The significance of this unanimity was underscored by its emergence at a time when intense rivalry between executive and legislative organs dominated the domestic scene.

⁷⁴"Kontsepsiya Vnyeshney Politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii, 25 yanvarya 1993 g," Document No., 1615/IS, as translated in *FBIS-USR-93-037*, 25 March 1993, pp. 1-20.

⁷⁵This document, "Fundamental Principles of a Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," was approved unanimously by the foreign, defense, and foreign economics ministries, the various departments of the Security Council, the intelligence services, and the parliamentary committees on foreign affairs and foreign economic relations, and on defense and security. See summary in *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 29 April 1993, pp. 1, 3.

The depth of this domestic consensus for cooperative engagement was also reflected in the tenor of the most comprehensive non-governmental critique of the Yeltsin administration's nascent grand strategy. The Council for Foreign and Defense Policy, arguably the most influential public Russian organization devoted to issues of national security at the time, issued a blueprint for strategy centered on strengthening Moscow's commitments to multilateral efforts at political and economic integration. While scathing in its critique of the government's failure to uphold Russia's unique and legitimate geopolitical interests, especially in the former Soviet space, this report described as "essential" the task of forging a new strategic partnership with the West in which Moscow would play the key role "regulating the situation in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Far East." Lobbying for diversity and balance in Russia's foreign policy, these author's stressed that inevitable conflicts of interests between Moscow and states in the near and far abroad must be resolved according to principles of economic and political cooperation, rather than by coercive diplomacy or force.⁷⁶

Finally, the general consensus for a cooperative strategic orientation was explicitly embodied in Russia's new military doctrine. Codified in November 1993 as the basic principles of military policy by the Security Council, this document was premised on the view that the prevailing international environment was conducive for "widening partnership, multilateral cooperation, strengthening of trust in military affairs, reductions of nuclear and conventional armaments," that lent priority to "the prevention of war and armed conflict by political-diplomatic, international legal, economic, and non-military means via collective actions of the world community when confronted by threats to peace

⁷⁶*Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 19 August 1992, pp. 4-5. The overwhelming support for cooperative engagement, albeit in a manner consistent with Russian national interests, within the official policy-making community during this period was affirmed in a structured survey of the orientations of 200 Russian foreign policy elites in Winter 1992-1993. See William Zimmerman, "Markets, Democracy and Russian Foreign Policy," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 10:2 (April-June 1994), pp. 103-195.

and acts of aggression." The leadership reiterated that it did not consider any state its enemy, and pledged that it would not use its military except as "a means of individual or collective self-defense in case of armed attack on the Russian Federation, its citizens, territory, armed forces, other troops, or its allies." The document, moreover, authorized the use of armed forces for peace-keeping and peace-enforcement operations along Russia's immediate border, couched in terms of protecting a sphere of influence. It committed Moscow "first and foremost" to searching out political approaches for defusing security dilemmas through regional and global cooperative mechanisms.⁷⁷

This convergence of Russian policy-making opinion on cooperative engagement was mainly in response to the persistence of MAD. Given that the bulk of the Soviet nuclear force was located in Russia, Moscow inherited an impressive strategic arsenal, consisting of over 10,000 warheads, that equaled of the United States and dwarfed the forces of Britain, France, and China combined.⁷⁸ As a result, parity remained intact despite the collapse of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and the disintegration of the Soviet military, and continued to inform Russia's strategic outlook. In the new doctrine, for instance, the leadership drew an explicit connection between the existence of strategic

⁷⁷*Krasnaya zvezda*, 19 November 1993, pp. 3-4.

⁷⁸Despite the partition of Soviet military forces among its successor states, Russia retained a formidable strategic nuclear force, albeit with a different mix of delivery systems. Even with the reductions imposed by adherence to the START I agreement, originally signed by the Soviet leadership, Moscow was guaranteed quantitative parity with the U.S. at 3000 warheads for the ensuing 10 years. Given the fragmentation of the Soviet bomber force and the deterioration of the ballistic missile submarine fleet, the lionshare of Russia's strategic nuclear warheads (6600) remained on land-based inter-continental ballistic missiles (1400). While it is true that Russian strategic forces were not immune from problems related to modernization, manning, training, and the lack of spare parts and financial resources that afflicted other parts of the military, these problems were self-inflicted and not caused by the loss of territory, human resources, or military assets associated with the breakup of the Soviet Union. For detailed breakdown of the distribution of Russia's strategic forces, see especially International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance*, 1992-1993 (London: Brassey's, 1994), p. 227. Similarly, despite disrupted supply lines, Russia inherited a formidable and autonomous defense industrial infrastructure, consisting of roughly 75 percent of the 2000 production facilities, research institutes, and design bureaus that comprised the Soviet military industrial complex. See Julian Cooper, *The Soviet Defense Industry: Conversion and Reform* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1991), pp. 19- 29.

parity and Russia's reliance on nuclear weapons solely for deterrence "against the initiation of nuclear war and the unleashing of aggression against the Russian Federation and its allies."⁷⁹ In keeping with the requirements for strategic stability, the document affirmed earlier Soviet commitments to international arms control aimed at reducing the testing and deployment of nuclear forces to the minimum levels necessary for maintaining security, as well as to multilateral efforts directed at stemming the proliferation of nuclear weapons and delivery systems. Similarly, the security provided by strategic parity undergirded calls for broadening mutual exchanges of military information, extending conventional arms control agreements, and coordinating rival military doctrines and strategies.

These strategic incentives were further sharpened by the fundamental economic distress that Russia inherited from the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991. In contrast to the economic stagnation that met Soviet predecessors as they contemplated grand strategy in 1985, the Russian leadership was handed an economy that was in the throes of profound crisis, experiencing negative real growth rates in GDP on the order of -12.9 percent in 1991 and -18.5 percent in 1992, and per capital income rates that more resembled those of Mexico than the U.S. or Germany. Industrial production, in particular, declined precipitously at rates of 8 percent and 18 percent in 1991 and 1992, respectively.⁸⁰ All cheap sources of growth, such as abundant raw materials, capital, labor, and hard currency reserves were completely depleted. Moreover, a result of the ill-conceived reform policies adopted during the Gorbachev period, the new leadership in Moscow faced macroeconomic crisis and near hyper-inflation, keyed by a budget deficit that soared to 30 percent of GDP by the end of 1991. Russia also was exposed to

⁷⁹*Krasnaya zvezda*, 19 November 1993, p. 3.

⁸⁰See especially Goskomstat Rossii, *Rossiiskaya Federatsiya v tsifrakh v 1993 godu*, pp. 8, 13-14. See also "Economic Review: Russian Federation," *International Monetary Fund Report 8* (June 1993), p. 85.

successive external shocks-- attendant to the inheritance of the Soviet Union's outstanding \$100 billion foreign debt, the breakup of the CMEA trading mechanism, and the collapse of trade among former Soviet republics in 1992-- that caused dramatic reductions in the volumes of both imports and exports, thus dimming the prospects for short-term relief.⁸¹ In sum, at the time of its independence Russia faced severe economic shortages and financial imbalances of all kinds and across all indicators that deprived Moscow of its former international standing as superpower and left it clutching to its remaining industrial, human, and natural resources for the preservation of its status as a great power.

The Soviet legacy of economic ruin, in effect, sapped the new Russian leadership of incentives and the wherewithal to exploit international opportunities for expansion or aggression. Echoing the concerns of its immediate Soviet predecessor, albeit at a higher decibel level, the new Russian leadership stressed the need for "economizing" on security. This was evident in the qualified doctrinal abandonment of the "no-first-use" pledge, even against non-nuclear states that, in effect, offered a cheap stop-gap for shoring-up unfavorable conventional military imbalances vis-a-vis rival forces in Europe brought upon by the retreat of Russian military power from the center of the continent and CFE treaty limits inherited from the Soviet Union. Similarly, voices from across the Russian political spectrum invoked economic hardship as justification for downsizing the military and strictly enforcing rationalization based on standards of efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and austerity towards defense spending and force restructuring.⁸² Finally,

⁸¹For a detailed account of the breadth and depth of the economic and financial crises confronting the Russian leadership in 1991-1992, see especially Anders Aslund, *How Russia Became a Market Economy* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1995), pp. 49, 281-283. According to Aslund, a prominent Western economic advisor to the Kremlin, Russian foreign trade was almost in free fall at the time of the collapse of the U.S.S.R., with exports plummeting by 40 percent and imports dropping by as much as 55 percent between 1990 and 1992.

⁸²Andrei Kokoshin, first deputy minister of defense, representing various political, professional military, and defense industrial constituencies, on numerous occasions pointed to economic considerations as providing the impetus to a weapons acquisitions reform agenda spearheaded by the exploitation of dual use and spin-off technologies. See, for example, *Krasnaya zvezda*, 11 March 1993, p. 2; and *Izvestiya*, 20 July

the need for foreign aid and investment was used to bolster arguments for forging closer ties with other great powers. This was reflected in the mantra for membership in and assistance from such groups as the Group of Seven (G7), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade (GATT).⁸³

Finally, the challenge of redressing technological inferiority reinforced pressures for geopolitical retrenchment. On the military plane, there was a consensus among civilian and military leaders that the Russian Armed Forces were far from prepared for engaging the world's most advanced armies on any battlefield, due to an inability for keeping abreast of the latest round in the technological revolution in military affairs. The new doctrine and accompanying armaments program, in particular, placed the premium for military reform on the research, procurement, and incorporation into operational planning and force structure of advanced deep-strike weapons, information weapons and battle management systems, and electronic warfare assets. During the transition period required for fielding a "lean and mean" fighting force, there was widespread acknowledgment of the need to foster interstate relations and mutually advantageous partnerships with foreign firms and scientific institutes conducive for technology transfer.⁸⁴ This mirrored a general orientation of foreign policy toward "the inclusion of the country in the most significant programs of scientific-technological cooperation," and

1993, p. 3. On the conventional level, the doctrine committed Russia to reducing the standing army by roughly 1 million soldiers to a total of 1.7 million.

⁸³See statements by both foreign minister Kozyrev, in *Interfax* 29 January 1992; and the Council of Foreign and Defense Policy, *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 19 August 1992, p. 3.

⁸⁴See for example summary the government's blueprint for military-technical cooperation specified by the new doctrine in *Kransaya zvezda*, 19 November 1993, p. 8; and in Andrei Kokoshin, "Protivorechiya formirovaniya i puti razvitiya voenno-tekhnicheskoi politiki Rossii," *Voennaya mysl'*, 2 (February 1993), pp. 2-9. See also discussions in P. S. Grachev, "Aktual'nye problemy stroitel'stva i podgotovki Vooruzhennykh Sil Rossii na sovremennom etape," *ibid.* 6 (June 1993), pp. 2-11; and Sergei Rogov, "Novaya voennaya doktrina Rossii," *SShA: Ekonomika, Politika, Ideologiya*, 4 (April 1994), pp. 3-10.

strengthening ties with "economically powerful and technologically developed Western nations" as the means for achieving the "top priority tasks of national scientific-technological revival."⁸⁵

Conclusion: Strategic Direction versus Excessive Reaction

The purpose of the foregoing discussion was to demonstrate that international pressures do indeed matter for the shaping of a state's grand strategy. As suggested by the respective leadership consensus that coalesced in the Brezhnev, Gorbachev, and Yeltsin regimes, basic strategic imperatives emanating from the balance of foreign threats and opportunities embedded in a security environment set the parameters for national security decision-making. Overarching incentives for engaging in international accommodation or competition translated directly into leadership calculations surrounding policy choices for war or peace. Under Brezhnev, general agreement among elites for a cooperative-competitive grand strategy galvanized in response to the emergence of strategic parity at a time when the national economy was growing at impressive rates. In contrast, the overwhelming endorsement for cooperative engagement by elites during the Gorbachev and early Yeltsin periods were consistent with the security rendered by the reality of MAD and the rising costs of political and military competition precipitated by sharp down-turns in the domestic economy and the growing technological gaps with erstwhile rival states. Thus, on the face of it, these cases suggest that realism appears to be on firm ground in reducing the basic orientations of a state's grand strategy to irresistible international pressures.

⁸⁵"Kontsepsiya Vnyeshney Politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii, 25 yanvarya 1993 g."

Such a narrow focus on the basic motivational force of the security environment, however, does not explain the specific choice among a range of policy options available to a state committed to a particular strategic orientation. As discussed in Chapter 1, statesmen have a range of options at their discretion for arranging foreign commitments and national capabilities that render basic notions of cooperation or competition hollow in a strategic context. In the aforementioned Soviet and Russian cases, diverse opinions vied for ascendancy within the objectively defined boundaries for grand strategy that bore directly on respective state capacities to adjust appropriately to the dictates of a prevailing strategic landscape. This is not inconsequential, given that the failure to respond commensurably to the imperatives of the security environment carried risks to the primary security interests of the state. It does not make sense from a realist perspective why states pursue strategic orientations to excess that succeed only in draining their military and economic strength or undermining their ability to prepare adequately for deterrence or defense. Therefore, in order to understand why leaders fail to halt in their efforts at international aggression or conciliation, with grave consequences for the relative standing of their state, we must look beyond realism. We must probe the realist black-box of national decision-making to uncover the domestic political imperatives that influence and frequently determine the intensity of state responses to the outside world.

CHAPTER 4

THE FORMAL SETTING: Political and Administrative Uncertainty in Soviet and Russian National Security Decision-Making

As suggested at the end of the previous chapter, domestic political consensus on the dictates of the security environment is not tantamount to universal endorsement of specific policies for international engagement. Though prevailing international security conditions generally favor particular cooperative or competitive strategic responses, they do not prescribe concrete programs of action. While politicians and bureaucrats might speak in unison of "objective" imperatives to exploit opportunities for international aggrandizement or reconciliation with foreign adversaries, they tend to remain internally divided over the appropriate means for achieving these ends. Given that outside circumstances are insufficient to explain the particular selection and combination of policy responses in a state's grand strategy, we must look to conditions linked to the domestic political milieu of decision-making for the driving force behind the operationalization of strategic aims. Moreover, that these policy conflicts can sabotage the implementation of generally agreed upon objectives and lead to strategic outcomes different from the declared intent, i.e. over-zealousness and under-achievement, compels investigation into the structures and processes of national security decision-making. In this chapter I will begin to refine and expand on this observation.

This chapter seeks to explicate the formal institutional arrangements that governed domestic political interaction between and among elites and functionaries in the Soviet and Russian national security policy-making regimes. In particular, I argue that the fundamental set of *de jure* rules for allocating policy-making power and establishing accountability remained uncertain in the Soviet political system *up through* the Gorbachev era. At the highest levels, despite the seedlings of constitutional order tied to the codification of new election rules and term limits for newly established executive and legislative offices, job position within the Soviet leadership was perennially divorced from the direct external control of either popular vote or legal procedure. The willingness on the part of elites to brandish Soviet constitutionalism in their political contests for accreting formal executive power undermined the legitimacy of nascent procedural mechanisms intended to secure job position. Moreover, while progress had been made towards sketching out somewhat more distinct policy domains among contending elites, the constitutional changes in the official machinery of government further confused national security policy-making, as new presidential and legislative organs were crudely super-imposed over venerable Party and state ruling bodies with ill-defined mandates and obscured lines of responsibility. The uncertainty over accountability was exacerbated at the administrative level, where oversight committees duplicated each other's work and were populated by the representatives of the very organizations they were tasked with monitoring. Moreover, staff members of the newly formed executive and parliamentary committees charged with generating policy options and overseeing the implementation of political directives for national security were at the mercy of arbitrary appointment and removal. Thus, despite the cacophony of calls for constitutionalism, Soviet formal decision-making was marred by uncertainty over job security and the delineation of legal authorities for devising and implementing foreign and defense policies.

The purpose of this chapter is to specify the level of institutional uncertainty that constrained political choice under the Gorbachev leadership, and to juxtapose it to the constitutional politics that informed exchange in both the mature Soviet system under Brezhnev and the nascent Russian transition to democracy under Yeltsin. The point here is not to map out the institutional structure of national security decision-making for each regime, but to compare the levels of uncertainty regarding job security and political accountability that informed respective elite competition and administrative behavior. To do this I explore formal rules stipulating membership, status, and function of elite and administrative organs officially designated to formulate and implement grand strategy under each regime. The utility of such an approach is based on the assertion that the emergence of a functioning policy-making process can be explained in good part by examining the political incentives generated by the formal institutional structure within which politicians and bureaucrats operate-- democratic, authoritarian, or otherwise. By focusing on structural features of decision-making, I will illuminate the source of distributional politics in the Soviet system that governed policy-making during the Brezhnev and Gorbachev periods alike, and that shaped the incentives for informal political exchange in the nascent Russian political system that will be discussed in the following chapter.

Institutional Uncertainty in the Mature Soviet System: Vulnerability of Incumbency and Bureaucratic *Podmena* Under Brezhnev

The hallmark of the formal structure of policy-making during the Brezhnev era, which represented the maturation of the post-Stalinist Soviet system, was the under-regulation of political and administrative behavior. This institutional structure was distinguished by the absence of legal protection of job tenure and the leakage of

responsibility across all layers of decision-making. Senior elites did not enjoy formal legal cover from the pursuit of self-interest among their peers or from the challenges presented by aspirants to power from lower ranks. Political competition was guided implicitly by the principle of *kto-kogo*, or who will destroy whom, rather than bounded by law and formal procedure, implying that struggles were zero sum and to the death of an actor's political career. As noted by one observer, "there was no institutionalized pattern of authority within it (the leadership), and no clear allocation of power among the different posts and structures in which the collective authority of the oligarchy was formally concentrated and distributed."¹ Similarly, functionaries were constantly vulnerable to arbitrary removal by superiors, and encumbered by overlapping official lines of authority ceded to parallel bureaucracies in party and state structures. The net result was an institutional structure that was formally devoid of legal constraints and procedures for delineating political power and accountability, thus marred by the acid of uncertainty.

At the crux of the decision-making uncertainty during the Brezhnev era was the absence of formal rules governing political incumbency. Despite doctrinal commitment to the norm of *kollektivnost' rukovodstva* (collectivity of leadership) that was codified in the standing formal rules of the CPSU at the time, there were no specific institutional arrangements concerning tenure or the removal from high office. Notwithstanding *pro forma* election by the CPSU Central Committee of the General Secretary (or *primus inter pares* among senior Party officials), leadership succession in the Soviet Union was determined primarily by political rather than procedural mechanisms. The confusion was exacerbated by the silence of the amended Soviet Constitution of 1977 on the issue of

¹T. H. Rigby, "The Soviet Political Executive, 1917-1986," in Archie Brown, ed., *Political Leadership in the Soviet Union* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), p. 37. For elaboration of the infamous Bolshevik notion of *kto-kogo*, see especially Nathan Leites, *Operational Code of the Politburo* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1951). Parenthesis added.

term limits for government personnel, and the oblique reference to the Party as the "leading and guiding force of Soviet society and the nucleus of its political system (Article 6)." The latter, in particular, obfuscated the implications of formal Party selection procedures for the tenure of officials in the state apparatus.² In this context, formal selection procedures did not confer legitimate authority on new leaders, compelling each to "work and fight for it *after* appointment to high office."³ According to Brezhnev, the concept of legally stipulated job security was simply alien to politicians in the Soviet system.

Leading posts in the Soviet Union (were) not reserved for anybody forever. The violation of discipline, the failure to draw conclusions from criticism, and the ratification of incorrect policies necessarily (lead) to demotion.⁴

²For the official text of the revised Soviet Constitution of 1977, see *Pravda*, 8 October 1977, as translated in the *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* (hereafter *CDSP*), 9 November 1977, pp. 1-13. For the text of the standing body of rules of the CPSU adopted in 1961, see Graeme Gill, *The Rules of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1988), pp. 204-227.

³T. H. Rigby, "A Conceptual Approach to Authority, Power and Policy in the Soviet Union," in T.H. Rigby, Archie Brown, and Peter Reddaway, eds., *Authority, Power and Policy in the USSR* (London: The Macmillan Press LTD, 1983), p. 16. For seminal works on the mature post-Stalinist Soviet system that speak to the inconclusiveness of the dynamics of political succession, see especially Myron Rush, *Political Succession in the USSR* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965); George W. Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev as Leaders: Building Authority in Soviet Politics* (London: George, Allen & Unwin, 1982); R. Hudson Mitchell, *Getting to the Top in the USSR: Cyclical Patterns in the Leadership Succession Process* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1990); Anthony D'Agostino, *Soviet Succession Struggles: Kremlinology and the Russian Question from Lenin to Gorbachev* (Boston: George Allen & Unwin, 1988); Seweryn Bialer, *Stalin's Successors: Leadership, Stability, and Change in the Soviet Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); and Raymond Taras, ed., *Leadership Change in Communist States* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989).

⁴*XXIVs'ezd kommunisticheskoi partii spovetskogo soyuza, stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow: Gospolitizdat, 1971), pp. 118-119. Parenthesis added. This uncertainty sparked a debate among Western analysts over the linkage between the lack of constitutionally prescribed leadership position and policy innovation in the Soviet system. For a sample of this exchange, see especially Valerie Bunce, "Elite Succession, Petrification, and Policy Innovation in Communist Systems: An Empirical Assessment," *Comparative Political Studies* 9:1 (April 1976), pp. 3-39; Philip G. Roeder, "Do New Soviet Leaders Really Make a Difference? Rethinking the 'Succession Connection,'" *The American Political Science Review* 79 (1985), pp. 958-977; and Archie Brown, "Leadership Succession and Policy Innovation," in Archie Brown and Michael Kaser, eds., *Soviet Policy for the 1980s* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1982), pp. 223-253.

Thus, the political uncertainty and insecurity in the formal succession process made the acquisition and maintenance of power and position critically dependent on the personal skill and guile of politicians rather than on constitutional recourse.

Uncertainty at the Top

Nowhere was the formal uncertainty in the mature Soviet system greater than with respect to the national security establishment. The function, membership, and structure of the two bodies at the pinnacle of Soviet grand strategy decision-making-- the Politburo and the Defense Council-- were legally inchoate and confused. This picture of a weakly institutionalized leadership derived as much from constitutional vagueness, as from the ill-defined dualism of Party and state structures.

At the zenith of Party policy-making was the Politburo. While supreme power resided in Party Congresses and the Central Committee, official Party rules vested daily decision-making authority in a smaller leadership body. This was codified in Article 39 of the 1966 amendment to the Party rules that instructed the Central Committee to elect a ruling Politburo "for leadership of the work of the CC between plena."⁵

Other than these few words stipulating its existence, the standing body of Party rules was silent on the operations of the Politburo. According to brief descriptions from several former members, there was no formal mandate governing its regular convening; though in practice, it met every Thursday behind closed doors, with sessions typically lasting only fifteen to twenty minutes. The agenda for each meeting was distributed the day before, and decisions were reached unanimously by an unspecified quorum. As

⁵Graeme Gill, *The Rules of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 216.

described by E. Ligachev, the sessions were short and formal, where Politburo members "accepted decisions that had been prepared in advance-- then adjourned."⁶

Similarly, there were no provisions for membership or tenure on the Politburo. With respect to the former, there was neither a set number of participants nor rules regulating the issue of *ex officio* seats. Earlier stipulations in the Party rules for a three-term limit were excised under Brezhnev, and replaced by the vague requirement for observing "the principles of systematic renewal of personnel and continuity of the leadership (Article 25)." Internally inconsistent, this formula presented ample room for evasion that made a mockery of any legal notion of job security. As a consequence, decisions regarding "departures" from the leadership were determined through informal and personal channels. P. Shelest, for example, in recounting episodes surrounding his own and several other members' eviction from the Politburo, said that demotions were presented as *fait accompli* to unsuspecting victims without recourse to due process or appeal, and were traditionally justified only by Brezhnev's proverbial declaration that "we have decided." The forced "resignation" of A. Shelepin in 1975, an early challenger to Brezhnev's authority in the ruling body, similarly spoke to the tenuous hold on position experienced by even the most senior members.⁷

⁶Ligachev's statement was originally cited in John Lowenhardt, James R. Ozinga, and Erik van Ree, *The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Politburo* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), pp. 117. While Ligachev, a Politburo member in the Gorbachev leadership, noted that sessions during the Brezhnev era generally lasted an hour, he nevertheless stressed their abbreviated nature and form. For additional discussion of the formal mechanics of Politburo meetings under Brezhnev, see especially Uri Ra'anan and Igor Lukes, eds., *Inside the Apparatus: Perspectives on the Soviet System from Former Functionaries* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1990), pp. 57-66; and Boris Yeltsin, *Against the Grain* (New York: Summit Books, 1990), p. 142.

⁷"So I Said to Brezhnev: You'll End Up in a Bad Way," *Moscow News* 37 (1989), p. 16; and John Lowenhardt, James R. Ozinga, and Erik van Ree, *The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Politburo*, p. 64. For an inside account of Shelepin's demise, see also Michael Voslensky, *Nomenklatura: The Soviet Ruling Class An Insider's Report* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1984), pp. 255-261. For similar discussions of the absence of formal protection for elite position in the leadership, see especially revelations by two of Brezhnev's former advisors on foreign policy in Andrey Aleksandrov-Agentov, "Semero iz politbiuro: zapiski pomoshchnika chetyrex gensekov," *Novoe vremya*, 23 (June 1993), pp. 38-44; and Georgiy Arbatov, "Iz hedavnego proshlogo," *Znamiya*, 10 (October 1990), pp. 197-227. 1990

The uncertainty linked to these glaring omissions in formal Party rules was rivaled only by the confusion wrought by constitutional shortcomings in the parallel state structure. In particular, there were oblique references to the establishment of a Defense Council as the highest governing body in the state hierarchy charged with formulating and coordinating the basic directions for Soviet national security. Shrouded in secrecy for years, its existence was formally confirmed with the unveiling of the revised 1977 Soviet Constitution that, in Article 121, explicitly empowered the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet (the continuously functioning legislative body) to "form the Defense Council of the USSR and confirm its composition."⁸ Aside from these few words, however, there was no elaboration of its legal mandate. Despite assertions in the open-source Soviet literature that the council's primary functions were to determine the fundamental political, military, and economic parameters of Soviet grand strategy, as well as to guide the organization of the military services, weapons acquisition, and force deployment, these functions of the Defense Council were never formally codified into Soviet law or constitutional procedure.⁹

In addition, there were no statutory regulations specifying the composition of the Defense Council. Neither the Soviet Constitution nor any other known official document made reference to *ex officio* membership. The official 1976 decree marking Brezhnev's promotion to chairmanship of the Defense Council, for instance, did not mention a connection between this new title and that of his position as General Secretary.¹⁰

⁸"Konstitutsiya (Osnovnoi Zakon) Soiuza Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik," *Pravda* 8 October 1977, p. 5.

⁹For succinct analyses of the official and unofficial functions of the Defense Council under Brezhnev, see especially Ellen Jones, *The Defense Council in Soviet Leadership*, Occasional Paper No. 188 (Washington, D.C.: Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, Woodrow Wilson International Centers for Scholars, 1984); and Hakan Karlsson, "The Defense Council of the USSR," *Cooperation and Conflict*, 23 (1988), pp. 69-83.

¹⁰*Pravda*, 9 May 1976, p. 1. Apparently in 1981 there was a legal move to couple the chairmanship of the Presidium with that of the head of the Defense Council. This not only added formal clarity to subsequent

Furthermore, the absence of such formal stipulations gave rise in practice to partial redundancy in membership of the Politburo and the Defense Council, as well as to *ad hoc* participation by non-Politburo members, such as senior military leaders and professional experts in defense-related activities. According to several insiders during the period, appointments to and tenure on the elite state body were considerably informal, determined partly by personal connections and partly by office. As a result, members lived in constant fear of being excluded from final decisions, and even worse, unexpected demotion.¹¹

Along a similar vein, there remained considerable ambiguity regarding the formal status and authority of the Defense Council. In particular, the legal boundaries between the Defense Council and the Politburo were never clarified. While they were constitutionally designated as separate state and party decision-making bodies, the precise relationship of super- and subordination was never formally spelled out. This fostered the *ad hoc* treatment of certain issues by each organ. Moreover, the procedural silence led to the Defense Council's irregular convening, reliance on informal, pre-meeting staff work for hammering out its agenda, and the drafting of decisions by small groups of "interested parties" among its membership. As summed up by Gorbachev, the Defense Council met "episodically and was merely formal" throughout the Brezhnev period.¹²

membership, but indirectly confirmed the previous absence of *ex officio* membership. See discussion in Ellen Jones, *The Defense Council in Soviet Leadership*, p. 35.

¹¹For a cursory review of alternative accounts, see especially Hakan Karlsson, "The Defense Council of the USSR," pp. 74-78; and Uri Ra'anana and Igor Lukes, eds., *Inside the Apparatus*, pp. 84-88.

¹²*Pervaya sessiya Verkhovnogo Soveta, Byulleten'*, 9 (1989), pp. 61-66.

Uncertainty at the Administrative Tier

The uncertainty at the apex of the traditional Soviet system was mirrored at the administrative level. Job security for Soviet bureaucrats depended on political patronage and personal skill rather than legal procedure. Moreover, the ambiguous division of labor and overlapping membership between agents in the Party and government hierarchies obscured the duties and accountability of functionaries. In fact, the constitutionally sanctioned "leading and guiding" role of the Party exacerbated the problem of bureaucratic *podmena* (supplanting of state organs), and abolished the formal semblance of operational boundaries between administrative counterparts in the dual systems that were tasked with generating policy options and implementing strategic directives.

At the crux of the administrative confusion in Soviet national security decision-making was the uncertainty surrounding the Secretariat of the Communist Party. Provisions in the 1961 body of Party rules stipulated only that a Secretariat be elected by the Central Committee to provide "leadership of current work, chiefly the selection of cadres and organization of the verification of the implementation of Party decisions."¹³ Other than these few words, however, there were no official statements that legally governed its composition and operations. Meetings, for example, were neither formally prescribed nor announced, despite unofficial disclosures that they took place approximately once a week from 1971 to 1981.¹⁴ As was the case with the Politburo, there was also no set number of members; though in fact, its composition stabilized between ten and eleven secretaries from 1971 to 1982. Adding to the confusion was the

¹³Graeme Gill, *The Rules of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 216.

¹⁴See tabulations in Jerry E. Hough, *How the Soviet Union is Governed* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979; p. 411; and Donald D. Barry and Carol Barner Barry, *Contemporary Soviet Politics: An Introduction* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1987), p. 115.

interlocking membership of at least six secretaries throughout the period, who simultaneously held titles to full or non-voting positions on the Politburo. According to Kiril Mazurov, a Politburo member from 1965-1978, this overlap significantly blurred the division of authority between the two bodies and made a farce out of the Secretariat's formal designation as the "executor" of the Politburo's will. In fact, he claimed that this redundancy made it conducive for those individuals with dual membership to "pre-cook" decisions before they came to official vote in the Politburo, leaving the other members no alternative but to concur unless they were willing to risk demotion or exclusion.¹⁵

The formal status and functions of the Secretariat were similarly ill-defined. On the basis of the vague statement in the Party rules, it was officially responsible for supervising the day-to-day processing and implementation of Politburo decisions. There were no stipulations, however, specifying its formal relationship to the Council of Ministers, its analog within the state apparatus for carrying out these tasks in the name of the Party leadership. The confusion was aggravated by the fact that the Party statute authorized the Secretariat to structure and oversee the vast Central Committee apparatus that consisted of approximately twenty-five departments with specialized functional responsibilities. The collective of the Secretariat appointed the heads of each department, while individual secretaries directed specific grouping of these departments. Beyond stipulating these basic tasks, there were no formal rules that demarcated the chain of command within the Central Committee apparatus. This was reflected by inconsistent procedures, as some secretaries in practice supervised other secretaries as well as departments, while some departments were directly headed by secretaries as others were not.¹⁶ Moreover, there was considerable procedural ambiguity surrounding the

¹⁵*Sovetskaya Rossiya*, 19 February 1989, p. 3. See also discussion of the redundant membership between these two Party bodies in T. H. Rigby, "The Soviet Political Executive, 1917-1986," pp. 41-49.

¹⁶In the first category, were Brezhnev, M. A. Suslov, A. P. Kirilenko, and D. F. Ustinov. Five of the eleven secretaries actually headed departments themselves in 1978.

relationship between Central Committee departments and the activities performed by the ministries in the parallel state structure.

The problem of overlapping jurisdiction between the Secretariat and the system of state ministries subordinate to the Council of Ministers and Supreme Soviet was especially acute in the realm of grand strategy decision-making. With respect to foreign policy, for instance, five Central Committee departments-- the International, Cadres Abroad, Socialist Countries, Propaganda, and Information departments-- were vested with formal authorities that duplicated to differing degrees those assigned by the Soviet Constitution to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the "chief administrative body of the state in the sphere of relations with foreign states."¹⁷ Vested with ambiguous mandates, the departments wielded considerable authority "to monitor and audit" that interfered with the business of the ministry. Personnel within the foreign ministry, for instance, had to be approved not only by the parliament, but screened by the Cadres Abroad department before taking their posts in foreign embassies. The instability in the balance of authority was most severe between the foreign ministry and the International Department that functioned as the agency formally charged with executing the Party's control and supervision of foreign policy. The boundary was blurred by conflicting mandates that, on the one hand, obliged the ministry to submit its recommendations to the Secretariat for approval, but on the other hand, authorized the foreign minister to report directly to the Politburo. The 1973 appointment to the Politburo of foreign minister A. Gromyko, while

¹⁷*Pravda*, 8 October 1977, p. 5. The problem of overlapping authority was similarly pervasive in the realm of resource allocation and weapons acquisitions decisionmaking, as the Defense Industry Department of the Central Committee duplicated many of the roles played by the State Committee for Defense Industry (VPK) and the Ministry of Defense that were formally subordinate to the Council of Ministers and charged with overseeing the military-industrial sector. This confusion was intensified with the appointment of the head of the department, D. F. Ustinov, as Minister of Defense in 1976. With this appointment, Ustinov formally occupied positions simultaneously in the Secretariat and the Politburo, as well as in the Council of Ministers apparatus.

in some ways facilitated coordination among the relevant bodies, for the most part only exacerbated the confusion via formal channels.¹⁸ According to several officials who worked in both organs at the time, this administrative overlap fostered turf wars that were that resonated throughout the senior political leadership. Thus in the context of this institutional vacuum, reconciliation between the ministries and their analogs in the Party apparat depended primarily on the personal rapport between a respective minister and the department head, as well as on the patronage of each to senior elites.¹⁹

Compounding the uncertainty related to confused administrative jurisdictions between Party and state organs, was the arbitrariness that marred formal job selection and tenure throughout the administered Soviet system. Membership on key Party and state bodies was determined via the *nomenklatura* system, which was composed of lists of both positions and individuals for which senior Party approval was required before a person holding one of those posts could be removed or a replacement could be named. *Nomenklatura* status, once conferred, provided a type of indefinite tenure to those who possessed it and upheld strict loyalty to the party. While this informal means of appointment in practice resulted in the "stability of cadres," it was completely arbitrary, leaving bureaucrats always susceptible to unexpected removal from office. As summed up by one former political insider, "stability in effect did not imply legal security of the

¹⁸Personal interviews with V. Zagladin, First Deputy of Head of the International Department, and K. Brutents, staff member of the International Department during the Brezhnev era, in Moscow, on 29 July 1992. See also Arkady N. Shevchenko, *Breaking With Moscow* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), pp. 187-188.

¹⁹For discussion of the personal relationship between foreign minister Gromyko and head of the International Department, B. Ponomarev, as well as each's ties to leaders at the elite level, see especially *Ibid.*, p. 189-191; Aleksander-Agentov, "Ministr inostrannykh del Andrey Gromyko," *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'* 7 (July 1991), pp. 114-125; and Uri Ra'anand Igor Lukes, *Inside the Apparatus*, pp. 161-167.

moment."²⁰ As a consequence, Soviet administrators throughout the bureaucracy were highly sensitive to any potential threat to their job positions.

Adding to this insecurity was the fact that individual social-economic welfare was closely intertwined with official titles. Each job within the Party and government hierarchy carried with it a set of private perks, such as access to special housing, medical care, consumer durables, chauffeured cars, and resort and travel privileges, that were bestowed upon the claimant of the position. In the shortage economy, these benefits were highly coveted and a critical source of private wealth and status. That official duties conferred upon an individual important benefits increased the stakes involved in securing a job and intensified the anxiety surrounding the absence of formal protection. According to Mazurov, an eventual victim of the arbitrariness linked to membership in the Politburo, this uncertainty fostered an incessant "fear of losing one's privileges if fired."²¹ Arbatov asserts that the same held true for functionaries throughout the Soviet system, who not only coveted the perks associated with a specific a job, but jealously protected both from possible encroachment. This, in particular, fostered an overriding sense of immediacy in maintaining job tenure at all cost, and a negative predisposition towards engaging in policy activities that could put continued receipt of these benefits at risk.²²

The upshot of these formal uncertainties at the elite and administrative levels of national security decision-making in the mature Soviet system was political parochialism. Specifically, there were deep seated fixations on protecting job position and skirting responsibility. Given the dearth of formal and clear-cut procedures regulating political

²⁰Personal interview with G. A. Arbatov, a foreign policy advisor to Brezhnev, in Moscow, on 13 August 1992. See also Michael Voslensky, *Nomenklatura*.

²¹*Sovetskaya Rossiya*, 19 February 1989, p. 3. See also discussion in Jan Winiecki, *Resistance to Change in the Soviet Economic System: A Property Rights Approach* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 1-28.

²²G. A. Arbatov, *Zatyanuvsheesya vyzdorovlenie (1953-1985 gg.): Sviditel'stvo sovremennika* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1991), pp. 258-264.

interaction, politicians and bureaucrats alike were left to their own devices in formulating and implementing policies. The potential pay-offs, political and pecuniary, for success were considerable, as there was no ceiling to the amount of prestige and privilege that could accrue to an ascending individual. The costs of error, however, were equally grave, as there was no proverbial legal net to brake a politician's or bureaucrat's fall from grace.

The Shift from Party to Presidential Uncertainty Under Gorbachev

As was the case during the Brezhnev era, Soviet policy-making was formally under-institutionalized throughout the Gorbachev period. In spite of the top leadership's unprecedented success at amending the 1977 Soviet Constitution and substituting legal procedures for the chronic arbitrariness in the Soviet political arena, culminating in the creation of "law-based" Presidential posts and democratic procedures for electing a new Soviet legislature, job security and the distribution of authority remained incomplete within elite and bureaucratic tiers of decision-making.²³ Party, government, legislative, and subsequently presidential bodies were formally organized along parallel lines with overlapping membership and functions that muddled the structure of policy-making and

²³The point here is not to deny that under Gorbachev constitutional transformation began to alter significantly the constituencies and incentives of politicians and bureaucrats. Rather, the purpose of this section is to demonstrate that despite the radical *de jure* changes to the constitutional framework of policy-making, the uncertainties concerning power and responsibility that traditionally plagued the Soviet system persisted. For a robust analysis of the dynamic process of endogenous constitutional reform under Gorbachev, see Philip Roeder, *Red Sunset* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 210-245. For general descriptions of the formal political and administrative organs created by the constitutional amendments initiated in 1988, see especially Cameron Ross, "Party-State Relations," in Eugene Huskey, ed., *Executive Power and Soviet Politics* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe Inc., 1992), pp. 49-82; and Eugene Huskey, "Executive-Legislative Relations," *Ibid.*, pp. 83-109; and Theodore Karasik and Brenda Horrigan, *Gorbachev's Presidential Council* P-7665 (Santa Monica: RAND, August 1990).

accountability. The formal imposition of term limits for newly established presidential and legislative offices failed to alleviate membership anxieties, as the power and legitimacy of these structures remained immature and subject to arbitrary revision. Moreover, the proliferation of constitutionally-mandated executive and legislative bodies compounded political uncertainty by creating additional decision-making layers that expanded the room for maneuver among competing elites and obfuscated the legal transfer of administrative authority. Membership on administrative bodies was fluid and subject to *ad hoc* change by discretion not by law. Similarly, the once sacrosanct tenets of collective leadership, *partinost'* (party spirit), and closed discussion enshrined in the Communist Party rules were formally reversed by 1990.²⁴ As characterized by a leading Western observer of Soviet legal reform, the oft amended constitution resembled a "patchwork quilt of ideas," where "Leninist and Stalinist substructures underlying Brezhnevist superstructures commingled with Gorbachevian reformist themes and even Western constitutional concepts."²⁵ This radical, yet hodgepodge, restructuring removed the vestiges of formal Party and state tutelage over Soviet policy-making established over decades of maturation of the Leninist system without replacing them with a coherent set of constitutionally empowered governing bodies. As a consequence, political uncertainty was perpetuated rather than alleviated, and was overtly manifest in the ongoing "war of decrees" between executive and legislative organs.²⁶

²⁴*Pravda*, 18 July 1990, p. 1.

²⁵Robert Sharlet, "The Path of Constitutional Reform in the USSR," in Robert T. Huber and Donald R. Kelly, eds., *Perestroika-Era Politics: The New Soviet Legislature and Gorbachev's Political Reforms* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1991), p. 19.

²⁶At the same time that this "war of decrees" was taking place at the center of the Soviet state apparatus, there was a similar battle being waged between the Federal government and emerging regional authorities. This study, with its exclusive focus on national security policy, focuses only the former, but acknowledges the importance of the latter for Soviet politics.

The Elite Tier of National Security Decision-Making

The persistence of formal political and administrative uncertainty in the Soviet system had a direct bearing on national security under Gorbachev. At the pinnacle of the formal Soviet national security policy-making apparatus remained contending executive organs linked to parallel Party and state hierarchies. Super-imposed over them, however, were the newly independent legislature and the office of the president. While the *de facto* balance of power between leading organs-- the Politburo, the Defense Council, and the presidency-- gradually shifted from the time of Gorbachev's accession to his final abdication, membership and responsibility remained subject to political discretion rather than to formal legal procedure. Thus, successive efforts to infuse legality into the restructuring of the highest echelon of policy-making resulted in more, rather than less political uncertainty in Soviet national security decision-making.

Throughout the Gorbachev period, the Politburo remained the executive organ at the apex of the Party's pyramid structure. In keeping with the past, members, including the General Secretary, were elected by the Central Committee either during plenary sessions or at the end of Party congresses. This was slightly revised by the amendments to the Party rules made at the July 1990 28th Party Congress which called for the General Secretary to be elected directly by the Party Congress, and for the Politburo to be composed of republican leaders, e.g., *ex officio* members not removable by the Central Committee. Before the Party officially surrendered its "leading role as guiding force in Soviet society" at the Congress, the Politburo continued to function under Soviet law as the senior collective body directly charged with deciding policies and confirming personnel appointments, including those related to the distribution of resources for

defense, formulation of strategy for international behavior, and responsibility for crisis decision-making.²⁷

Despite *de jure* changes to the formal operation of the Politburo, tenure and portfolios among the membership remained ambiguous. The 1986 amended version of the Party rules repeated *verbatim* the brief and oblique provision on the Politburo stipulated in the 1961 edition, broadly specifying its election by the Central Committee and its role in directing the work of the Party between plenary sessions.²⁸ Formal changes failed to specify the size of the Politburo or procedures for appointing a new leader. That there were 13 new additions and the removal of 12 full and candidate members between 1985-1990 speaks to the tenuous nature of job position within the highest executive organ of the Party throughout most of the Gorbachev period. As revealed by G. Aliev, one of the holdover members from the Brezhnev era who was subsequently displaced in 1987, it remained possible to be dropped from the Politburo at any time without explanation or legal recourse.²⁹ Moreover, before its formal conversion into an organ of republican Party leaders at the 28th Party Congress, Party rules did not specify policy domains for individual members. According to Ligachev, even the collective resolutions by the Politburo were subject to secret amendment by unwritten practice.³⁰ Furthermore, the *pro forma* adherence to a specific agenda during each session directed by the General Secretary countermanded the formal authority bestowed

²⁷ According to Ligachev and B. Yeltsin, the Politburo continued to meet every Thursday to discuss a set agenda of the most important issues confronting the Soviet leadership. See E. K. Ligachev, *Zagadka Gorbacheva* (Novosibirsk: Interbuk, 1992), pp. 89-90; and Boris N. Yeltson, *Against the Grain*, pp. 142-144.

²⁸ Graeme Gill, *The Rules of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 240.

²⁹ *Nashe delo* 4:7 (1990), p. 8. Aliev asserts that his eviction from the Politburo came unexpectedly and informally when Gorbachev summoned him and said without explanation: "You must go."

³⁰ E. K. Ligachev, *Zagadka Gorbacheva*, pp. 89-90.

upon individual Politburo members to initiate debate on select issues by their nominal administrative positions in state and Party structures³¹

Adding to the confusion was the retention of the Defense Council as a parallel "supreme executive organ" within the Soviet state apparatus. From 1985-1988, the Defense Council remained ostensibly attached to the Presidium of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet, which was constitutionally empowered to approve membership on the council. In the December 1988 amendments to the constitution, the chairmanship of the council was officially recognized and reserved for the newly created post of Chairman of the Supreme Soviet. Moreover, the reconstituted Supreme Soviet possessed the legal authority to confirm the composition of the council.³²

These attempts to legitimize the Defense Council as a constitutionally-based organization notwithstanding, tremendous uncertainty regarding the composition and operation of the council persisted. Despite Gorbachev's unprecedented candor in revealing partial membership of the council, there were never any provisions for enshrining particular portfolios or tenure in Soviet law. This was reflected in subsequent disclosures that *ex officio* membership of the commander-in-chiefs of the five military services continued to fluctuate throughout the period on an *ad hoc* basis.³³ Additionally, despite Gorbachev's determination to "revive the Defense Council decisively and put it in the role, at the level, which it should be playing," the exact legal authority of the council

³¹Boris N. Yeltsin, *Against the Grain* (New York: Summit Books, 1990), pp. 142-144.

³²See Article 121, Paragraph 5, and Article 113, Paragraph 3, of the amended text of the U.S.S.R. Constitution, in *Pravda*, 3 December 1988, p. 2.

³³During hearings in July 1989 at the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet to confirm Army General D. Yazov as defense minister, Gorbachev, in breaking with traditional Soviet practice, revealed that the Defense Council included: the chairman (himself), the defense minister, the chairman of the Council of Ministers, the foreign minister, and officials from the defense industry, and "some of the principal command staff" of the Armed Forces. See *Pervaya sessiya Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR, Biulleten'*, 9 (1989), pp. 61-66. For contradictory statements on the inclusion/exclusion of the five service chiefs of the armed forces, see "Vremya vybora," *Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil* 11 (1990), p. 27.

remained ambiguous.³⁴ This was suggested by the inconsistent statements concerning its administrative and executive functions uttered by some of its own members. For instance, the first deputy chief of the Defense Council, claimed that its job was "to implement supreme organizational, executive, and control functions on specific issues of the country's defense capacity and security and to coordinate the activities of the competent departments."³⁵ On different occasions, both he and others contradicted this assessment by asserting that the Defense Council was the locus of leadership decision-making concerning the allocation of resources for the acquisition of major weapon systems, formulation of Soviet arms control proposals, internal organization and deployment of the armed forces, and development of Soviet military doctrine and strategy.³⁶ According to one well informed source, the confusion over the council's legal mandate relegated decision-making of the body proper to *pro forma* activity on most national security matters.³⁷

In addition, Soviet law remained mute on the exact relationship between the Defense Council and other elite governing bodies, as well as with respect to the accountability of its membership. While the December 1988 provisions for Supreme Soviet approval of the council's membership alluded to congressional hearing procedures for the confirmation of candidates, the constitution remained silent with respect to procedures for nominating and removing individuals. As suggested by Gorbachev's appointment of Zaikov as the Defense Council's first deputy chief in November 1989, job

³⁴"Report on speech by M. Gorbachev at 3 July Session of U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet," as translated in *FBIS-SOV-89-127*, 5 July 1989, p. 49.

³⁵*Pravda* 4 July 1990, p. 3.

³⁶Harry Gelman, *The Rise and Fall of National Security Decisionmaking in the Former USSR* R-4200-A (Santa Monica: RAND, March 1992), pp. 16-19.

³⁷Personal interview with V. Kataev, chief staff member of the Defense Department of the Central Committee under L. Zaikov and O. Baklanov, in Moscow, on 8 October 1993.

position on the Council depended primarily on the discretion of the chairman rather than on legal procedure. Furthermore, the deleted reference to the Defense Council and the establishment of the Presidential Council in the March 1990 revised constitution cast a shadow of uncertainty around the body's relative executive status. While the Presidential Council was formally ceded authority to govern "issues of security and defense," there was no statement formally stripping the Defense Council of its previous authority. Confusion was exacerbated by its continued unofficial existence, as well as by Gorbachev's subsequent contradictory remarks referring first, to its supposed demise; second, to its re-subordination to the Presidential Council; and third, to its reconstitution under the auspices of the newly formed National Security Council in November 1990.³⁸

The formal uncertainty concerning Soviet national security decision-making dramatically intensified with the emergence of a new parliamentary structure. Constitutional revisions in 1988-89 officially imparted authority to the Congress to define the basic direction of foreign and defense policy. The opening session of the Congress of Peoples Deputies in 1989 marked the assertion of legislative prerogative in the conduct of Soviet security policy. The parliament's permanently functioning executive body, the Supreme Soviet, was assigned operational responsibility for the ratification of and withdrawal from treaties, the confirmation of responsible defense and foreign policy officials, the declaration of war, and the development of laws and budgets related to defense and security. Article 113/14 of the amended Soviet Constitution also granted the Supreme Soviet powers to "adopt decisions on the use of contingents of the armed forces of the USSR in the event of the need to fulfill international treaty obligations to maintain peace and security."³⁹ Furthermore, government ministers, and later the Soviet

³⁸Theodore Karasik, "The Defense Council & Soviet Presidency," *Perspective* (December 1990), pp. 2-3.

³⁹F.J.M. Feldbrugge, "The Constitution of the USSR," *Review of Socialist Law* 2 (1990), p. 200. The Soviet Constitution also empowered the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet to exercise these authorities in periods between sessions of the larger body.

President, were legally obliged to report to the parliament on foreign and defense issues and to justify their particular policies. Parliamentary deputies had the legal authority to direct *zaprośy* (formal queries) to executive agencies at their own discretion that required immediate responses and allowed for detailed legislative probing into the activity of government agencies. In sum, the reconstructed Soviet legislature possessed the formal rights to initiate national security policy and question the direction of policy advocated by the government.⁴⁰

While the constitutional resurgence of the parliament represented a formidable challenge to traditional party rule, it affirmed the formal ambiguity within the elite tier of policy-making. First, with the continued operation of the Defense Council, the Congress of Peoples Deputies ostensibly became a redundant "supreme organ" of state power of the U.S.S.R.. The relationship between these two governing bodies was never formally specified. Second, although vested with the authority to call for hearings on topical foreign and defense policy issues, the parliament did not possess constitutional recourse to enforce its challenges to the government's security policy. The Supreme Soviet could initiate debate and criticize the principal direction of policies but lacked the legal means to force change in the government's policies. As demonstrated by the foreign ministry's finesse in asserting the president's sole prerogative to authorize military action during the Persian Gulf war, it was possible to exploit ambiguity in the constitution to bypass active opposition within the Congress.⁴¹

⁴⁰The parliament vividly exerted its newfound powers to challenge government policy during hearings surrounding the ratification of the treaties concerning Soviet troop withdrawal from Germany and the Soviet abstention from combat activity during the Persian Gulf War. In both instances, the Supreme Soviet deliberated at length, providing for an acrimonious exchange between opposing groups, before drafting resolutions that approved the executive decision.

⁴¹ In this case, foreign ministry officials pointed to the president's role as "guarantor of the rights and freedoms of Soviet citizens," as legal justification for the chief executive's neglect of parliamentary approval for the deployment of military forces to protect Soviet citizens caught in harm's way during the crisis. For discussion of the constitutional ambiguity surrounding the debate between the executive and

In March 1990, the office of the president was formally added to the Soviet political structure, legally superseding the chairmen of the Supreme Soviet and Council of Ministers as the supreme executive of the state. As the constitutionally-designated head of state, the president was in charge of directing and coordinating the activities of the government and legislative organs. In the area of national security, the President possessed the formal mandate to represent the U.S.S.R. in the international arena, receive foreign dignitaries, appoint and recall Soviet diplomats, and direct Soviet foreign policy. The president was also the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, vested with the legal powers both to declare war and govern the conduct of the military.⁴²

In grafting the new office of the presidency onto traditional party and government executive organs, the Soviet leadership created even more confusion regarding tenure and responsibility at the highest political level. In the process of gaining title to the presidency, Gorbachev set an ominous precedent by exempting himself from the constitutional provision for the president to be elected directly by popular vote with universal suffrage. This not only muddled the accountability of the president to the Soviet people, but undermined confidence in the sanctity of the constitutionally specified five year term limit.⁴³ Moreover, the president, once in office, was not formally accountable to any other official organ. The Congress of Peoples Deputies could remove the president-- by a vote of no less than two-thirds of its total membership-- but only if it

legislative branches over the use of Soviet military force during the Persian Gulf War, see Suzanne Crow, "Legislative Considerations and the Gulf Crisis," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Weekly Report* 2:5 (14 December 1990), pp. 1-3.

⁴²*Izvestia*, 16 March 1990, pp. 1-3. See also constitutional amendments to the office of the presidency in *Pravda* 27 December 1990, p. 2. For a full description of the powers of the Soviet presidency, see B.M. Lazarev, "The President of the U.S.S.R.," *Soviet Law and Government* 30:1 (Summer 1991), pp. 7-26; and Ger P. van den Berg, "Executive Power and the Concept of *Pravovoe Gosudarstvo*," in Donald D. Barry, ed., *Toward the "Rule of Law" in Russia? Political and Legal Reform in the Transition Period* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1992), pp. 139-162.

⁴³It is important to remember that Gorbachev's political opponents used a sound legal basis to manipulate formal procedures to justify their failed coup attempt.

could be demonstrated that the president violated the constitution. On the other hand, the constitution granted the president powers to dissolve the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet under certain circumstances, as well as to initiate and veto its legislation. In addition, the president retained the right to appoint and remove the Chairman of the Council of Ministers and other personnel within the government, with consent from the parliament. Finally, the September 1990 constitutional revisions provided the president explicit powers to issue edicts of a normative character in a number of fields, including national security. This step, while formally conferring enormous executive powers upon the presidency, did not specify the precedence of presidential decrees over parliamentary edicts, and demonstrated that the Supreme Soviet retained the authority to alter constitutional relations between the highest agencies of power, thus potentially reducing the potency of the presidency. In the end, the office of the president was not placed within a formal context of separation of powers, but rather functioned paradoxically as both a hegemonic executive authority, as exemplified by the fusion of powers to declare and conduct war, and a subordinated prime minister with rule making prerogatives subject to approval by the parliament.

The Administrative Level of National Security Decision-Making

As was the case within the elite tier, the Soviet national security bureaucracy was in almost complete flux throughout the Gorbachev period. Extensive restructuring introduced greater uncertainty concerning the accountability of the different bureaucratic organs charged with administering Soviet national security policies. The reorganization of traditional offices and the formation of new ones increased the duplication of authority among the different party, legislative, and government bureaucracies. In doing so, these

reforms exacerbated the ambiguity regarding functional boundaries, access to information and expertise, and procedures for resolving disputes among administrative bodies formally tasked with framing the issues and running the day-to-day affairs in the national security sector.

Successive changes to the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the CPSU marked attempts to differentiate roles between Party and state bureaucracies that ultimately backfired, worsening problems of *podmena* and control of Party organs involved in overseeing Soviet national security. As was the case under Brezhnev, the Secretariat traditionally supervised the ongoing affairs of Soviet society, including the execution of duties by government ministries. As a rule, the International Department and Defense Industry Department that were subordinate to the Secretariat duplicated the work performed by the respective ministries in the state apparatus. The overlapping nature of these duties was reaffirmed in the 1986 version of the Party rules, that empowered the Secretariat to "direct current work, chiefly the selection of cadres and organization of the verification of implementation [of decisions related to] current questions of Party life."⁴⁴ Since issues of "Party life" traditionally encompassed all aspects of the functioning of the Soviet state, this statement was tantamount to the codification of the Party's mandate to interfere in the daily operations of the ministries rather than the erection of a barrier between the different administrative hierarchies. In the area of foreign policy, the International Department retained its redundant jurisdiction with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to oversee front organizations and maintain liaison with non-ruling Communist and other revolutionary groups in the Third World. Similarly, the Defense Industry Department continued to provide the Party with oversight of weapons R&D and procurement, possessing the formal authority to duplicate much of

⁴⁴Graeme Gill, *The Rules of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 240.

the work performed by the State Military Industrial Commission (VPK) in supervising the defense industry ministries and state commissions.

The reorganization of the Secretariat and its apparatus in September 1988 increased the confusion regarding the division of labor between the Central Committee and the government. While the number of departments in the Party's shadow administration was reduced from 20 to 9, with the remainder re-subordinated to six new Central Committee commissions that replaced the Secretariat, Party organs continued to intrude within the government's domain on national security issues. For example, the exact powers and supervisory functions of the International Affairs Commission were never specified, as it lacked an official agenda or schedule for convening.⁴⁵ The International Department, which was converted into a working organ for the International Affairs Commission, seemed to have undergone an ambiguous transformation. According to its chief, V. Falin, it no longer had the authority to conduct foreign policy and was subordinate to the new commissions created in the Supreme Soviet.⁴⁶ Despite this reference to its diminished status, the International Department retained the formal authority to guide day-by-day relations with front organizations and draft reports for higher Party organs.⁴⁷ The absorption of the Cadres Abroad Department and the

⁴⁵According to the chairman of the International Affairs Commission, A. Yakovlev, the committee functioned ostensibly as a "stimulator and initiator of broad and responsible discussion in the Party and the country of the most important issues connected with interaction with the outside world." See *FBIS-SOV*, 3 July 1990. For information on the formal work of the six Central Committee Commissions that had been established at the September 1988 plenum, see *Izvestiya TsK KPSS*, 9 (1990), pp. 19-25; and *Pravda* 29 November 1988, pp. 1-2. The Secretariat underwent an additional round of restructuring at the October 1990 Central Committee plenum, resulting in the creation of 11 new commissions and 13 new departments. While the Party formed a new Military Policy Commission, its mandate remained ill-defined, tasked with making "recommendations" in the area of defense. *Pravda*, October 1990, p. 1.

⁴⁶*Argumenty i fakty* 9 (4-10 March 1989), pp. 4-5; and *Argumenty i fakti* (September 1989), p. 4. See also discussion in Mark Kramer, "The Role of the CPSU International Department in Soviet Foreign Relations and National Security Policy," *Soviet Studies* 42:3 (July 1990), pp. 436-438.

⁴⁷This was confirmed in personal interviews with V. Zagladin and K. Brutents. Brutents claims that, as first deputy chief of the International Department, he continued to play a very active role as an official liaison to international socialist movements and to the leaderships of former East European allies.

Department for Liaison with Socialist and Workers Parties expanded the jurisdiction of the International Department to include control over the selection of diplomats and oversight of relations with Communist countries. The latter function in particular intensified the "turf war" between the International Department and the foreign ministry, as was reflected in the acrimonious dispute over the nature of the security threat and attendant policy guidelines provoked by the altered political landscape in East-Central Europe.⁴⁸ Additionally, the status of the new Defense Department remained in limbo, as it was not formally attached to a Central Committee commission and remained independent of both the Defense Council and the VPK. Gorbachev's subsequent comments pertaining to its eventual dissolution added further ambiguity to its relative standing.⁴⁹ In general, the restructuring of the central Party apparatus constituted more of a cosmetic change than a formal cessation of the co-mingling of Party and state bureaucracies.

The contradictions between dicta at the 28th Party Congress in 1990 and the subsequent reticence to "depoliticize" the Party evinced a similar pattern of ambiguity concerning the formal responsibility of Party administrative organs. At the 28th Party Congress, Article 6, which granted the Communist Party its formal monopoly of political power, was repealed. In an overt measure to separate central Party and state organs, Party rules were also amended to restrict the province of the Secretariat solely to intra-Party affairs. There was explicit reference to its primary duty of servicing the Politburo with

⁴⁸ For contradictory analyses and policy prescriptions concerning the Soviet posture towards re-building relations with former allies in Eastern Europe, presented by the International Department and the Foreign Ministry, respectively, see *Izvestiya TsK KPSS* 3 (1991), pp. 12-17; and "Vneshnepoliticheskaya i diplomaticheskaya deyatel'nost' SSSR," *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'* 3 (1991), pp. 11-22, 40-54, 128-135. This clash centered around the International Department's advocacy of re-establishing Soviet control in the region, and the foreign ministry's view of the inherent geostrategic pressures that gravitate the countries of the region towards the Soviet Union, and the utility of harmonizing relations with former allies as a springboard for cementing ties with the West.

⁴⁹ *Izvestiia TsK KPSS* 1 (1989), pp. 84-85.

draft resolutions and overseeing local-level Party cells. Moreover, new Party rules and resolutions pertaining to the Party's military policy called for the re-subordination of the Main Political Administration of the of the Soviet Army and Navy (the Central Committee's administrative arm of the military command) to the government, and its cessation of Party administrative work in the armed forces. These formal gestures towards de-coupling, notwithstanding, the Party's administrative oversight authority remained ill-defined. In a paeon to the Party's continued vanguard position in the Soviet polity, the Congress resolved to perpetuate and expand the organization of party cells at all levels of the government bureaucracy.⁵⁰ Following the Congress, Gorbachev explicitly condoned the Party's continued intrusion within the realm of defense.

We are against the de-Partyization of the Army and believe that the codification in the statutes of the basic principles of Party work in the Army and Navy collectives is indispensable. In taking this position we proceed from the premise that from now on Party work in the Armed Forces will be conducted only by primary party organizations and elected party agencies.⁵¹

That primary party organizations continued to operate within the armed forces, and remained staffed predominantly by personnel steeped in traditional Party culture, ensured lingering Party oversight within the defense establishment and fostered the continued diffusion of responsibility among Party and state administrative organs.

There was also confusion surrounding the legitimate activity of the joint parliamentary committees charged with supervising the operations of state organs in the area of foreign and defense policy. Article 120 of the Soviet Constitution provided the legal footing for the Supreme Soviet to establish two standing committees with national security portfolios-- the International Affairs Committee and the Committee for Defense

⁵⁰*Pravda*, 3 July 1990, pp. 1-3.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 13 July 1990, p. 1-3.

and State Security. While there were oblique references to responsibilities for conducting hearings in respective policy domains, neither organ possessed a clear agenda or the stable infrastructure required to sustain a coherent role in the legislative process. First, there were no official guidelines for selecting committee members. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet was formally responsible for appointing committee members and directing their agendas but did so arbitrarily in the absence of regularized rules.⁵² According to one critic, in the absence of codified procedures, the Defense and Security Committee became "staffed to a considerable degree by representatives of the leadership of the military and the defense industry," that transformed it into a lobby for the corporate interests of the very bodies that it was tasked with overseeing.⁵³ Second, while the Soviet Constitution called for the annual rotation of one-fifth of committee personnel, it did not specify term limits for appointments or the mechanisms for choosing which individuals would circulate in a given period. This exacerbated the already tenuous commitment to parliamentary duty by deputies hired on a part-time basis, and frustrated attempts to evoke a professionalism among committee members who were cognizant of the potential for unexpected removal lurking in the shadows.

Additionally, committee funding and staffs were dependent mostly on outside sources. Committee budgets were controlled by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, as well as by the counterpart ministries in the government structure that the committees were formally charged with overseeing. Moreover, the committees were serviced by

⁵²According to unofficial statements, selection was based informally on individual preferences and professional qualifications. See Report of the Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives, "The New Soviet Legislature: Committee on Defense and State Security," (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 11 April 1990). For the committee agenda, see *Izvestiya* 21 November 1990, p 2.

⁵³See Arbatov's critique in *Ogonek*, January 1990, p. 4. For discussion of the composition of the committee, which confirms the defense industrial backgrounds of the majority of its members, see Mikhail Tsytkin, "The Committee for Defense and State Security of the USSR Supreme Soviet," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Weekly Report* 11 May 1990, pp. 8-11.

small subcommittees that lacked the resources to provide comprehensive support. In the case of the Defense and Security Committee, there were three subcommittees that were staffed by only seven to ten individuals. Deprived of formal access to "sensitive" data on military-technical issues, these staff members were directly dependent on the information and analyses provided by the defense ministry and representatives of defense industry.⁵⁴ Individual deputies also lacked their own personal staffs. Similarly, members of the International Affairs Committee frequently complained that the press was their only source of information, and that due to insufficient support they often received the texts of documents that they were supposed to approve only hours before debate was scheduled to begin.⁵⁵

At the crux of the administrative uncertainty surrounding national security policy-making from 1987-1991 was reform of the government apparatus. While the amended Soviet Constitution preserved its status as "the highest executive and administrative organ" of the USSR, changes to the organizational structure of the USSR Council of Ministers were unsurpassed by those in any other formal arm of the Soviet administered system. By the end of 1989, there was almost a 100 percent turnover in membership from the time of Gorbachev's ascension in March 1985. Between 1984 and February 1989, fifteen ministries and departments were officially eliminated. This became a source of confusion, especially in the defense industrial sector, as personnel from abolished ministries were absorbed by other ministries and inter-branch state committees, and displaced ministers were either transferred to another ministry or promoted to the Presidium of the Council of Ministers. In the case of the former, they functioned as co-

⁵⁴Robert T. Huber, "Soviet Defense and Foreign Policy and the Supreme Soviet," in Robert T. Huber and Donald R. Kelly, eds., *Perestroika-Era Politics: The New Soviet Legislature and Gorbachev's Political Reforms* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1991), pp. 221-227.

⁵⁵*Sovetskaya Rossiya*, 4 October 1990, p. 3.

ministers within the new ministry; with respect to the latter, they possessed authority to oversee traditional work without holding a formal portfolio.⁵⁶

Situated at the nexus of Party reforms and the newly reconstituted legislature, the legal authority vested in the Council of Ministers fluctuated tremendously. With the emasculation of the Secretariat of the Central Committee, membership and functions swelled, as many former staffs of Central Committee departments were transferred to parallel ministries in the government. The ambiguity surrounding the new role of the commissions of the Central Committee added further confusion regarding the Council's authority to act as an "executive organ." Additionally, the new legislative bodies, the Congress of Peoples Deputies and the Supreme Soviet, began to assume responsibilities for supervision of the ministries and to exercise their constitutional authority for approving the government. Much to the chagrin of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, N. Ryzhkov, the deputies exerted their new prerogative by rejecting nine of his nominees for the Council in the summer of 1989. This initiative notwithstanding, the formal lines of super- and subordination remained unclear. As exemplified during the confirmation hearings for the Defense Minister, D. Yazov, modifications in the election rules allowed for candidates to be elected without obtaining a simple majority in the Supreme Soviet, thus obfuscating the legal distribution of authority between the parliament and the ministerial apparatus.⁵⁷ By the end of 1990, Ryzhkov lamented that the "condition of uncertainty" among the highest administrative organs at the center

⁵⁶Dawn Mann, "Gorbachev's Personnel Policy: The U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Weekly Report* 17 November 1989, pp. 8-13.

⁵⁷The rule change permitted the defense minister to be confirmed, despite receiving only 256 votes, by the majority of delegates present for the vote, rather than by receiving an absolute majority of the entire Supreme Soviet (542).

created a situation where "control had been totally lost at all levels of the state structure," resulting in "complete or partial deterioration of all systems of administration."⁵⁸

This state of formal uncertainty especially marred government oversight of military industrial affairs. The VPK, chaired by a first deputy prime minister, remained officially in charge of determining military R&D priorities, ensuring preferential supply of resources to defense enterprises, adjudicating disputes between and among defense industry ministries and the ministry of defense, and coordinating production and input orders within the military industrial sector with state planning and supply committees. Beginning in 1988, the VPK was also tasked with developing and administering the state's defense conversion program. According to former members, the precise mandate of the VPK was never clarified. Responsibility for defense industrial coordination ranged from "simply preparing paperwork" for weapons requirements and the defense budget, to technical guidance in the design and production of armaments. Adding to the confusion, the VPK duplicated many of the duties formally assigned to the Central Committee Defense Department. Moreover, despite the significance and breadth of its responsibilities, it retained only a small staff of 300 specialists.⁵⁹

The state of administrative confusion within the government apparatus increased with successive rounds of radical restructuring that were directed at creating a stronger chief executive beginning in February 1990. In order to facilitate the smooth functioning of the president, the revised Soviet constitution empowered the chief executive to create

⁵⁸*Pravda*, 21 July 1989, pp. 1, 4.

⁵⁹Personal interview with V. Kataev. According to one former-VPK official, the VPK possessed the formal jurisdiction to intervene in the weapons design process but lacked the expertise to do so. In reality, VPK specialists were only qualified to monitor the plan fulfillment, and not equipped to make substantive technical revisions to supply and production orders. Add to the confusion a parallel organ within the Presidium of the Council of Ministers was also formally tasked with coordinating the different defense industrial committees. According to a former member of this body, it was a hollow shell that, in practice, only "prepared documentation and serviced the VPK." Personal interview with E. Glubakov, in Moscow, on 12 December 1994.

a Presidential Council as an advisory body. The council, however, had no policy-making authority and was tasked with presenting policy alternatives on important foreign and defense issues to the president. As stated in Article 127/5, the Presidential Council was charged with "devising ways to achieve the basic goals of domestic and foreign policy" and "ensuring the country's national security."⁶⁰ This constituted a direct assault on the formal provinces of the Politburo and the Defense Council, both of which continued to convene and function in the aftermath of the formation of the office of the presidency despite repeated claims of their eventual demise.⁶¹

The centerpiece of the November 1990 round of executive branch reorganization was the formation of the Cabinet of Ministers that was designed to replace the long standing Council of Ministers. Among the responsibilities delegated to the Cabinet were the administration of defense industry, implementation of Soviet foreign policy, and the maintenance of defense and security. The new Cabinet reported directly to the president (though was accountable simultaneously to the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet), with term limits directly linked to that of the president. In this regard, job security rested squarely with the president, who was authorized by the revised Soviet constitution to hire and fire heads of ministries and state committees at his own discretion. As an official appendage of the executive branch, it had an ill-defined mandate vis-a-vis the office of the president. According to the V. Pavlov, the former Prime Minister and first head of the Cabinet, the officially specified decree-making authority of the Cabinet was contradicted by the rights of the president. He complained that this resulted specifically in the Prime Minister being

⁶⁰*Izvestiya*, 13 May 1990, p. 2.

⁶¹Despite the claims by many officials of the eventual transfer of authority from the senior party and state organs to the presidency, the extensive overlap in the formal legal status of these elite governing bodies persisted until the final collapse of the Soviet polity. For accounts of the legitimate, but not de jure, shift in authority among these bodies, see especially discussion in Alexandr Rahr, "From Politburo to Presidential Council," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Weekly Report* 1 June 1990, pp. 1-4.

held responsible for the performance of the government bureaucracy, while being deprived of the authority to supervise the activities of the ministries.⁶²

The abolition of the Presidential Council in 1990 wrought further uncertainty among executive appendages charged with overseeing Soviet national security. In its place was created the USSR Security Council in November 1990 which was constitutionally empowered "to draft recommendations to implement all-Union policy for the country's defense "that broadly included issues related to foreign, military, economic, social, and nationalities policies. The council was made directly accountable to the president. Except for these general statements, there were no provisions officially outlining its detailed functions. In a *post mortem* assessment, V. Bakatin, former member of the Security Council, asserted that the body never left the embryonic stage. Its formal mandate was never specified and its staff was apparently non-existent.⁶³ Moreover, the Security Council's relationship to the Defense Council remained ambiguous, as the boundaries of these two organs overlapped.⁶⁴ Utterly exasperated by the uncertainty within the national security edifice, Bakatin sardonically averred:

And now the Security Council... . Maybe it would have been better first to think out the statute on it and its relations with all other structures and only then adopt a decision (on its formation).⁶⁵

⁶²*Pravda* 5 March 1991, pp. 1-2.

⁶³Comment made to author by V. Bakatin, head of Committee for State Security (KGB), in Munich, on 24 October 1993.

⁶⁴ Apparently, the Defense Council reported directly to the president, calling into question the relative stature of both organs. Personal interview with K. Brutents.

⁶⁵*Izvestiya*, 15 May 1991, p. 3

Russia's Post-Communist Transition and the Legacy of Institutional Uncertainty

By December 1991 the Soviet state ceased to exist. This left to its Russian successor the daunting tasks of consolidating democracy, establishing a rule of law, and creating *ex nihilo* an institutional structure of governance backed by a division of responsibilities and effective administrative capacity. Even before it was officially defunct, in the wake of the aborted August 1991 putsch staged against the Gorbachev leadership, B. Yeltsin, the popularly elected president of Russia, assumed this mantle with the expressed commitment to placing the transition to and consolidation of democracy on a constitutional footing. Intent on distancing itself from the *ancien regime*, the new leadership banned the CPSU, subordinated several Soviet institutions to the authority of the Russian state, and abolished others that rivaled existing Russian bodies, including the Soviet presidency and the Soviet Congress of Peoples Deputies. Moreover, it accelerated preparation of a new constitution poised to codify Russia's sovereignty, a new delineation of powers between and among constitutive federal and regional elements, and enhanced civil liberties. The pivotal objective of this process of state-building was to set up a new constitutionally mandated polity that was both accountable to the Russian people, and capable of effective governance.⁶⁶

⁶⁶While debate over the precise division of authority among constitutive state and government elements raged on, embodied in successive draft constitutions submitted during the initial years of Russian statehood, there was fundamental agreement among the framers for creating a federal structure, headed by a popularly elected president and bicameral legislature that governed according to a rule of law interpreted and enforced by an independent judicial authority. See especially the amendments to the RSFSR constitution in June 1991, in *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, 7 June 1991, pp. 1, 3; and the texts of successive draft Russian constitutions in *Federatsiya*, 1 April 1992; and *Argumenty i fakti*, 12 March 1992. For the codified commitment to judicial reform and the establishment of the rule of law, in both the non-arbitrariness and state subordination senses of the term, see especially *Sovetskaya yustitsiya*, 21-22 November 1991, p. 2; and summary discussion in Carla Thorson, "Russia," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Weekly Report* 1:27 (3 July 1992), pp. 41-49.

Despite these lofty ambitions, the constitutionalism that emerged was marred by uncertainty. The great leap towards democracy, while revolutionary in its assault on the Soviet institutional edifice, only exacerbated the confusion regarding the formal delineation of political and administrative authority. During the first stage of transition, lasting from June 1991 to September 1993, the ambiguity was such that the polity fluctuated between *de jure* authoritarianism and a stalemated "war of decrees" among the different branches of government.⁶⁷ The absence of civil procedure at the highest political level culminated in the violent dissolution of the parliament in October 1993. With the imposition of a new constitution and tacit commitment to "civic accord," a new era dawned in which the Russian government was subsequently plagued by near-complete administrative disarray. Throughout 1994, inchoate and overlapping mandates undermined any formal semblance of administrative oversight and exchange among rival executive organs. Nowhere in the embryonic Russian democracy was this formal institutional uncertainty greater than with respect to the new national security decision-making apparatus.

The Executive-Legislative Impasse, June 1991-July 1993

Immediately following the amendments to the R.S.F.S.R. Constitution and Yeltsin's subsequent victory in the presidential elections in June 1991, a bone of fierce contention emerged at the pinnacle of the newly reconstituted Russian state over executive responsibility for grand strategy decision-making. The constitutional

⁶⁷As was the case during the latter stage of the Soviet era, a similar "war of decrees" was being waged by the central Russian government and newly reconstituted regional governments. Focus here, once again, is on the uncertainty at the federal level.

enactment of term limits for the Russian presidency and Supreme Soviet (the standing parliament) notwithstanding, there remained the conspicuous absence of a clear legal statement on the precise jurisdiction of each body regarding the formulation of Russian foreign and security policies. As a result, an intense power struggle emerged between the president and legislature that undermined the relative stature and formal checks on the authority of each branch of government.

On the one hand, proponents of parliamentary supremacy trumpeted Article 104 of the standing constitution that proclaimed that the "Russian Federation's home and foreign policy shall be defined exclusively by the Congress of Peoples Deputies ." This included sole jurisdiction over the determination of Russian foreign policy, ratification and rejection of international treaties requiring constitutional changes, and rescission of presidential decrees and directives on security matters. In addition, the 1991 constitutional amendments charged the Supreme Soviet with ratifying treaties that did not require constitutional changes, and planning the basic measures of the state's defense. Moreover, the parliament was formally empowered to evaluate Russian foreign and security policy, declare war when Russia itself was not directly attacked, and confirm the Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs, as well as the Secretary of the Security Council. These powers were subsequently reinforced by the May 1992 Law on Security and the ensuing Law on Defense that conferred upon the Supreme Soviet exclusive rights to define the vital interests and military policy of the Russian state.⁶⁸

Similarly, the Russian Constitution vested extensive administrative control for grand strategy decision-making in the structure and operating rules of the Supreme

⁶⁸For the constitutional amendments, see *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, 7 June 1991, p. 3. For the "Law on Security," see *Rossiskaya gazeta*, 6 May 1992, p. 5. For the "Law of the Russian Federation on Defense," see *Rossiskaya gazeta*, 9 October 1992, pp. 4-5. For discussion of the constitutional supremacy of the parliament on foreign and security matters, see especially Yevgeny Kozhokin, "The Russian Parliament and Foreign Policy," *International Affairs*, 9 (1992), pp. 32-43.

Soviet. First and foremost, the parliament possessed the formal authority to issue resolutions on the basic contours of Russian foreign and security policies. This included rights to decide the "constitutionality" of foreign policy acts, and to "consult" with foreign dignitaries on concrete issues of Russian security. Similarly, the Law on Defense granted it authority to amend the government's draft defense budget and enact it into law. Second, the Supreme Soviet retained the authority to approve and amend legislation pertaining to the appointment and evaluation of official policy-makers. According to the Law on State Security, this gave the parliament a free hand to control cadre policy, including the rights of approval and dismissal for all cabinet posts.⁶⁹

In addition, the bylaws of the Russian Constitution stipulated parliamentary mechanisms for reviewing the conduct of foreign and security policies. The speaker of the Supreme Soviet, for example, was vested with considerable discretion to initiate and preside over formal discussions on the directions and competence of Russian foreign policy. Similarly, the parliament, *via* the authority of the Committee for International Affairs and Foreign Economic Relations, enjoyed rights to conduct official hearings to review various foreign and security policy questions. In doing so, the committee was entitled to summon reports from cabinet members of the government, reprimand their service, and author draft resolutions on specific policy issues for submission to the floor of the parliament for legal codification.⁷⁰

⁶⁹There was considerable ambiguity on this point, as the "Law on Security" made only oblique reference to the parliament's control over cadre policy. In November 1992, the legislators took it upon themselves to make this provision more explicit, passing a resolution on the re-subordination of the power ministries to the Congress of Peoples Deputies, in effect securing sole nomination authority for the parliament and making it mandatory for congressional approval for all ministerial appointments. See *UPI* (Moscow), 13 November 1992.

⁷⁰In a widely publicized example, the Committee for International Affairs and Foreign Economic Relations conducted several closed sessions in July 1992 that scolded the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for advising the government to return the Kurile Islands to Japan. See *ITAR TASS*, 28 July 1992.

On the other hand, the Russian Constitution ceded equally strong authorities to the president. By law, the popularly elected Russian president shared power with the legislature, serving as the "highest official" and "chief executive authority" of the government. In this capacity, the president was the "supreme commander-and-chief" of the Russian Armed Forces, vested with the powers to "control and coordinate" the formulation and implementation of Russian national security policies, and instructed to work jointly with the parliament in defining the strategic directions for Moscow's international behavior. This specifically included rights to oversee the development of mobilization plans, the deployment of internal troops and the army, the conduct of international negotiations and signing of treaties, the issuance of executive decrees and edicts on security matters (the legal equivalent of laws passed by the parliament), and the declaration of war in the event of an armed attack on Russia. To carry out these tasks, the president had authorities to appoint cabinet members of the government, subject to approval by the parliament, as well as to select and recall unilaterally all military officials and diplomats below the ministerial rank.⁷¹

These formal authorities significantly overlapped those assigned to the parliament. Both organs, for instance, were legally designated as "supreme" in the realm of national security. References to "joint control" and "joint selection of cadres" were rife

⁷¹For the legal authority of the Russian president on matters of national security, see the "RSFSR Law on the RSFSR Presidency" in *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, 30 April 1991, p. 1; "Law of the RSFSR on Amendments and Additions to the RSFSR Constitution," in *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, 7 June 1991, p. 1, 3; "The Russian Federation Law on Security" in *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 6 May 1992, p. 5; and "The Law of the Russian Federation on Defense" in *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 9 October 1992, pp. 4-5. Adding to the confusion over the formal division of executive authority, were the powers amassed by the president following the failed coup attempt in August 1991. In November 1991, President Yeltsin demanded and received additional legal authority to rule by decree in order to further the cause of political and economic transition. As a result, the president was granted the authority to appoint himself Prime Minister and to form his own government without consulting the legislature. While this authority was rescinded after nearly a year in place, the new "Law on Government" (December 1992) could not be applied retroactively, thus allowing the president to retain his personally selected cabinet. Henceforth, the president, while granted sole authority to choose a prime minister and a cabinet, was required to seek parliamentary approval. See detailed discussion in Jan S. Adams, "The Legislature Asserts its Role in Russian Foreign Policy," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Weekly Report* 2:4 (22 January 1993), p. 36.

with ambiguity, providing grist for an all-consuming internal battle. The confusion surrounding this redundancy was compounded by the fact that as of Fall 1993 government officials were not legally prohibited from occupying simultaneously seats in the Russian parliament.⁷² Furthermore, the Russian Constitution and accompanying legal documents ceded supervision of the ministerial apparatus to both branches of government. Given the uncertainty over the division of responsibilities between the two branches, this in effect made the governmental apparatus beholden to contradictory executive decrees and parliamentary resolutions. Confusion was exacerbated by the aforementioned rights conferred upon the Committee on International Affairs and Foreign Economic Relations to generate concrete foreign and defense policies that paralleled the authority vested in the Ministries of Defense and Foreign Affairs.

The embodiment of this confusion over the delineation of executive authority was the Security Council. Established by law as a consultative, inter-agency body, the Security Council was formally situated between the executive and legislative branches, and assigned the task of aiding the two "supreme" authorities by reviewing, overseeing, and coordinating the administration of all government security-related activity. While not authorized to make policy decisions on its own, the council was granted wide latitude to manage policies approved by the president or legislature across a broad substantive scope of issues related to state, economic, social, defense, information, ecological, and foreign security. To carry out this mandate, the Security Council was authorized to set up permanent and temporary inter-departmental commissions on key issues, with the expressed responsibilities for preparing proposals on security programs and emergency situations and evaluating the conduct of the governmental apparatus. By law, the post of

⁷²*Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 19 October 1993, p. 4.

Security Council Secretary was assigned a support staff to coordinate the council's internal operations and liaisons with the executive and legislative branches.⁷³

The simplicity of its legal stature notwithstanding, the formation of the Security Council intensified the uncertainty over executive decision-making authority in the realm of grand strategy. As an inter-agency body, it was composed of permanent representatives of the parallel presidential, legislative, and governmental structures. Yet within the organ there was a specified hierarchy. The president, as chair of the council, wielded unrivaled leverage *via* the power to appoint three of the other four permanent members-- the prime minister, vice president, and secretary. This left the first deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet not only subordinate to the chief executive but at a potential disadvantage in the council's majority voting procedures. Presidential control was also buttressed by the stipulation that the chairman of the council retain authorities to approve final decisions, appoint an unlimited number of non-voting members, and delegate responsibilities to the secretary for selecting the heads of the council's inter-departmental commissions and staff. Moreover, the mandates assigned to these inter-departmental commissions to draft policy proposals and forecasts directly overlapped those of respective government ministries and parliamentary committees. Charged with "coordinating the activities of executive organs," the Security Council had considerable legal discretion to challenge the authority vested in the Russian cabinet, including the right to issue binding instructions to their bureaucracies. Finally, unlike other executive and legislative organs, the council functioned as a closed forum without individual accountability.⁷⁴

⁷³"Presidential Decree on Immediate Measures to Ensure the Activity of the Russian Federation Security Council, (3 June 1992)," *Vedomosti*, 24 (18 June 1992), pp. 1669-71. See also "Law of the Russian Federation on Security," in *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 6 May 1992, p. 5. The size of the staff fluctuated from 80-120 throughout this initial transition period. See *Komersant-daily*, 6 November 1993, p. 2.

⁷⁴*Rossiiskie vesti*, 29 October 1992, p. 3. According to several Russian legal commentators, the powers vested in the Security Council apparatus not only duplicated those of respective ministries, but superceded

The upshot of the uncertainty regarding the balance of executive authority was the "war of decrees" between the president and parliament that unfolded throughout 1993. Both branches, armed with equally legitimate claims to authority, issued independent directives for grand strategy, at times in contradiction to each other. This schism reached a climax by Fall 1993, with the presidential call for disbanding parliament that negated the semblance of constitutional order and resulted in insurrection. In the aftermath, a new constitutional edifice was imposed that, while unequivocally demoting the parliament in the realm of grand strategy, ushered in a new round administrative uncertainty.

Uncertainty in the Vertical Delineation of Power

Shortly after the bloody dissolution of the Russian Congress of Peoples Deputies in October 1993 and its replacement by a two-tiered Federal Assembly, a plebiscite on a new constitution was held to sort out the division of executive authority. The result was the passing of a new Russian Constitution that assigned substantial grand strategy decision-making powers solely to the president. It stripped the legislature of "supreme" status, and explicitly endowed the president with ultimate power to set the security agenda of the state, including exclusive rights to approve military doctrine and determine the course of foreign policy. Similarly, the new constitution granted the chief executive powers both to initiate and confer final legal standing on the federal budget, thus circumscribing the input of parliament in determining the aggregate size of the defense budget. In addition, the president was vested with the authority to declare war against

them. See especially *Izvestiya*, 10 July 1992, p. 3; and Aleksei Kirpichnikov, "Yurii Skokov: Novyi samyi glavnyi," *Kommersant* 28:128 (6-13 July 1992), p. 2. Frustration over this interference with the government's duties drove the foreign minister to cry out that "the foreign ministry does not make fundamental decisions on foreign policy matters." See *Komsomolskaya pravda*, 9 June 1992, p. 3.

other nations and states of emergency within Russia, with the modest stipulation of subsequently "informing" the two houses of parliament "without delay." With respect to personnel issues, Article 83 ceded to the president sole authority to appoint all deputy prime ministers and cabinet members, including the ministers of foreign affairs and defense, without seeking confirmation by either legislative body. Moreover, each member of the Security Council was directly subordinated to the president, including the chairmen of the two houses of parliament who were subsequently included on the council by presidential edict.⁷⁵

Although the new constitution went along way towards clarifying the horizontal lines of authority between the executive and legislative branches, ceding the lion's share of control over grand strategy decision-making to the former, it further obfuscated the formal boundaries of presidential and governmental administrative responsibility.⁷⁶ Under the bylaws of the new constitution, the position of vice president was removed and replaced by provisions permitting the expansion of a series of offices and institutions that reported directly to the president and were not accountable to the parliament or government. During the first quarter of 1994, the presidential apparatus was divided into two parallel structures that retained redundant groups of advisors on foreign and security

⁷⁵For the standing draft of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, see *Izvestiya*, 10 November 1993, p. 3-5. While the constitution did not formally alter the composition of the Security Council, there was a specific provision assigning the president as chairman. With the 1994 presidential decision to include the chairmen of the two houses of parliament among the council's permanent membership, a situation emerged whereby the highest legislative officials were directly subordinated to the president. See discussion in *Obshchaya gazeta*, 3 (19 January 1995), p. 8.

⁷⁶Despite the aforementioned clarification, considerable uncertainty persisted in the delineation of executive and legislative authority. Both houses of the parliament, for instance, retained authorities to issue binding decrees and override presidential vetos of their legislation. The new constitution, furthermore, failed to provide procedural means for resolving contradictions between presidential and parliamentary decrees. Second, members of the Russian government were still permitted to hold simultaneously positions in either house of parliament. Finally, with respect to job security, the lower chamber of parliament, the State Duma, could be dissolved by the president in response to successive votes of no confidence in the government or rejection of the president's choice for Prime Minister; similarly, the government could be unilaterally dismissed by the president without the approval of the State Duma.

affairs. Adding to the confusion, a January 1994 edict re-subordinated to the presidential apparatus the "power ministries," including the Ministries of Defense and Foreign Affairs, that made each directly accountable to both the president and prime minister, while leaving respective legal jurisdictions *vis-a-vis* other presidential organs a constitutional mystery.⁷⁷ Moreover, the Security Council, *via* its inter-departmental commissions, was granted extensive rights to investigate any issue related to national security (broadly defined) that allowed it to collect information from any governmental organization and to "coordinate" all policy recommendations submitted to the chief executive.⁷⁸ These vacuous legal provisions generated considerable uncertainty regarding the supervision of Russian foreign, military, and defense industrial policies.

With respect to foreign policy, the swollen presidential apparatus and expanded authority of the Security Council blurred the functional responsibilities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Not only was the ministry directly accountable to both the president and prime minister, but it shared jurisdiction with the Security Council's Inter-departmental Commission on Foreign Policy in monitoring key policy concerns, such as relations with the former Soviet republics and the Russian diaspora. This administrative confusion was intensified, as the commission was authorized to participate in decisions regarding personnel changes and re-organization of the ministry. Moreover, the presidential assignment of successive deputy foreign ministers to head the commission not only muddled institutional oversight, but confounded relations of super- and subordination within the ministry.⁷⁹

⁷⁷*Izvestiya*, 3 February 1994, p. 4.

⁷⁸*Rossiiskie vesti*, 2 November 1993, p. 3. For the expanded list of inter-departmental commissions, see *Ibid.*, 9 November 1993, p. 5.

⁷⁹For the original charter of the Foreign Policy Commission, see *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 3 February 1993, p. 7.

Similarly, the Security Council's extended mandate encroached upon the administrative duties of the Ministry of Defense with respect to the formulation and implementation of Russian military policy. For example, following its revamping in Fall 1993 the council acquired the legal mandate to participate in the drafting and approval of Russia's military doctrine. This was more than a perfunctory role, as the defense ministry, while formally tasked with initiating the process, was legally obliged to work with members of the Security Council in hammering out military-technical policy. Moreover, as the constitutionally designated "coordinating mechanism of the power ministries," the Security Council enjoyed a decisive voice in shaping military strategy and operational art. According to several inside accounts, this included joint control over military operations with the General Staff in crisis scenarios, and exclusive control during peacetime.⁸⁰

Nowhere, however, were the formal lines of authority more inchoate than with respect to the defense industrial sphere. After taking office in 1991, the Yeltsin government moved swiftly to decapitate the once-sacrosanct administrative bulwarks of Soviet defense industry-- the Central Committee Defense Department and the VPK-- and to consolidate the nine former ministries related to defense industry under the departments of the newly formed Russian Ministry of Industry. Hastily conceived, the new industrial departments turned out to be administrative orphans within the larger ministry, as well as superfluous in the new environment calling for military-technical efficiency, diversification, and commercialization.⁸¹ As a result, the government

⁸⁰Throughout the second half of 1994, rumors circulated in Moscow of a pending restructuring of the Ministry of Defense, capped by the re-subordination of the General Staff and operational planning to the Security Council and president. See *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 3 November 1994, pp. 1, 5; *Kommersant-daily*, 17 January 1995, p. 3; *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 9 February 1995, p. 3; and *Komsomolskaya pravda*, 17-20 February 1995, p. 5.

⁸¹"Decree of the President of the Russian Federation on the Structure of Central Bodies of Federal Executive Authority, 2 October 1992," *ITAR-TASS World Service*," as translated in *FBIS-SOV-92-193*, 5 October 1992, p. 16.

spearheaded an second wave of administrative reform in October 1992 that dissolved the super-ministry and re-subordinated Russian defense industrial organizations to an array of executive organs with inter-locking mandates for determining and implementing state policies for weapons acquisitions and defense conversion.

Redundant authorities to supervise military R&D and procurement were formally allocated to rival ministries and the Security Council. By statute, the governmental apparatus was instructed to devise and implement the Russian defense budget and armaments program, subject to confirmation by the president. Specifically, the Ministry of Finance was charged with determining the aggregate level of Russian military spending, as part of a broader mandate to form the state budget and control the federal deficit. This authority, however, significantly overlapped the legal rights ceded to the Ministry of Defense for determining the financial requirements of the armed forces and allocation of federal outlays for weapons research, development, and production.⁸² The same state of affairs marred the formulation of an armaments program. Unlike its Soviet predecessor, the Russian defense ministry enjoyed full legal authority to accept or reject on a contract basis weapons into the arsenal.⁸³ This, however, contrasted with the mandate granted to the re-structured Security Council in November 1993. In particular,

⁸²In fact, the "Law on Defense" did not stipulate provisions for reconciling this redundancy or for ironing out discrepancies in the submission of alternative budgets. See *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 9 October 1992, p. 4-5. By law, the Ministry of Finance was charged with computing budget figures submitted by all government agencies in developing the draft federal budget. Upon approval by the Prime Minister and president, the draft was submitted to the lower house of parliament for successive readings on line item amendments, including the shifting of monies related to the defense budget, within the constraints of the aggregate level devised by the Ministry of Finance. After this, the revised budget was sent to the upper chamber of parliament for final legislative approval. This body did not have the right of line item veto. Finally, the budget was forwarded to the president for final confirmation. This process was explained in personal interview with Alexei G. Arbatov, member of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, in Moscow, on 10 December 1994.

⁸³See statement by first deputy defense minister, A. A. Kokoshin in *Rossiiskie vesti*, 25 August 1993, p. 7. Within the ministry, a first deputy minister and an armaments directorate were officially charged with devising and monitoring military orders and general relations with defense industry.

the newly created Inter-departmental Commission on Strategic Matters of the Defense Industry was also assigned general oversight of the development of defense orders and coordination of weapons procurement.⁸⁴

Adding to the confusion was the allocation of directly related rights to the formal successor to the Soviet VPK. After abolishing the Ministry of Industry, the government formed the Russian Committee for the Defense Industry to supervise the fulfillment of procurement contracts, creation of state technology centers, and development of federal conversion programs. Subsequently elevated to the status of State Committee for Defense Industry (*Goskomoboronprom*), this body was tasked specifically, together with the Ministry of Defense, with formulating the list of state-protected defense enterprises that were to continue to receive priority government credits as primary defense contractors (*kazenny*). That these two organs possessed redundant rights to select enterprises as part of divergent mandates to supervise defense conversion and weapons acquisition ensured that conflicting preferences would compound this administrative uncertainty.⁸⁵

Similarly, several executive and governmental organs shared supervisory functions within the sphere of defense conversion. Both the Ministry of Economics and *Goskomoboronprom*, for instance, were vested with duplicate authorities to select specific defense enterprises for receipt of federal subsidies and to monitor the allocation of conversion credits *via* the central bank. The picture was even more convoluted with respect to the development and adoption of state conversion programs. The Security Council's Inter-departmental Commission for Strategic Matters of the Defense Industry and *Goskomoboronprom*, for example, were both granted "exclusive" rights to make the

⁸⁴On the creation of the inter-departmental commission, see *Segodnya*, 11 September 1993, p. 2.

⁸⁵Personal interviews with former members of *Goskomoboronprom*, in Moscow, on 8 December 1994. As a state committee, the organ enjoyed the equivalent status of a ministry within the governmental apparatus.

initial selection of specific enterprises and projects to comprise the state program. Subsequently, three high level executive organs- the Security Council, the government's Inter-departmental Commission for Military-Technical Cooperation, and the Office of the Special Assistant to the President for Defense Industrial Matters-- retained final authority to sign-off on official conversion policies. Finally, both *Goskomoboronprom* and the government's inter-departmental commission were delegated parallel executive authorities to formulate and supervise Russian foreign arms sales, including the marketing, contracting and delivery of weapons systems.⁸⁶

The upshot of this administrative disarray in Russian national security decision-making was the omnipresent concern for relative standing among politicians and functionaries. The confusion fostered profound risk aversion in political and administrative interaction. The "procedural incompleteness" of the constitution concerning lines of authority created a strong presumption against civic accord, "as administrators, assistants and politicians were left to fend for themselves."⁸⁷ Unable to count on reciprocity *via* formal mechanisms of exchange, there was an overwhelming urge to fixate on each's own narrow concerns and to shun political compromise. Moreover, because of the *ad hoc* nature of the policy-making process, administrative agencies adopted short-time horizons. As observed by several presidential advisors, the absence of formal monitoring procedures linked to the bloated and convoluted institutional network for decision-making permitted administrative organs to become

⁸⁶Personal interview with former members of *Goskomoboronprom*. For a description of *Goskomoboronprom's* role, see especially comments by the committee's chairman, in Viktor K. Glukhikh, "Oboronnaya promyshlennost' na 1994: Polozhenie i tseli na 1994," *Konversiya*, 4 (1994), pp. 3-8. On arms sales, information was gleaned from personal interviews with V. Kartavtsev and A. Klement'ev, both deputy heads of the Directorate for Foreign Ties at the Russian State Arms Trading Corporation (Rosvooruzhenie), in Moscow, on 12 December 1994.

⁸⁷See comment by F. Burlatskiy in *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 17 February 1995, p. 3.

preoccupied with the immediate benefits for each policy decision, as measured in terms of resources channeled to specific pet projects.⁸⁸

Conclusion

To sum up, uncertainty marred the formal institutional landscape of national security decision-making in the Soviet Union and Russia. Political position and administrative oversight were considerably under-specified in the constitutional and legal procedures of the mature Soviet system. This was most glaringly reflected by the duality of state order and party rule; the hallmarks of the Brezhnev administrative system. The same held true for the Gorbachev regime, despite the celebrated push for "constitutionalism" and formal emasculation of party control. Confusion persisted as a presidential bureaucracy was merely super-imposed over an already-muddled set of relations between and among established state and party infrastructures. This ambiguity, however, was exacerbated rather than mitigated by the regime change in Russia. During the first year and a half of the post-communist transition, political exchange was virtually stymied by the chaos precipitated by the dismantlement of the Soviet institutional edifice and the constitutional vagueness of the new division of power between executive and legislative bodies. This state of affairs reached an apogee with the violent assault on the Parliament in 1993. Following this event and the imposition of a new constitutional framework, grand strategy decision-making was constrained by ambiguous relations between rival administrative bodies within the executive branch. In this second phase of

⁸⁸Personal interview with Emil Pain, member of the Analytical Center of the Russian President, in Washington, D.C., on 19 October 1995. See also comments by Sergei Filatov, Chief of Staff of the Administration of the Russian President, in *Kommersant-Daily*, 8 June 1995, p. 3.

reform, the distribution of redundant authorities vitiated the administrative control and oversight specified by formal institutional mechanisms.

These constraints notwithstanding, policies related to grand strategy still managed to be formulated and carried out. Except for the initial period of regime transition, the formal institutional uncertainty in Soviet and Russian politics did not paralyze national security decision-making. On the contrary, informal procedures and norms emerged to guide foreign and security policy-making. The next chapter will explore how the logic of uncertainty and attendant incentives for distributional gains, shaped the institutions that informally governed grand strategy policy-making in the respective constitutional settings.

CHAPTER 5

***DE FACTO* POLICY-MAKING: Who Really Mattered and What Did They Want?**

In Chapter 2, I proposed that the level of uncertainty in a domestic institutional structure determines the costs of political exchange between and among elites and bureaucrats formally charged with devising and implementing a state's response to its security environment. In the previous chapter I expounded on this theme, demonstrating that vague and contradictory constitutional stipulations of power and responsibility create conflicts at the center of grand strategy decision-making in authoritarian and democratic systems alike. I showed, in particular, that such ambiguities instill in both elites and functionaries an overriding fear for political survival, and thus an acute sensitivity to potential encroachments on official standing. In such a high-stakes environment, one would expect atomistic political behavior to run rampant at all levels, impeding the requisite exchanges involved in formulating and implementing policies. Yet this is not evidenced even in the most under-regulated constitutional settings, as politicians and bureaucrats manage to impose upon themselves limits to political opportunism in order to stabilize policy-making. In this chapter I will refine and expand on this observation.

The chapter demonstrates that, as was proposed in Chapter 2, constitutional uncertainty does indeed matter for explaining the real political processes and substantive policy preferences that, in practice, govern grand strategy decision-making. I present

evidence to support the contention that, in the absence of legal guarantees of power and authority, politicians informally parcel out responsibilities for formulating and implementing policies related to grand strategy on the basis of patronage and information monopolies, in return for limits to political competition. Fixated on immediate concerns for political survival, a central executive is motivated to take the initiative to create a functioning policy-making process that would informally confer legitimacy upon his/her standing as *primus inter pares* among the elite. To do so, a central executive brokers a *de facto* exchange of authorities in key policy realms. These distributional political and administrative arrangements informally compartmentalize rights for defining the nature of the international threat, and for determining the specific means and forms for carrying out appropriate policy responses. In effect, this implicit segmentation of authority introduces significant agency costs at the heart of the grand strategy decision-making process, as different elites and bureaucrats acquire limited control over diplomatic, military, and defense industrial policies. Unable to micro-manage activities *via* formal channels and beholden to informal networks for political legitimacy, as well as for passing up important information and carrying out policies, a central executive must delegate considerable autonomy to other politicians and bureaucrats that, in turn, induce them to indulge their narrow policy preferences with considerable impunity.

The chapter tests this argument by outlining the *de facto* national security policy-making processes that were brokered by respective central executives in the Soviet and post-communist Russian political systems. Using political and administrative information monopolies and patronage as measures of *de facto* authority, I trace the informal mechanisms that actually governed policy-making under Gorbachev, and compare them to the distributional processes that routinized national security decision-making in the Brezhnev and early Yeltsin regimes. In addition, I flesh out the divergent policy preferences that derived directly from the delegation of authority that, throughout

each period, had to be satisfied in order to stabilize policy-making and preserve the integrity of the informal institutional networks between and among first- and second-tier actors. By demonstrating the close interaction between the structure of leadership, the terms by which power and authority were delegated, and the sources of substantive policy preferences for responding to international imperatives, this chapter provides the basis for systematically understanding the "institutionalized" propensity for a state's recurrent bouts with self-defeat that will be described in the following chapter.

Brezhnev's "Government Within The Government"¹

Working within a seamless web of ill-defined and under-specified rules and regulations, Soviet policy-makers at all levels were traditionally forced to buttress formal procedures with a wide array of informal institutions. Instead of embarking on the politically suicidal courses of unabated competition or structural reform, Brezhnev and his leadership cohort entered into an implicit arrangement with one another and key functionaries that, in practice, divided policy-making responsibilities as a means to solve for political security. From a political standpoint, neither elites nor functionaries had compelling reason to disrupt this arrangement given that it mitigated their anxieties over unexpected challenge.² This political service notwithstanding, the limited character and

¹Personal interview with G.A. Arbatov, in Moscow, on 13 August 1992.

²For descriptions of the informal distributional mechanisms employed by the Soviet leadership to regularize and systematize policy-making across the gamut of issues areas, see T. H. Rigby, "The Soviet Leadership: Towards a Self-Stabilizing Oligarchy?" *Soviet Studies* 22:2 (October 1970), pp. 169-191; Dennis Ross, "Coalition Maintenance in the Soviet Union," *World Politics* 32:2 (January 1980), pp. 258-280; Ellen Jones, "Committee Decision Making in the Soviet Union," *World Politics* 36:2 (January 1984), 165-188; Philip G. Roeder, *Red Sunset: The Failure of Soviet Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); William A. Clark, *Crime and Punishment in Soviet Officialdom* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1993); and Jan Winięcki, *Resistance to Change in the Soviet Economic System* (London: Routledge, 1991).

insulation of policy control came at the expense of direct oversight that, in turn, fostered divergent substantive policy preferences among the very actors empowered to formulate and administer Soviet policies.

This informal exchange mechanism was strongly entrenched in Soviet grand strategy decision-making. Under Brezhnev, it took the form of tacit cooperation between and among senior politicians and bureaucrats that not only reflected a truce on naked political opportunism, but empowered different elites and administrators with narrow control over the diplomatic agenda, military strategy, and the allocation of resources for defense. According to insider accounts, at the highest level this was manifest in an agreement to vest final decision-making authority for grand strategy in a small informal group of senior political elites. This core group consisted of select Politburo and Defense Council members, such as Brezhnev, Premier A. Kosygin, M. Suslov, defense minister A. Grechko, chairman of the Supreme Soviet N. Podgorny, and subsequently Central Committee secretary for defense industry D. Ustinov; as well as foreign minister A. Gromyko, and KGB head Y. Andropov.³ This privileged sub-set of the elite excluded roughly half of the Politburo, including A. Kirilenko, who nominally sat in on formal high level Party and state discussions of national security. Notably absent from this inner-circle were also the chief of the General Staff of the Red Army and the chairman of the Military-Industrial Commission, both of whom were traditionally regarded as instrumental voices on the Defense Council.⁴ This sub-committee of key national security elites was charged with meeting outside of plenary Politburo sessions to hammer

³See Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence* (New York: Times Books, 1995), pp. 218-219; and G. A. Arbatov, *Zatiamuvsheesiya vyzdovrovlennie (1953-1988 gg.): Svidetel'stvo sovremennika* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, 1990), p. 233.

⁴This was evidenced by A. Kirilenko's on-again-off-again membership on the Defense Council. See especially discussion in Harry Gelman, *The Brezhnev Politburo and the Decline of Detente* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), pp. 63-70.

out actual policy directives in the name of the collective leadership. As a rule, the Politburo would then "rubber stamp" the decisions, conferring legal standing upon the directives issued by the sub-committee.⁵

The political significance of this tight-knit sub-group of elites was that decision-making authority among the membership was narrowly segmented. Major foreign policy questions, such as the strategic relationship with the U.S. and state-to-state diplomacy fell under the jurisdiction of Brezhnev and Gromyko, with occasional input from Kosygin, Andropov, and Podgorny. Gromyko, in particular, was permitted to take the initiative in preparing position papers and setting the foreign policy agenda on issues such as Soviet-American relations, arms control, and European affairs. This tacit control derived as much from information advantages associated with Gromyko's position atop the foreign ministry bureaucracy, as from his close personal access to and relations with Brezhnev. The latter was especially important, for as a rule Brezhnev "invariably heeded the advise of such as accomplished diplomat."⁶ Thus, in practice, Gromyko not only was the most informed politician on traditional issues of diplomacy, but carried the authority of the General Secretary in his recommendations and informal lobbying of his peers.

By virtue of his recognized authority to conduct traditional diplomacy, Gromyko was primarily interested in stabilizing U.S.-Soviet relations in the prevailing competitive-cooperative security environment; constantly seeking advantage for the Soviet Union, but also willing to accommodate Western interests in whatever measure the tactical situation necessitated. As the one charged with wielding the Soviet Union's newly acquired superpower status in diplomatic fora, he preferred cautious policy initiatives, aimed at

⁵Uri Ra'anand Igor Lukes, *Inside the Apparatus: Perspectives on the Soviet System From Former Functionaries* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1990), p. 158.

⁶Andrei Aleksandrov-Agentov, "Ministr inostrannykh del Andrei Gromyko," *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'* (July 1991), p. 116-117. See also Anatoli Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, pp. 218-219; and Arkady N. Shevchenko, *Breaking With Moscow* (New York: Ballantine, 1985), pp. 149-150; 181, 187.

consolidating postwar gains (primarily borders in Eastern Europe and nuclear parity) while avoiding the risk of confrontation with the U.S. if the vital interests of the USSR were not at stake. According to his former associates, this position imbued Gromyko with a sense for the "long view" in formulating Soviet foreign policy, assessing relations with the West in terms of Soviet balance of power requirements. In sum, stability was the leitmotif behind his policy recommendations for meeting the challenges of the security environment.⁷

Gromyko's informal latitude to shape Soviet behavior towards the West notwithstanding, foreign policy authority was informally bifurcated upon Brezhnev's ascendance within the leadership. In practice, M. Suslov wielded near complete control over Soviet relations with ruling and non-ruling communist parties, including national liberation movements in the Third World. While he did not occupy any formal foreign policy post within the Party or government, his seniority as Party stalwart and unwavering commitment to the spread of Marxist-Leninist ideals earned him the respect and deference of his comrades. According to one of Brezhnev's closest personal foreign policy counselors, Suslov's ideological conviction and friendship made him the General Secretary's "most trustworthy advisor" on questions related to Soviet interactions with radical movements in the Third World and with powerful Communist and socialist parties in the developed world. On these topics, "the only question for the leadership was which

⁷See for example Anatoli Dobrynin, *In Confidence* pp. 404; and Arkady Shevchenko, *Breaking With Moscow*, pp. 150-152; and A. Aleksandrov-Agentov, "Ministr innostrannykh del Andrey Gromyko," pp. 114-125. According to these authors, Gromyko, because he was not responsible for overseeing Soviet policies in Eastern Europe and the Third World was not interested in them, except in those instances when Soviet "out-of-area" activities threatened to undermine diplomacy with the West. According to Shvechenko, he was also personally uncomfortable with ideologically driven policies and only barely tolerated adding such quotations to his formal speeches.

direction would Suslov's advise take," leaving no doubt that his word would carry the day.⁸

This informal position atop the ideological apparatus reinforced Suslov's personal conviction for infusing Soviet foreign policy with dogmatic assertiveness. Tasked with overseeing the spread of Marxist-Leninist ideology within the Soviet bloc and the developing world, he maintained unwavering commitments to backing ideologically conservative leaders among the Warsaw Pact states, and expanding Soviet ties with revolutionary democratic movements in the Third World. From this perspective, the objective of Soviet policy in the Third World was to form anti-imperialist fronts that would facilitate, at least over the long haul, their transition to communism. From this vantage point, strategic parity secured for the Kremlin equal footing with the US to exploit opportunities for promoting its ideological and political objectives in areas outside of respective vital interests. As stated by one former Soviet diplomat, Suslov's common refrain in dismissing accusations of harboring unduly opportunistic policy preferences, was to ask: Why does the United States raise such complaints about us when they are themselves so active around the globe?"⁹

At the decision-making level, *de facto* control over the technical equipping and employment of the armed forces was similarly bifurcated. In particular, authority over military policy and defense resource allocations rested with the defense minister and the leading Party secretary formally charged with overseeing defense industry. These portfolios were originally divided between defense minister Grechko and Central

⁸See especially Andrei Aleksandrov-Agentov, "Semero iz politbyuro," *Novoe vremya*, 23 (June 1993), p. 42. According to Aleksandrov-Agentov and Dobrynin, this informal division of labor was further upheld by both Gromyko's and Suslov's disinterest in the issues relevant to the other's policy domain. See also Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, pp. 404-405; Andrei Aleksandrov-Agentov, "Ministr inostrannykh del Andrei Gromyko," p. 115; and Arkady Shevchenko, *Breaking With Moscow*, pp. 152, 158.

⁹Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, p. 405. See also Andrei Aleksandrov-Agentov, "Semero iz politbyuro: zapiski pomoshchnika chtyrekh genskov," p. 42.

Committee secretary Ustinov; with the former handling issues related to force posture, military strategy, operational art, and tactics; and the latter controlling the inputs to and outputs from defense industry. Following Grechko's death in 1976, the final word governing military industrial affairs fell in practice to Ustinov, who formally added to his portfolio the post of defense minister. According to one of Brezhnev's foreign policy advisors, this consolidation of military-technical decision-making in the hands of Ustinov effectively rendered the military-industrial complex "perfectly untouchable" to the other elites. Ustinov combined his long experience, success and stature as curator of the armaments industry, with his close personal relations with Brezhnev and formal standing as defense minister to form, in practice, the epicenter of Soviet military-technical policy-making.¹⁰

Charged with guiding Soviet military-technical policy in a new era of strategic parity, Grechko maintained an undaunted commitment to the steady build-up of dual capable armed forces. While recognizing the objective reality of mutual assured destruction and the dire consequences of escalation in a confrontation with the West, Grechko focused attention on the modernization of strategic and theater nuclear forces as a hedge against nuclear blackmail and a cover for exploiting opportunities for prolonging the conventional phase of large-scale operations. On the conventional level, he was charged with adapting Soviet war-fighting plans to the introduction of qualitative improvements in weapons technology -- such as new sighting and guidance systems, laser electronics, and computer technology. Given the potential of these innovations for

¹⁰G.A. Arbatov, *Zatiamuvsheiya vyzdorovlenie (1953-1986 gg.)*, pp.194. See also Roy Medvedev, *Lichnost' i epokha: politicheskiy portret L. I. Brezhneva* (Moscow: Novosti, 1991), pp. 137-138; and Condoleeza Rice, "The Party, the Military, and Decision Authority in the Soviet Union," *World Politics* 40 (October 1987), pp 55-81. Ustinov's ascendance as leader of the Soviet military-industrial complex was confirmed in personal interviews with V. Kataev and V. Popov, chief and deputy chief staff members of the Defense Department of the Central Committee under L. Zaikov and O. Baklanov, in Moscow, on 13 October 1993.

enhancing the mobility and range of Soviet heavy armor contingents, he sought to incorporate them into planning for the conduct of decisive offensive operations without resorting to nuclear weapons. The ambiguous nature of the new weapons technology and the accelerated developments in defensive weapons-- such as anti-tank guided missiles-- however, compelled Grechko to stress that technology alone would not determine victory on a battlefield. Instead, he relied on favorable prospects for extensive economic growth to provide the wherewithal to upgrade the training of military personnel and increase the quantity of resources devoted to military purposes. Taken together, these factors were presumed to ensure conventional superiority and the success of a combined arms offensive war-fighting strategy.¹¹

Ustinov's subsequent appointment as *de facto* overlord of the military-industrial complex, however, brought a strong preference for incrementalism in military organization and weapons acquisition. Delegated multiple authorities to manage resource allocations to defense industry, direct weapons purchases, and oversee the Soviet Armed Forces, he searched out policies that would preserve continuity in relations among component parts of the military industrial complex. In particular, he supported initiatives designed to rationalize military expenditures, while maintaining stable production lines at defense industrial organizations and respecting the limited capacity of Soviet troops to absorb new weapons. As a consequence, he cautioned against haste in embracing new conventional weapons technologies, and was predisposed towards quantitatively building-up the arsenal. Moreover, Ustinov was interested in streamlining practices within defense industry in order to restrict waste and increase the production of civilian goods. This strategy allowed him to fulfill his twin mandates for increasing resource

¹¹For detailed discussion of Grechko's preferences for military strategy during this period see especially A. A. Grechko, *The Armed Forces of the Soviet State* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1975); and Dale Herspring, *The Soviet High Command 1967-1989* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 79-116.

allocations to the defense sector and building-up the armed forces, while improving the country's overall economic situation.¹²

In order to forestall or cope with possible policy conflicts, Brezhnev brokered an informal acceptance of unanimity in decision-making in return for the discrete division of policy control. Among this core group of elites, there was an unwritten but inviolable understanding that each was not to interfere in the policy domains delegated to the others. In practice, "each had his bureaucratic territory and would not welcome an invasion from another member, so they acted accordingly in foreign territories that were not their own."¹³ On issues concerning military policy, for example, Gromyko was very deferential to Ustinov and the military. "He did not dare get involved in military affairs," and remained a dilettante, a virtual "comrade yes" to Ustinov, despite his sympathies for alternative military industrial policies.¹⁴ This respect for informal boundaries was reciprocated by Ustinov and his deputies in the defense industrial apparatus, who were loathe to interfere in "Gromyko's business," even on those exceptional occasions when their input on foreign policy issues was directly solicited by Brezhnev.¹⁵ Andropov, head of the KGB, also treaded lightly within the informal institutional setting, confiding

¹²See especially comments in D. F. Ustinov, "Na strazhe revoliutsionnykh zavoevanii," *Kommunist voorruzhennykh sil*, 21 (November 1977), p. 6; and *Krasnaya zvezda*, 22 June 1983, p. 2. This was confirmed in personal interviews with V. Kataev and V. Popov. For detailed discussion of Ustinov's policy preferences during this period, see especially Dale Herspring, *The Soviet High Command 1967-1989*, pp. 119-165.

¹³Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, p. 219. For a general discussion of the informal operating procedures among this core elite group, see especially E. K. Ligachev, *Zagadka Gorbacheva* (Novosibirsk: Interbuk, 1992), p. 9.

¹⁴Georgi Arbatov, *The System: An Insider's Life in Soviet Politics* (New York: Times Books, 1992), p. 199; and G.A. Arbatov, *Zatiamuvsheiia vyzdorovlenie (1953-1986 gg.)*, p. 230.

¹⁵Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, p. 426-427.

on several occasions his reluctance to "get out in front" of Ustinov or Gromyko in their respective issue areas.¹⁶

As the official power broker in the leadership, Brezhnev brought his authority directly to bear as the enforcer of the informal delegation of decision-making authority. By informally hiving-off a core group of elites and sub-dividing decision-making authority among them, Brezhnev strengthened his own position vis-a-vis formal members of the Politburo, while mitigating the political appetite for narrow policy control among formidable challengers. This institutional arrangement, in effect, was "self-stabilizing," as it simultaneously deprived the most dissatisfied members of the ruling elite of critical information and initiative over policies, and coopted those colleagues that wielded important policy resources in the realm of national security. In those rare instances involving egregious violations of the tacit division of authority, Brezhnev would formally rebuke the perpetrators and remind them of their obligations to the ruling collective. This was demonstrated vividly in an episode when Grechko flagrantly overstepped his authority in the internal deliberations over SALT I, openly declaring that he, as defense minister, was *the one responsible for the security of the nation*. Brezhnev, viewing this not only as a personal affront but a clear encroachment on the core leadership's duties, employed his privileged authority to "set Grechko straight" in no uncertain terms.¹⁷

Administrative support for this informal core group of Soviet grand strategy policy-makers functioned via a similarly implicit set of relations among second-tier agents. Separate organizations within the state were delegated crucial authorities to

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 210. See also Georgi Arbatov, *The System*, p. 206.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 233. See also Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, p. 330, and Roy Medvedev, *Lichnost' i epokha*, pp. 146-148. Offending statements on Soviet foreign policy and callous disregard for the *de facto* division of labor among the elite resulted in Brezhnev's moves to evict P. Shelest (and earlier N. Yegorachev) from their respective positions in the Politburo and Central Committee Secretariat. See especially discussion in *Argumenti i fakti*, 2 (1989), pp. 5-6; and Harry Gelman, *The Brezhnev Politburo and the Decline of Detente*, pp. 96-98.

collect information, frame the terms of debate, lobby respective patrons, and run day-to-day affairs. Each organizational network exercised considerable autonomy in its respective policy domain, reporting directly to Brezhnev and its designated patron with minimal cross-fertilization. The upshot was the *de facto* establishment of a four-pillared administrative apparatus that generated distinct policy preferences for Soviet grand strategy.

Regarding traditional foreign policy issues, such as state-to-state relations with the U.S., the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MID) constituted the most important administrative player. In practice, MID, unlike most other ministries, was directly responsible to the core sub-committee of the leadership via its immediate subordination to Gromyko. The various desk offices of the ministry were specifically delegated authorities to initiate studies and draft specific *zapiski* (memoranda) for Gromyko, who then was responsible for passing on information to other members of the collective leadership at his own discretion. As the organization with sole authority to accumulate and control communications with Soviet embassies through its own "secret code," the foreign ministry enjoyed considerable leverage to manipulate the circulation of information among elites and to shape the international agenda.¹⁸ Moreover, ministerial representatives, especially Soviet ambassadors, enjoyed considerable freedom to explore unconventional back-channels and to serve as informal conduits between Brezhnev and Gromyko and their foreign interlocutors that was not conferred upon other party or government officials. The most noteworthy example was the informal role played by A. Dobrynin, Soviet ambassador to the U.S., who was granted significant discretion to sound

¹⁸Arkady Shvechenko, *Breaking With Moscow*, p. 187. See also Uri Ra'anand Igor Lukes, *Inside the Apparatus*, pp. 167-168.

out American executives and report directly to Gromyko and Brezhnev, thus preempting other elites from directly commenting on initiatives before policy was formulated.¹⁹

Functioning in parallel to MID was the International Department (ID) of the Central Committee of the CPSU. Under the auspices of B. Ponomarev and his patron, Suslov, the ID exercised administrative control over relations with radical movements in the developing world, as well as with communist front organizations and socialist parties throughout the non-Communist world. Included in its informal jurisdiction were the rights to finance and train foreign communist movements, as well as to provide and oversee Soviet political, economic, and military support to national liberation movements and client states in the Third World. With a relatively small staff of approximately 200 experts, the ID exerted its authority in this area via a direct link to Suslov and extensive contacts with foreign communist officials and radical Third World leaders. While the former secured the department's access to the "inner circle" and *de facto* authority to set the agenda for top level meetings, the latter enabled ID personnel to collect and control the dissemination of critical information regarding the activities of groups in the Third World that typically operated in a covert fashion. This administrative clout was reinforced by the ID's status as the sole repository for information pertaining to the Third World that was gathered from foreign communist movements and contacts on the ground, as well as from KGB, MID, and defense ministry intelligence networks. Moreover, by employing numerous full- and part-time scholars from universities and research institutes of the Academy of Sciences, and by maintaining administrative control over the funneling of their reports, the department functioned as the key conduit between senior

¹⁹Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, pp. 230-231. Dobrynin recounts that he and Gromyko worked out a tacit arrangement whereby he would submit "confidential" recommendation directly to Brezhnev and the core leadership, with Gromyko's silence signaling his *de facto* approval. While Politburo members formally retained the right to question or object to the recommendation, in practice, "most hesitated to intrude in the sphere of foreign policy and in any case were unaware of the details of our relations with Washington."

policy-making circles, intelligence networks, and analytical communities on matters concerning relations with Soviet clients in the Third World. According to several former members of the department, it was exactly this position as "information hub" that conferred *de facto* legitimacy on the policy recommendations and background reports originating from the ID.²⁰

The upshot of this bifurcated foreign policy apparatus was the informal institutionalization of distinct policy preferences. According to a former deputy chief, the ID's policy recommendations were strongly conditioned by its exclusive duty to expand and strengthen Soviet ties with ruling and non-ruling communist parties and with national liberation movements poised to subvert "imperialist" forces in the developing world. In practice, the ID tended to focus on the competitive impulses generated by the prevailing security environment to advance its parochial concern for aggressively supporting radical movements in the Third World.²¹ Alternatively, the foreign ministry by virtue of its narrow sovereignty in the realm of traditional diplomacy and Gromyko's leadership, was predisposed to fixate on regulating state-to-state relations with the West. Primary concern rested with maintaining flexibility in conventional diplomatic channels to

²⁰Personal interviews with V. Zagladin, former first deputy of the International Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU, in Moscow, on 29 July 1992; A.C. Cherniayev, former deputy chief of North America and the United Kingdom of the ID, in Moscow, on 11 October 1993; and K. Brutents, former deputy chief of Middle East and Latin America of the ID, in Moscow, on 24 July 1992. According to Brutents, the ID staff was experienced and highly qualified, consisting mostly of former academics and long-time specialists in respective geographic areas of assigned oversight. Moreover, he acknowledged that the ID staff determined whether and when to forward outside expert reports directly to the leadership, in effect operating as the information "gate-keeper" on issues concerning relations with the developing world. According to data gleaned from a large-scale Soviet interview project, the ID and MID carried equivalent administrative clout in the *de facto* foreign policy apparatus. See especially Uri R'aanan and Igor Lukes, *Inside the Apparatus*, pp. 161-171. For detailed discussion of the ID's organizational structure and mission, see especially Mark Kramer, "The Role of the CPSU International Department in Soviet Foreign Relations and National Security Policy," *Soviet Studies* 42:3 (July 1990), pp. 430-433; and Robert W. Kintros, "International department of the CPSU," *Problems of Communism* 34:5 (September-October 1984), pp. 47-65.

²¹Personal interview with K. Brutents.

stabilize relations with the US, the nuclear balance, and European security in light of the imperative for cooperation engendered by the advent of strategic parity.²²

The professional military constituted the third pillar of the informal national security establishment. While in theory, the defense ministry's prerogative to determine the technical aspects of military strategy- operational plans, force posture, and organization- was subordinate to the Party leadership's control of doctrine; in practice, it functioned with considerable autonomy.²³ The General Staff, the "brain of the army," exercised near-complete authority to determine and oversee the theoretical forecasting, operational planning, and conduct of combat activity. Specifically, the Main Operations and Military-Science directorates of the General Staff managed overall strategic planning and coordinated the technical preparation for warfare. The main staffs of the military services were authorized, pursuant to General Staff approval, to determine service-specific operational theory and practice at the front and tactical levels.²⁴

²²*Argumenty i fakti*, 9 (4-10 March 1989), p. 4; Arkady Shevchenko, *Breaking With Moscow*, p. 151; and Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, p. 404. According to Shevchenko, this distinction was reinforced by the personal animity between Gromyko and Pomarev. As recollected by one former Soviet official at the time, Gromyko appointed seasoned diplomats and loyal subordinates to the foreign ministry's collegium which helped secure his control over the ministry's activities. See especially commentary in Uri Ran'an and Igor Lukes, *Inside the Apparatus*, p. 167. According to these sources, the limited mandate vested MID with a preference for improving ties with existing governments rather than soliciting relations with anti-imperialist opposition parties.

²³According to one retrospective analysis, the professional military "turned the structure of military doctrine upside down," claiming that military science, under their control, had provided the basis for "successful Party policies in military matters, and that military doctrine must be based on military science, rather than visa versa." See discussion in Thomas M. Nichols, *The Sacred Cause: Civil-Military Conflict Over Soviet National Security* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 98. This independence seemed to increase under Ustinov's guidance, given that he was not a professional soldier and had little to say about Soviet war-fighting strategy. See especially Dale R. Herspring, *The Soviet High Command 1967-1989*, p. 126.

²⁴This was affirmed on numerous occasions by senior military leaders. According to Akhromeyev, the primary task of the General Staff was to "formulate the military-technical aspect of Soviet military doctrine by elaborating questions of strategy, operational art, and the development and employment of the Armed Forces." See *Krasnaya zvezda*, 2 July 1989, p. 2. This was confirmed in personal interviews with V.M. Tatarnikov, military aide to S.F. Akhromeyev, in Moscow, on 5 October 1993; Colonel Y. Kirshin, military theoretician within the Soviet General Staff, in Moscow, on 19 August 1992; and Captain B. Makeev, Soviet naval theoretician within the General Staff, in Moscow, on 7 September 1992. See also discussion in Condoleezza Rice, "The Party, the Military, and Decision Authority in the Soviet Union," pp. 55-61; and Edward L. Warner, *The Military in Contemporary Soviet Politics: An Institutional Analysis* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977), pp. 16-65.

The High Command's authority in the realm of military art derived from its historical training and experience in forecasting requirements for future combat operations, as well as from its privileged access to technical information. The Soviet General Staff employed a well developed methodology for generating "scientific" forecasts based on applied mathematics, probability theory, operations research, systems analysis, and historical analogy. These methods were used to determine specific combat missions, technical needs, and mobilization requirements for achieving victory in the event of a nuclear or conventional war. Key positions on these staffs were reserved exclusively for graduates of military academies and servicemen who completed a two-year course at the General Staff Academy.²⁵ Moreover, the High Command retained monopoly control of satellite reconnaissance assets, and functioned as the sole organization privy to comprehensive information pertaining to training exercises, mission assignments and the disposition of Soviet military personnel and equipment. This was reinforced by the General Staff's direct control of theater-level command staffs that served as the locus for data collection and analyses that were critical for guiding front-level combat activities. The absence of a parallel civilian staff apparatus with access, in particular, to intelligence on Soviet military force structure and organization enabled the General Staff to wield paramount authority to set the military-technical agenda, thus controlling the range of policy options presented to the leadership. The increasing technical complexity of warfare assured that this monopoly of expertise would cement the

²⁵Personal interview with V. Yarinich. As a rule, students of the General Staff Academy were taught "by generals and officers who graduated from the academy and gained extensive experiences working with troops and staffs." For more on the curriculum and cadres of the General Staff Academy, see "Akademiya generalnogo shtaba," as translated in *JPRS-UMA-88-016-L*, 4 October 1988, p. 18. On the General Staff's traditional methodology for scientific military forecasting, see especially Jacob Kipp, "The Evolution of Soviet Operational Art: The Significance of 'Strategic Defense' and 'Premeditated Defense' in the Conduct of Theater-Strategic Operations," *Journal of Soviet Military Studies* 4:4 (December 1991), pp. 624-628.

political leadership's dependence on professional military evaluations concerning the preparation and use of Soviet military force.²⁶

This practical control over national military strategy vested the High Command with an overarching preference for an all-azimuth build-up in military capabilities for meeting the challenges presented by the prevailing competitive-cooperative security environment that has been documented at length elsewhere and will not be recounted in detail here. What is significant for this discussion is that granted a circumscribed mandate to coordinate preparation and guidance for combat operations, the professional military narrowly focused on the technical means for securing victory in nuclear and conventional contingencies. On the nuclear plane, because strategic parity and the advent of MAD made mutual deterrence insurmountable, there was a strong presumption against the unleashing of general nuclear war. Among the professional military core this was underscored by the fact that a nuclear exchange would severely impede combat operations, dramatically retarding advance rates of frontal units and eliminating viable command and control. As a consequence, there was widespread concern on the part of military officials for building-up strategic forces as the primary instruments for dissuading the U.S. from introducing nuclear weapons on a battlefield while ensuring victory should the American's not pay heed.²⁷

²⁶The absence of a civilian staff institution for military policy, either parallel to or within the defense ministry, distinguishes the informal institutionalization of Soviet defense policy-making. For detailed discussion and examples of the compartmentalization of military-technical information on Soviet arms control teams, see especially Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, p. 234-235; and Edward L. Warner, *The Military in Contemporary Soviet Politics*, pp. 239-244.

²⁷Similar rationales for counter-balancing comparable U.S. systems and for securing effective forces in the event of war undergirded Soviet military support for the quantitative and qualitative build-up of theater level nuclear forces. Throughout the 1970s, skepticism pervaded the Soviet military concerning the prospects for limited nuclear war. Grechko, for example, reiterated that the introduction of nuclear weapons in a conflict would inevitably lead to the escalation of strategic exchanges. See A. A. Grechko, "Rukovodiashchaya rol' KPSS v stroitel'stve armii razvitogo sotsialisticheskogo obsshchestva," *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, 5(1974), p. 37. For detailed discussion of the Soviet military's conceptual embrace of MAD, albeit in a manner that jibed with its operational requirement for securing victory, see especially Raymond L. Garthoff, *Deterrence and the Revolution in Soviet Military Doctrine* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1990), pp. 49-93; and John G. Hines, Philip A. Peterson, and Notra Trulock II, "Soviet Military

By the same token, the ambiguity surrounding the new revolution in military-technical affairs and impending budget constraints fostered professional military interest in preparing for a prolonged conventional phase of combat. While there was ambivalence over the prospects for ultimately preventing the escalation of a major conventional war into a nuclear conflict, there was serious Soviet military interest in planning for a large conventional combined-arms strategy designed to overwhelm Western forces in Europe and deprive them of an integral step towards realizing the NATO doctrine of flexible response, and thereby preventing the introduction of nuclear weapons and securing a meaningful victory. The considerable uncertainty over the prospects for the development of conventional weapons based on "new physical principles" instilled confidence that technological breakthroughs in firepower and maneuverability stood to bolster the utility of the mainstays of the Soviet arsenal- the tank and fighter aircraft- making it possible not only for a conventional pause in a European war, but for the Red Army to exploit operational and tactical opportunities and quantitative advantages in troops and equipment to seize victory on a battlefield.²⁸ This preference for incremental evolution in tested combat practices and technical preparation of the Armed Forces was reinforced by a felt need to avoid squandering resources on unknown technologies and methods in

Theory from 1945-2000: Implications for NATO," *The Washington Quarterly* 9:4 (Fall 1986), pp. 117-137.

²⁸Most members of the High Command maintained that the emergence of new technologies and countermeasures, such as anti-tank munitions, only led to further enhancements in tank survivability and effectiveness, albeit with slight modifications in the tactical and numerical deployments of armored forces. See especially discussion in Phillip A. Karber, "The Soviet Ant-Tank Debate," *Survival* (May-June 1976), p. 105; and C. N. Donnelly, "Tactical Problems Facing the Soviet Army: Recent Debates in the Soviet Military Press," *International Defense Review* 11:9 (1978), pp. 1405-1412. For evidence that there was not a complete consensus on this view, see N. V. Orgarkov, "Voennaya nauka i zashchita sotsialisticheskogo Otechestva," *Kommunist*, 7 (May 1978), p. 118. For detailed account of the initial fervent that resulted from burgeoning concerns for the obsolescence of traditional Soviet means of warfare in light of the unfolding scientific-technological revolution in military hardware and distinct authorities ceded to the General Staff and respective staff commands of the military services, see especially Rose E. Gottemoeller, *Conflict and Consensus in the Soviet Armed Forces R-3759-AF* (Santa Monica: RAND, October 1989), pp. 9-16.

the face of looming budgetary constraints.²⁹ As reflected by the nature of military exercises and war games in the General Staff Academy, and extensive theoretical discussion of operational art and tactics published in the confidential General Staff journal *Voennaya mysl'* (Military Thought), this preoccupation with combined-arms war-fighting generated a strong preference for the development and deployment of a highly offensive military strategy and forces primarily aimed at rapidly seizing the operational initiative and destroying NATO conventional and theater nuclear forces throughout the European theater of military operations. According to military commentators, such offensive operations enabled the attacker to seize the initiative, choose the sector of engagement, control the timing and means of destructive blows against the opponent, and impose its will over an adversary that were decisively more advantageous than defensive operations.³⁰

The fourth leg of the informal administrative structure revolved around the issue of defense economics. While the uniformed military was delegated broad jurisdiction to formulate and implement defense strategy and force posture, the High Command exerted

²⁹An example of the High Command's sensitivity to impending budget stringency was the move to reduce emphasis on the development of the navy's independent power projection capabilities in favor of channeling resources to the preparation for waging a major ground and air offensive in Europe. In this case, the military leadership proved willing to sacrifice aircraft carriers for ground force armor in light of a possible cut-back in allocated resources. See Francis Fukuyama, *Soviet Civil-Military Relations and the Power Projection Mission R-3504-AF* (Santa Monica: RAND, April 1987), pp. 39-42.

³⁰For an example of Soviet military writing that championed the "indisputable" advantages of offensive, as opposed to defensive operations in view of the advances in traditional military technology and attainment of strategic parity, see A. A. Sidorenko, *Nastuplenie* (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1970), pp. 3-5. While the importance of defensive operations was not neglected, they were seen as transitional activities on a battlefield and subordinate to offensive operations and tactics. See especially I. A. Grudin, *Dialektika i sovremennoye voennoye delo* (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1971), pp. 57-58. For detailed summaries of the High Command's fixation on preparing for the launch of a large-scale ground and air offensive against NATO forces in Western Europe, see especially Ghulam Dastagir Wardak, *The Voroshilov Lectures*, vol. 1, ed. Graham Hall Turbiville, Jr. (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1989), pp. 257-315; Phillip Peterson and John Hines, "The Conventional Offensive in Soviet Theater Strategy," *Orbis*, 27:3 (Fall 1983), pp. 695-739; and David M. Glanz, "Soviet Offensive Ground Doctrine Since 1945," *Air University Review* (March-April 1983), pp. 25-35; Kimberley Martin Zisk, *Engaging the Enemy: Organizational Theory and Soviet Military Innovation, 1955-1991* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 69-81.

only marginal control over military acquisitions and defense resource allocations. In fact, the producers, rather than the professional military customers, wielded technical and political advantages that enabled them to usurp administrative control over procurement of Soviet defense capabilities. Most specialists within the Defense Ministry, "cut their teeth" in defense industrial institutes and organizations, and had a proclivity for deferring to their former mentors on technical issues. For example, engineers ostensibly tasked with generating weapons requirements in the various military scientific institutes, the General Staff's Scientific Technical Committee, and the technical directorates of the individual military services received their training in defense industry and were separated from rank-and-file servicemen.³¹ This leverage was reinforced by the cross-over both at the senior and administrative level of personnel from defense industry to key procurement posts in the defense ministry.³² Most significant from the stand point of administrative control, however, was that military representatives stationed at design bureaus and production facilities (*voenpredi*), who were formally designated as quality control agents for the defense ministry, received important perquisites and amenities from plant directors above their base salaries. According to spokesmen from the Ministry of Defense, it was quite common for *voenpredi* to sacrifice diligence as monitoring agents for the uniformed military, and to succumb to the lures of material consumption,

³¹Personal interview with V. Katev and V. Popov; A. Isaev, Ministry of Aviation, in Moscow, on 20 July 1992; and V. Shlykov, former Deputy Chairman of the Russian State Committee for Questions of Defense, in Moscow, on 12 December 1994. According to the Rector of the Moscow Aviation Institute, I. Rizhov, the vast majority of engineers in the Air Force and Strategic Rocket Forces were trained at his institute, not within their respective military services. Interview conducted by Andrew J. Aldrin with I. Rizhov, in Los Angeles, on 14 February 1991.

³²This was facilitated at the senior level, by the appointment of Ustinov as defense minister; and at the administrative level, with the appointment of V. Shabanov as deputy defense minister for armaments in 1978. The latter spent the bulk of his career in the radio industry and as a deputy minister of defense industry, and maintained close working relations with many factory managers and general designers.

approving practically every weapon system that they inspected in return for automobiles, access to privileged schools and housing, and a cushy retirement.³³

At the crux of the autonomous defense industrial administrative network was the Defense Industry Department of the Central Committee. In practice, this organ functioned as the supervisor and enforcer of Soviet defense industry-- broadly comprised of nine industrial ministries and over 2000 factories, design bureaus, and research institutes. As the leading defense industrial body within the Party, staffed by 300 specialists, it was delegated authority to issue binding orders for accepting or rejecting weapons systems, and for channeling material and financial resources for military R&D and procurement.³⁴ While responsibilities for housekeeping and monitoring defense industry were formally shared with the Military Industrial Commission (VPK), the Defense Department was uniquely situated to raise matters directly with the political leadership, via its patron Ustinov. As such, it constituted the "court of last resort" for adjudicating disputes between and among different defense industrial organizations and

³³ See especially A. Tabak, "Chest' mundira i chest' armii," *Literaturnaya gazeta*, 8 November 1989, p. 11; *Krasnaya zvezda*, 22 February 1990, p. 2; and *Komsomolskaya pravda*, 12 November 1989, p. 1; A. Kravtsov, "Kontroler na povodke," *Ogonek*, 43 (October 1990), pp. 7-8; and E. Lyuboshits, "Raskhody na oboronu- pod kontrol' nauki," *Voprosi ekonomiki* 10 (1990), p. 40-42. A former *voenpred* confirmed receipt of attractive perks, such as cars, consumer goods, and access to special schools, from plant directors. He went to great lengths to point out the "inherent complexities of his job" in depending on both professional military and defense industrial higher-ups for his welfare. Personal interview with D. Medvedev, in Moscow, on 28 June 1992. Indicative of the perceived magnitude of the problem was Shabanov's statement that "a main factor in the general Soviet lag in the introduction of advanced technologically into the arsenal is the laxity shown by military acceptance representatives at defense plants, who are responsible for the smooth hand over of defense output." *Krasnaya zvezda*, 18 August 1989, p. 2; and *ibid.*, 19 August 1990, p. 3. This general indictment of laxity was reiterated in personal interviews with V.N. Lobov, former Chief of the General Staff, in Moscow, on 6 August 1992, and N. P. Markov, former admiral in the Soviet Navy, in Moscow, on 23 July 1992.

³⁴ Personal interviews with V. Kataev, and V. Popov. In fact, funding for military research, development, and procurement was earmarked by the informal defense industrial establishment directly out of the state budget, and remained independent from Ministry of Defense for whom the work was contracted. Interview with Igor Novosolov, former member, defense economics section of the State Planning Commission, in Moscow, on 9 July 1992. See also Peter Almquist, "Soviet Military Acquisition: From a Sellers' Market to a Buyers'?", in Susan L. Clarke, ed., *Soviet Military Power in a Changing World* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), p. 141.

the military over the technical requirements of components and systems slated for delivery to the arsenal.³⁵

Within the defense industrial network, day-to-day authorities governing weapons acquisitions and defense resource allocations were considerably decentralized. For instance, the nine defense industrial ministries were ceded basic control over the distribution of funds to particular enterprises, and were granted broad mandates to oversee the execution of the state plan.³⁶ In carrying out these tasks, the ministries, in turn, were dependent upon subordinate organizations for critical technical and analytical support. According to several defense industrial insiders, the central research institutes within each ministerial apparatus provided the staffing and technical assessments of individual weapons systems for the Central Committee and the VPK. Research institutes also formulated the armaments programs for their respective ministries that allowed them, in practice, to determine the basic parameters for the annual and five-year plans for output within each ministry. Similarly, general designers possessed the technical expertise to control decisions regarding the drafting of final weapons designs, prototype development, and the acceptance of systems into full production. Finally, manufacturing facilities, which were excluded from the design process altogether, were in charge of developing and implementing stable production lines for each weapon system.³⁷ Thus,

³⁵Personal interview with V. Kataev and V. Popov.

³⁶Peter Almquist, *Red Forge* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), p. 26. For a discussion of the nature and scope of managerial autonomy of enterprise directors through the centrally administered Soviet system, see especially Jeremy R. Azrael, *Managerial Power and Soviet Politics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966); Joseph Berliner, *Factory and Manager in the USSR* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957); Abram Bergson, *The Economics of Soviet Planning* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964); Alec Nove, *The Soviet Economic System* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1977); and Susan Linz, "Managerial Autonomy in Soviet Firms," *Soviet Studies* 40:2 (April 1988), pp. 175-195.

³⁷Specifically, general designers maintained considerable discretion to coordinate the integration of modern components and basic scientific research into a weapons system. They also possessed the final word regarding pre-production amendments to technical requirements. Personal interviews with V. Kataev and V. Popov; and Evgenii Fedosev, Director of the State Scientific Research Institute of Aviation, in Moscow, on 7 July 1992. See also Peter Almquist, *Red Forge*; and Thane Gustafson, "Response to

actual authorities over the establishment and fulfillment of output targets, as well as the research and development of technical specifications, were appropriated by various actors at low levels in the defense industrial agency chain who retained superior knowledge about the daily operations at individual enterprises.

While designers and plant managers exercised informal control over discrete phases of the production cycle, they were liberated from important liabilities associated with actual ownership. Despite the practical divorce of central administrative organs from the minutiae of weapons design and procurement, the state continued to claim *de jure* authority over all aspects of defense decision-making. Administrative reforms throughout the 1970s-- aimed specifically at integrating basic science with defense production, strengthening the hand of general designers in the management of procurement, and accelerating open and covert "acquisition" of foreign technology-- failed to convert administrative agents and plant directors into residual claimants of official duties. As a consequence, responsibilities for plan fulfillment and the delivery of weaponry to the arsenal were diffused throughout the Soviet system. According to one former defense industrial administrator, "blame for mistakes in plan fulfillment was apportioned throughout the hierarchy, as lower level bodies were not formally accountable for their actions, and higher administrative agents could do as they pleased."³⁸ In this regard, defense industrialists shared basic incentives to restrict their activities on behalf of the state to the fulfillment of gross plan targets. They were not accountable for any defects outside of plan fulfillment, nor were they rewarded for

Technological Challenge," in Timothy J. Colton and Thane Gustafson, eds., *Soldiers and the Soviet State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 192-238.

³⁸Interview conducted by Donald Mahoney with M. Malei, former Russian presidential advisor on defense industrial matters, in Moscow, on 20 March 1992.

accomplishments above and beyond specified output targets. Thus, the defense industry as a whole maintained a strong preference for strictly adhering to plan targets.

Compounding the gap between power and responsibility within the defense industrial apparatus was the assurance of economic survival. As state entities with "soft budget" constraints, defense industrial enterprises remained protected from the threat of insolvency. According to one defense industrial official at the time:

while there was intense competition among design bureaus for the state's acceptance of a particular system, there was never a real threat of bankruptcy. In fact, the state usually decided to procure competing systems rather than to select a winner among them.³⁹

Moreover, design bureaus and production facilities operated on the basis of a cost-plus acquisitions principle. As summed up by one insider, "defense workers always achieve[d] the necessary result because the state [did] not limit the costs."⁴⁰

In addition, the various organizations that comprised Soviet defense industry were allocated funds directly from the state budget on the basis of institutional demands. Research institutes, for example, received funds based on their own submissions for personnel and material needs, rather than on the cost effectiveness or substance of their research.⁴¹ Like their civilian counterparts, defense industrial organizations operated under conditions of goal-oriented planning, where concerns for cost and productivity

³⁹Transcript of interviews conducted by Andrew J. Aldrin and Peter Almquist with O. Baklanov, director of an electronics-related plant of the missile industry at the time, p. 14. Baklanov cites the decision to procure both the SS-25 and SS-26 mobile ICBMs as a evidence of "the results of competition." This was confirmed in personal interview with A. Koulakov, deputy head of Scientific-Technical Council of the VPK, in Moscow, on 13 December 1994.

⁴⁰*Sotsialisticheskaya industriya*, 7 February, 1989, p. 2, as translated in *FBIS-SOV-89-030*, 15 February 1989, p. 80.

⁴¹Personal interviews with V. Surikov, former Deputy Minister of the Central Scientific Research Institute of Machine-Building, in Moscow, on 15 September 1993; and E. Fedosev.

were peripheral to the allocation of resources.⁴² Thus, there was little economic incentive for defense industrial organizations to be concerned with the efficient employment of factor inputs (labor, capital, energy), or for that matter, the weapons requirements specified by the Ministry of Defense, as they were financially divorced from the interests of the buyer.

Finally, the *de facto* empowerment of Soviet defense industrial organizations was affirmed by the state's weak monitoring system. Plan output targets were the primary instruments for administrative oversight performed by the Department of Defense Industry and the VPK. These targets were traditionally expressed in easily observable aggregate figures. There was a premium placed on steady output measured in physical units, both at an enterprise and within a ministry. Bonuses were also tied to quantitative indicators, such as increases in the number of systems produced at a plant. Design teams, for example, were rewarded for the timely introduction of slight modifications to existing systems, while defense plants received material benefits for maintaining stable production lines. Moreover, promotions across the defense industrial sector were confined mostly to positions within a single branch ministry, reinforcing managerial incentives to adhere strictly to plan targets issued from above by the ministry.⁴³ This ministerial inbreeding, compounded by the increased specialization of technical expertise, imposed severe limits on the mobility of enterprise directors that rendered the opportunity costs of poor managerial performance inconsequential and further hampered effective monitoring.

⁴²See especially A. Isaev, "Reforma i oboronnye otrasli," *Kommunist* 5 (March 1989), p. 5. According to interviews with V. Kataev; A. Isaev; and I. Novsolev, the inefficiency in the Soviet defense industrial sector was on par with that in other sectors of Soviet industry. The main source of its "magic," laid in its priority receipt of scarce resources. See also discussion in Arthur J. Alexander, *Perestrioka and Changes in Soviet Weapons Acquisitions* R-3821-USDP (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, June 1990), pp. 40-45.

⁴³Confirmed in personal interviews with V. Surikov; and A. Isaev. See also Peter Almquist, *Red Forge*. For empirical evidence of ministerial autonomy and the powers of self-recruitment within the Soviet government as a whole, see especially David Lane and Cameron Ross, "Limitations of Party Control: The Government Bureaucracy in the USSR," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 27:1 (1994), pp. 19-38.

These crude oversight measures, in effect, duplicated the "success indicator problem" that plagued the civilian sector of the economy. The defense industrial community as a whole maintained overriding incentives to meet designated specifications at all costs. This encouraged plant directors to manipulate output consistent with specified indicators, and to avoid undertaking innovative practices for which they would not receive benefits. According to several "red directors" during the period, these incentives became all the more prevalent, as the growing technological complexity of new systems made it impossible to stipulate comprehensive production specifications in formal plan contracts.⁴⁴

The most severe impediment to effective monitoring within the defense industrial apparatus, however, was the penetration of administrative bodies by the very actors that were the subject of observation. According to several former administrators of Soviet defense industry, most VPK staff members spent the bulk of their careers at design bureaus, while the rest learned their trade at production facilities and research institutes within the defense industrial sector. Similarly, most of the analytical specialists within the Central Committee Defense Department were "appointed at the behest of specific chief designers."⁴⁵ As a consequence, not only were the administrative bodies dependent upon the analyses performed by research institutes and design bureaus for carrying out their monitoring activities, they were typically captured by internecine associations and collusion among their personnel with former employers throughout the defense industry. Moreover, given that monitoring agents were increasingly dependent on directors and designers to fulfill taut plans, they were reluctant to sanction individual infractions that

⁴⁴A. Isaev, "Reforma i oboronnye otrasli," p. 25; and *Sotialisticheskaya industriya*, 13 November 1988, p. 2, as translated in *FBIS-SOV-88-233*, 5 December 1988, p. 122.

⁴⁵Personal interviews with V. Kataev and V. Popov. For a similar finding, see Peter Almquist, *Red Forge*, pp. 21-23.

would jeopardize ongoing personal relationships. As stated by one former Central Committee staff member, "it often made more sense to ignore a specific problem than to risk undermining a stable relationship that was necessary for continuous plan fulfillment."⁴⁶

The *de facto* separation of authority within the defense industrial apparatus infused policy conservatism in responding to the mixed cooperative-competitive pressures of the prevailing security environment. Empowered, but not directly accountable for their performance, defense industrial actors were wedded to the perverse incentives of the Soviet administered system. Despite its privileged access to scarce resources and allowance for excess reserve capacity, the defense industrial establishment contended with taut plan targets, uncertain supplier networks, and "soft budget" constraints that typically restricted input substitution and budgetary reallocations. As was the case in the civilian industrial sector, these structural constraints stifled incentives for technological innovation and impeded entrepreneurship throughout the administrative hierarchy. This also reinforced incentives for duplication, standardization and incrementalism in the design and production of weapons in the name of plan fulfillment. As a consequence, defense industrialists shared preferences with military bureaucrats for continuity, both in terms of resource allocations and the design and production of weapons. Delegated partial authority to exploit opportunities for conventional superiority, the defense industrial establishment maintained a strong preference for quantitative, as opposed to qualitative manufacturing techniques, tailored to increasing the volume of cheap, simple and reliable weaponry available to the Red Army. Moreover, there was a strong presumption against arms control and other re-distributive

⁴⁶Personal interviews with V. Kataev; and A. Koulakov.

domestic policies that could threaten budgetary outlays and disrupt stable military production lines.⁴⁷

In sum, the *de facto* division of labor within the Brezhnev grand strategy decision-making establishment created several distinct preferences for coping with the prevailing security environment. Within the bifurcated foreign policy apparatus there were cross-cutting pressures for regulating the strategic relationship with the West and exploiting opportunities for advancing ideological interests in the developing world. Simultaneously, there were interests in preparing the armed forces for a major conventional war in Europe and stabilizing defense industrial production.

The Consolidation of Foreign Policy-Making and Fissures Within the Military-Industrial Complex Under Gorbachev

Amidst the perennial confusion in the formal procedures for Soviet national security decision-making, Gorbachev, like his predecessors was forced to cede limited responsibilities to those politicians and administrators that actually controlled information and technical expertise in respective policy domains. At the highest level, he adopted a fresh administrative start by establishing an inter-departmental commission to unite around one table core members of the elite with formal portfolios for national security. In practice, this exclusive subset of the leadership continued to possess the "final word" for determining Soviet defense and foreign policies. At the bureaucratic level, informal networks drawing on the substantive expertise located within the Central Committee, the

⁴⁷See especially discussion in Arthur J. Alexander, "Decision-Making in Soviet Weapons Procurement," *Adelphi Papers* 147-148 (Winter 1978/79); and Thane Gustafson, "The Response to Technological Challenge," pp. 204-207; and Karl F. Spielman, "Defense Industrialists in the USSR," *Problems of Communism* 25:5 (September- October 1976), pp. 52-69. It is important to note that efforts to redirect the focus of defense industry, including attempts to increase its role in the consumer and agricultural sectors of the economy, were made by appeals to the good will of the red directors, rather than by political fiat.

Ministry of Defense, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, retained autonomy to generate alternative policy responses and oversee the implementation of elite directives in respective diplomatic, military-technical, and defense industrial spheres.

Once again, the upshot of the *de facto* parceling out of authority, albeit in a slightly modified form, was the informal segmentation of rights for defining the nature of the international threat, deciding the appropriate political and military responses, and determining the specific means and forms for carrying out these tasks. This continued compartmentalization of authority among different political, professional military, and defense industrial actors introduced significant agency costs that prevented the leadership from effectively coordinating the various policy strains in *new thinking*. Unable to micromanage their activities through effective formal channels, Gorbachev continued a long-standing Soviet tradition of relying on cooptation and patronage for the promulgation of strategy. Beholden to these informal networks for devising and implementing *new thinking*, Gorbachev was compelled to grant considerable discretion to these agents that, in turn, induced them to indulge their narrow policy preferences at the expense of technical competence and political allegiance. Given the dramatically different character of the prevailing security environment, however, this *de facto* delegation of authority produced a different set of divergent policy preferences among empowered actors. In fact, the combined effect of the partial delegation of authority and altered security environment unified preferences within the informal foreign policy network in favor of deepening international cooperation, while provoked discord within the Soviet military-industrial complex over the military-technical requirements of Soviet grand strategy. The net result was a rigid bargaining process that sanctioned undisciplined parochialism and aggregated competing policy preferences into Gorbachev's *new thinking*.

In the first months following his ascendance as General Secretary in 1985, Gorbachev mounted a concerted effort to reinvigorate the *de facto* structure of Soviet national security decision-making that had atrophied during the political interregnum following Brezhnev's death. With the Politburo's blessing, he formed a special Political Commission that was devoted "to coordinating military and technical aspects of international politics." This organ reported directly to the Politburo, and was tasked with translating the political-military objectives of the top leadership into a realistic plan of action. Its job was to operationalize abstract political directives formulated by the leadership regarding the nature of the international threat, the allocation of resources for defense, and the balance between political and military approaches to security. To do so, the Political Commission possessed a broad mandate to develop negotiating positions and to coordinate the activities of the defense and foreign ministries, and other official agencies specified by the senior leadership.⁴⁸ Initially, it dealt expressly with devising strategies and approving all initiatives and packages for conventional and nuclear arms control negotiations. In this capacity, the commission served as the final receptacle for recommendations and reports submitted by negotiating teams.⁴⁹ Following its re-subordination to the presidency in 1990, its jurisdiction widened to encompass general

⁴⁸*Pravda* 4 July 1990, p. 3. Zaikov implies that this organ was established shortly after Gorbachev formally announced the new Soviet program for improving international relations in January 1986. According to a foreign ministry official, the Political Commission did not begin to take the lead in national security decision-making until Yakovlev became a full member of the Politburo in June 1987. Personal interview with V. Mizhin, former Soviet foreign ministry representative at the Geneva talks, in Moscow, on 11 October 1993.

⁴⁹This was claimed by Shevardnadze in a speech before the 28th Party Congress. See *Pravda*, 26 June 1990, p. 3. This was seconded by Yu. Kvitzinskii., who stated that all disarmament negotiating points were hammered out by an inter-departmental body in Moscow. Personal interview with Y. Kvitzinskii, former head Soviet negotiator during the INF talks, in Moscow, on 13 August 1992. See also implicit references to the existence and functions of an inter-departmental organ of the Politburo by the former Chief of the General Staff in S.F. Akhromeyev and G.M. Kornienko, *Glazami marshala i diplomata: Kriticheskiy vzglyad na vneshnyuyu politiku SSSR do i posle 1985 goda* (Moskva: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1992), pp. 90-95.

issues of foreign policy, weapons acquisition, and defense industrial conversion.⁵⁰ Thus, as was the case in the Brezhnev regime, substantive rights to do the collective leadership's bidding and to determine the practical implications for national security policy at the highest level were informally ceded to a small subset of the elite.

The authority of the Political Commission derived directly from its access to the top leadership, as well as from its high-powered composition. Studies and recommendations were sent directly to the Politburo for final approval. The commission's senior members also sat on the Politburo, where they held critical national security portfolios. L. Zaikov, for instance, as the chairman from its initial inception through the summer of 1991 endowed the position with immediate stature, bringing to it his combined status as a Politburo member, first deputy chairman of the Defense Council, and senior secretary of the Central Committee responsible for defense industry.⁵¹ He also brought to the commission a wealth of experience accumulated from an extensive administrative career in Soviet defense industry, as well as respect and good working relations with prominent "red directors."⁵² E. Shevardnadze (foreign minister) and A. Yakovlev (senior secretary of the Central Committee in charge of foreign policy), two of Gorbachev's staunchest political allies, were the other full Politburo members on the

⁵⁰Personal interview with V. Mizhin. According to one well connected source, the Political Commission was subsequently re-subordinated to the office of the president during the latter part of 1990. In the transition, it was renamed the "Group on Negotiations," though it retained an inter-departmental character. Personal interview with V. Surikov.

⁵¹*Pravda* 4 July 1990, p. 3. O. Baklanov succeeded Zaikov as chairman of the newly reconstituted Group on Negotiations under the office of the president in Fall 1991. At the time, he too brought significant clout to the body, simultaneously retaining the positions of First Deputy Chairman of the Defense Council, head of the Defense Department of the president's staff, and leader of the Defense Commission of the rump Party organization. Moreover, he enjoyed a long career in defense industry, rising up from a factory manager, to become Minister of General Machine-Building from 1983-1988, and subsequently occupying the post of Central Committee secretary responsible for the defense and chemical industries.

⁵²Zaikov's powers broadened in September 1988, when he also became the Mayor of Moscow. For more on Zaikov, see Alexander Rahr, "A Biographic Directory of 100 Soviet Officials," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Weekly Report* 1 January 1989.

commission. This core group not only held key national security portfolios, but represented Gorbachev's inner circle.

In addition to these senior Politburo officials, membership on the Political Commission was restricted to the heads of core national security organizations. Zaikov claimed that as an inter-departmental body, the Political Commission consisted of leaders from the Defense Ministry, KGB, defense industry, and other departments. According to several well informed insiders, "there were seven members of the commission in all, and the four besides Zaikov, Shevardnadze, and Yakovlev were the defense minister, the chief of the General Staff, the chairman of the KGB, and the most senior military-industrial leader."⁵³ Thus, the Political Commission constituted an exclusive gathering of the most important national security players, and functioned as the actual locus of expertise on defense and diplomacy at the highest level.

The streamlined collection of the most senior national security elites in the Political Commission contrasted vividly with the broad organizational representation in the Politburo and Defense Council. Noticeably excluded were Ryzhkov (Prime Minister) and Ligachev (second secretary of the Central Committee), two of the most prominent conservative voices in the Politburo throughout the period. Several permanent members of the Defense Council, including the heads of the military services, the first deputy ministers of defense, the chief of the Main Political Directorate of the Armed Forces, and the head of the state planning commission, did not participate directly in the workings of the Political Commission. These omissions ensured that policy-making authority for all practical purposes was the exclusive preserve of those elites possessing formal functional

⁵³*Pravda* 4 July 1990, p. 3. This is according to Viktor Surikov, as quoted in Harry Gelman, *The Rise and Fall of National Security Decisionmaking in the Former USSR*, pp. 22-23. This was affirmed by V. Kataev, who clarified that the latter member was the head of the VPK. He named Akhromeyev (later Moiseyev), Yazov, Chebrikov (later Khryuchkov), and Maslyukov (after 1988 Belousov) as the additional members. Personal interviews with V. Kataev and V. Popov.

responsibilities in areas expressly related to national security. Moreover, the restricted membership actually diluted professional military representation at the highest level, and concentrated disproportional authority over the formulation of national security policies in the hands of three Politburo members-- Shevardnadze, Yakovlev, and Zaikov-- who were close confidants of Gorbachev.

The leadership vested this new Politburo subcommittee with *de facto* autonomy. The political clout of its senior members, as well as its corner on top national security functionaries shielded the Political Commission from close Politburo scrutiny. According to "insiders," its independence was manifest in the Politburo's general tendency to rubber-stamp its recommendations.⁵⁴

Within the commission, authority was parceled out on the basis of functional specialization. Entrusting the collective authority of this body to hand-picked associates, Gorbachev allowed members to exercise discretion over their narrow policy interests. Each was responsible for crafting policies in a respective area, armed with executive authority to shape the agenda of deliberations within the attendant bureaucracy. In fact, the new organ functioned less as an inter-agency coordinating mechanism for resolving policy differences among prominent national security elites and functionaries, than as a venue for demarcating vertical lines of authority for the different dimensions of Soviet grand strategy. The commission convened only to discuss "extraordinary" issues and to

⁵⁴Personal interviews with V. Kataev and V. Popov. Surikov reiterated the integral role played by the Political Commission and spoke of the general *pro forma* acceptance of its reports by the Politburo and the Defense Council. Personal interview with V. Surikov. Similar comments were also made in personal interviews with V. Tatarnikov; and V. Mizhin. Yakovlev, in a retrospect asserted that the Politburo played an insignificant role in defense and foreign policy deliberations during this period. "It was only the less important issues that were raised in the Politburo." *Berlingske Tidende Sondag*, 26 July 1992, as translated in *FBIS-SOV-92-146*, 29 July 1992, p. 15. This was confirmed in a personal interview with N. A. Kosolopov, Yakovlev's foreign policy advisor, in Moscow, on 3 October 1993.

receive Gorbachev's formal endorsement, permitting each member to call the shots in his own policy domain on a regular basis.⁵⁵

Zaikov's performance as chairman of the Political Commission reflected the distributional nature of this elite coalition. According to informed sources, he functioned more as a facilitator and coordinator of lower level staffing bodies, than as a mediator of policy conflicts among the committee's membership.⁵⁶ His role was mainly to make sure that members did not encroach upon each other's jurisdiction. Akhromeyev, for example, recounts that on several occasions during internal deliberations over Soviet arms control proposals both Gorbachev and Zaikov reprimanded him for foisting the military's parochial concerns on the other members of the commission. The marshal was explicitly urged to "listen to the views of others, including political figures and scientists," who were responsible for other spheres of foreign and security policy.⁵⁷

With respect to Soviet diplomacy, Shevardnadze and Yakovlev informally wielded almost exclusive authority within the Political Commission . By virtue of their formal portfolios and intimate associations with Gorbachev, they enjoyed great latitude in shaping the Soviet foreign and security policy agenda, especially in the drafting of negotiating positions. The two worked in tandem- Yakovlev serving as the intellectual father of *new thinking*, and as senior Secretary of the Central Committee directly in control of the foreign policy mechanism in the Party; Shevardnadze acting as Gorbachev's *alter ego* in the state apparatus, and as the principal representative of *new thinking* to the outside diplomatic community. As suggested by the plethora of personal

⁵⁵Personal interview with V. Kataev and V. Popov; and V. Surikov. For the most part, Zaikov confined his public policy statements to issues of upgrading Soviet industrial and technological competitiveness, as well as to social and economic reform in Moscow, where he simultaneously functioned as municipal party chief from 1987 to 1989.

⁵⁶Personal interviews with V. Kataev and V. Popov.

⁵⁷S.F. Akhromeyev and G.M. Kornienko, *Glazami marshala i diplomata*, p. 72.

attacks levied against them for free-lancing and selling out Soviet national interests, Shevardnadze and Yakovlev, in exercising their tremendous executive authorities to take diplomatic initiatives, were unencumbered by the narrow considerations of their peers on the commission. Akhromeyev, for instance, repeatedly complained about the autonomy of these senior officials, and the privileges accorded to them in riding roughshod over the arms control and foreign policy agenda.⁵⁸

This “kitchen cabinet” was informally authorized to make independent political gambits to further the course of Soviet diplomacy. According to several of his trusted aides, Shevardnadze was vested with the authority to short-circuit the formal decision-making process in Moscow and to by-pass the military and other interest groups in crafting Soviet negotiating positions. On many occasions, he would instruct his staff to devise initiatives that he would personally propose to his foreign interlocutors without vetting them through formal channels. “After they accepted his terms, he would take breakthroughs back to Gorbachev for approval, only then would he present them to the military-- as a *fait accompli*.”⁵⁹ By Shevardnadze’s own admission, the Political Commission implicitly conferred upon him practical authority to negotiate and make binding foreign policy decisions on behalf of the Soviet leadership. In a particularly revealing comment, he stated that:

The commission which Zaikov headed helped me a great deal. Some of these issues were not resolved in this commission, but I had an understanding that when I went to the negotiations with Baker and other partners, I would send the information from there and state my position... . I proposed that if no other

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 222, 227. While most of these accusations came from conservative “outsiders” in the Parliament and Central Committee, who were searching for evidence to oust liberal opponents, Akhromeyev’s statements are particularly revealing since they came from within the informal national security establishment. See also discussion in A.C. Chernyaev, *Shest’ let s Gorbachevym* (Moskva: Progress Kul’tura, 1993), p. 106.

⁵⁹Micheal R. Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, *At the Highest Levels* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company: 1993), p. 118.

instructions came, I would make the decision. That was how I acted on certain key positions and I acted quite boldly.⁶⁰

Armed with informal prerogatives to oversee the course of Soviet diplomacy, both Yakovlev and Shevardnadze became increasingly preoccupied with the realization of international entente. Situated directly at the nexus of domestic and international pressures for international accommodation, these two elites were delegated responsibilities for breaking the impasse in foreign relations with the West and altering the image of Soviet diplomacy so as to alleviate wrenching domestic problems.⁶¹ As such, their fates became increasingly linked to the implementation of a radical, visionary diplomatic approach that held out the prospects for strengthening the Soviet Union's international position while averting the dire economic and social costs linked to the excessively provocative strategies of the past.⁶² Both were bent on optimally fulfilling their mandates to build a lasting international partnership with the West, faced unique incentives for searching out breakthroughs and demonstrating progress in negotiations with foreign interlocutors. As a consequence, they maintained strong preferences for employing dynamic bargaining tactics, that included the offering of asymmetric concessions, as tools for breaking the inertia in international negotiations and "qualitatively" improving Soviet national security.⁶³

⁶⁰"Vybor Eduard Shevardnadze," *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'* 10 (October 1991), p. 9. See also Shevardnadze's statements in *Izvestiya*, 23 March 1989, p. 5; *ibid.*, 11 February 1991; *Argumenti i fakti*, 18, (6-12 May 1989), pp. 1-2; and *ibid.*, 3 October 1990, pp. 4-5.

⁶¹Personal interviews with N. Kosolopov; and A. Chernyaev, Gorbachev's foreign policy advisor, in Moscow, on 20 August 1992. See also A.C. Chernyaev, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym*, pp. 110, 117.

⁶²See especially Shevardnadze's early pronouncements in "Vystuplenie E.A. Shevardnadze na sobranii aktiva diplomaticheskoi akademii, instituta mezhdunarodnykh otnoshenii i tsentral'nogo apparata MID SSSR," *Vestnik Ministerstva Inostrannykh Del SSSR* (hereafter *Vestnik MID*) 2 (25 August 1987), pp. 30-34.

⁶³For detailed analysis of Shevardnadze's strategic vision and commitment to qualitative measures for pushing political compromise in Soviet foreign policy, see especially John Van Oudenaren, *The Role of*

By Shevardnadze's own characterization, his role was akin to that of an business entrepreneur. As the designated head of the Soviet diplomatic establishment, he was responsible for "producing" radical, innovative concepts for ensuring the "competitiveness" of Soviet foreign policy in the world market. Because he and his coterie were in charge of generating "profits" from the translation of the leadership's vision of international accommodation into political reality, it was incumbent upon them to exploit fully the opportunities for finalizing "achievable" agreements with the West.⁶⁴

These delegated responsibilities empowered Shevardnadze and Yakovlev with preferences that were independent of those possessed by Gorbachev. As they aggressively pursued their narrow authorities to realize international agreements, they were driven increasingly to make international accommodation the focal point of their duties. Vested with partial authority to promote an external setting that was conducive for long-term domestic reform, their preferences became inextricably linked to the progress of international negotiations, despite the changing political winds in Moscow. As the designated purveyors of "common human values" and other tenets of *new thinking* among the Soviet elite, both Shevardnadze and Yakovlev had great stakes in seeing that they came to fruition. In Shevardnadze's case, this autonomy increased his appetite for taking bold initiatives and made the consummation of international agreements a priority in itself. In fact, on several occasions he proved willing to collaborate independently with his foreign interlocutors in circumventing impediments to the progress of

Shevardnadze and the MFA in the Making of Soviet Defense and Arms Control Policy, R-3898-USDP (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1990). See also Shevardnadze's defense of his commitment to political compromise in Eduard Shevardnadze, *Moi vybor: v zashchitu demokratii i svobody* (Moskva: Novosti Press, 1991), pp. 143-158.

⁶⁴"Vystuplenie E.A. Shevardnadze na sobranii aktiva diplomaticheskoi akademii, instituta mezhdunarodnykh otnoshenii i tsentral'nogo apparata MID SSSR," pp. 30-34; and "The 19th All Union CPSU Conference: Foreign Policy and Diplomacy," *International Affairs*, 10 (1988), pp. 20. Shevardnadze used the term "competitiveness" in a qualitative sense to convey the need for infusing Soviet diplomacy with flexibility that he perceived was demanded by prevailing international and domestic circumstances.

international negotiations, even to the point of subverting alternative Soviet diplomatic initiatives that were sanctioned personally by Gorbachev.⁶⁵ As suggested by their respective resignations in protest of mounting reactionary domestic political pressure, these preferences for promoting international reconciliation ultimately transcended personal loyalties to Gorbachev.⁶⁶

While actual responsibilities for overseeing the extension of foreign commitments were concentrated in the hands of Gorbachev's inner circle, discretion over the other dimensions of grand strategy was informally divided across several networks within the second tier of the Soviet national security establishment. In practice, the parceling out of administrative responsibilities for national security took place under the auspices of an "inter-departmental working group" that was directly attached to the Political Commission. This body operated at the level of deputy minister or secretary. According to well informed sources, the chairman of this working group was Colonel B. Omelichev, first deputy chief of the General Staff. The other permanent participants mirrored representation on the senior body, "including figures such as deputy VPK chairman G. Khromov and men of comparable rank from the KGB and foreign ministry."⁶⁷ In addition, there were others who participated on an *ad hoc* basis, depending on the nature

⁶⁵According to U.S. officials in the Bush administration, Shevardnadze was particularly territorial concerning his wide discretion in overseeing Soviet foreign policy, and conspired against the initiatives taken by other Soviet officials. At one point during negotiations following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, Shevardnadze sent a message to a State Department official requesting that he reject the peace proposal that was scheduled to be delivered by Gorbachev's special envoy E. Primakov. See Michael Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, *At the Highest Levels*, p. 276. According to Kvitzinskii this type of "unprofessional" freelancing characterized Shevardnadze's behavior during the the end-game of negotiations over German reunification. Personal interview with Yu. Kvitzinskii.

⁶⁶Personal interviews with N. Kosolopov; and A. Chernyaev; and F. Burlatskii, long-time Soviet political insider, in Moscow, on 3 August 1992.

⁶⁷This was stated by V. Surikov, as quoted in Harry Gelman, *The Rise and Fall of National Security Decisionmaking in the Former USSR*, p. 23. The existence and composition of the inter-departmental working group of the Political Commission was confirmed in personal interviews with V. Kataev and V. Popov; and V. Tatarnikov.

of the issue at hand. These occasional members included "representatives from other departments, scientists and experts from the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, and scientific research centers of the General Staff and of industry."⁶⁸

The working group enjoyed considerable latitude to formulate policy recommendations and implement national security directives. As a staffing organ, it supplied the Political Commission with detailed expertise on discrete topics, as well as communicated orders down through the various bureaucracies. Negotiating teams reported directly to this organ which, in turn, processed the information for the Political Commission.⁶⁹ More important, it solicited analytical reports from experts located throughout the system, channeling relevant information up to the political leadership. In doing so, the working group organized informal expert groups to address specific foreign, military, and defense industrial policies. According to Zaikov, the working group relied primarily on the political and technical recommendations provided by specialists in the Defense Department and International Department of the Central Committee, in addition to the expertise of the General Staff and foreign ministry.⁷⁰ As a consequence, several distinct informal networks emerged to shape the agenda and administer the different diplomatic, military-technical, and defense industrial spheres of Soviet grand strategy.

⁶⁸*Pravda* 4 July 1990, p. 3. These occasional members rounded out the representation on the working group. As such, this was the inter-ministerial body that constituted the *pyaterka* that was the source of much speculation among Western specialists. Its total membership, however, was not strictly confined to representatives from the five national security organs (the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, KGB, VPK, and Central Committee) but included these occasional members as well. Personal interviews with V. Kataev; and V. Tatarnikov.

⁶⁹According to several former arms control negotiators, Soviet negotiating teams were comprised of representatives from the foreign ministry, General Staff, VPK, KGB, and Central Committee, who reported independently to their respective counterpart on the working group. The group was then tasked with reconciling differences among the various reports and channeling a final recommendation up to the Political Commission. In the event that differences could not be resolved at the working group level, the matter was passed up to the Political Commission for final resolution. Personal interviews with V. Mizhin; Yu. Kvitzinskii; and V. Tatarnikov.

⁷⁰*Pravda* 24 June 1990, p. 3.

On the foreign policy plane, substantive issues continued to be informally farmed out to the ID and MID, largely in recognition of their *de facto* in-house expertise and direct subordination to Yakovlev and Shevardnadze, respectively. MID remained integral to the execution of foreign policy via its control over diplomatic services and the staffing of Soviet embassies. Moreover, foreign ministry personnel stationed abroad retained discretion to interact with officials in host countries, serving as both routine and back channels to and from national policy-making communities. As summed up by one Soviet diplomat during the period, the personal rapport established with foreign interlocutors was crucial not only for communicating delicate information between leaderships, but for providing the ministry important leverage in its dealings with other bureaucracies in Moscow.⁷¹

Successive waves of internal reorganization beginning in mid-1986 further enhanced the foreign ministry's *de facto* clout to oversee the conduct of Soviet diplomacy, as well as increased Shevardnadze's personal control over the foreign policy establishment. Following his appointment as foreign minister, Shevardnadze moved decisively to realign the ministry's departments, creating new offices delineated by region rather than by functional responsibility, in order to process information consistent with the contemporary political geography facing the Soviet Union. In addition, the foreign ministry established the Research Coordinating Council and the Directorate for International Scientific and Technological Cooperation to solicit expert advice from scientists, academics and *instituchiki* (scholars affiliated with the different Academy of Science research institutes) on technical issues of strategic stability that were needed for

⁷¹Personal interview with Yu. Kvitzinskii. Shevardnadze, in outlining the new directions for the ministry in 1987, called for playing on this strength. See "Vystuplenie E.A. Shevardnadze na sobranii aktiva diplomaticheskoi akademii, instituta mezhdunarodnykh otnoshenii i tsentral'nogo apparata MID SSSR," pp. 30-34. For more on the foreign ministry's position in the policy-making bureaucracy, see Mark Kramer, "The Role of the CPSU International Department in Soviet Foreign Relations and National Security Policy," pp. 432-438.

securing the ministry's control over the Soviet nuclear arms control agenda. Outside scholars also were included on negotiating teams as analytical advisors. These outreach programs to the unofficial expert community not only offered scholars a real voice in the formulation of policy, but served as important sources of the ministry's control over expertise in the realm of foreign affairs.⁷² Finally, by 1989 Shevardnadze succeeded in creating an inner circle within the Office of the Foreign Minister that was expressly loyal to his personal policy agenda. In practice, this tight-knit group of confidants preempted deliberations that took place both within the ministry and the inter-departmental working group, and ultimately compelled formal channels to bend to the will of the foreign minister.⁷³

Similarly, the International Department, retained its administrative status by virtue of its professional staff and direct access to the top leadership. In the wake of the 27th Party Congress, for example, there was a considerable transfer of personnel from the foreign ministry. Officials with extensive diplomatic experience, such as A. Dobrynin and G. Kornienko, were appointed to lead the department. The infusion of career foreign service personnel with expertise in negotiating U.S.-Soviet relations and arms control provided the springboard for the department to expand its jurisdiction beyond traditional contacts with non-ruling parties, national liberation movements, and radical Third World regimes. Despite personnel changes following the reorganization of the Secretariat in 1988, the resurrected ID remained staffed at the highest level by former foreign ministry officials, such as V. Falin, as well as by longtime in-house pragmatists, such as K.

⁷²Personal interviews with N. Kosolopov; and G. Arbatov. For an overview of the reorganization of the foreign ministry, see James P. Nichol, *Perestroika of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs During the Gorbachev Period*, Program in Soviet and East European Studies Occasional Paper Series No. 16 (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts International Area Studies Program, 1988).

⁷³See reference to the unrestrained informal authority of Shevardnadze and his coterie in S.F. Akhromeyev and G.M. Kornienko, *Glazami marshala i diplomata*, pp. 221-257. This point was also reiterated in interviews with A. Chernyaev; and G. Arbatov.

Brutents and R. Fedorov, that helped to preserve the department's competence in overseeing relations with both Communist and non-Communist regimes. Moreover, after staff reductions brought about by the administrative reform in 1988, the ID continued to submit draft documents and recommendations directly to the top leadership for review.⁷⁴ Holding on to its position as the unofficial gatekeeper of information flowing to and from the Politburo, the ID remained the *de facto* repository for inter-agency foreign intelligence, as well as the superintendent of specialist analyses and recommendations provided by the various foreign affairs research institutes.⁷⁵

Unlike the previous period, where the Party and state foreign policy establishments functioned in parallel with little horizontal interaction, the foreign ministry and International Department consolidated their efforts under Gorbachev. While the division of labor became more ambiguous, as the Party apparatus initially expanded its jurisdiction to shape relations with the non-socialist world, these activities became coordinated closely with the foreign ministry. This lateral interaction received a boost from the unprecedented cross-fertilization of personnel between the two organizations. The newly appointed leadership of the International Department exercised influence over early staffing decisions in the foreign ministry. For example, Dobrynin, while he had no

⁷⁴Mark Kramer, "The Role of the CPSU International Department in Soviet Foreign Relations and National Security Policy," p.432. Following the restructuring of the Secretariat in 1988, the number of staff members devoted to a particular issue was significantly reduced, and many positions were left vacant. Personal interviews with V. Zagladin; and K. Brutents.

⁷⁵Interviews with N. Simoniya, head of Section on Africa, at the Institute of World Economy and International Relations, in Moscow, on 6 July 1992; and G. Mirskii, head of Section on the Middle East at the Institute of World Economy and International Relations, in Moscow, on 24 July 1992. Prior to the reorganization in 1988 the close personal ties enjoyed by Dobrynin and Zagladin with Gorbachev served to buttress the department's advantages of proximity to the top leadership.

official authority to oversee appointments, "unofficially" secured the movement of some of his former associates into the upper echelon of the foreign ministry.⁷⁶

With the radical shake-up of the Central Committee in 1988 and Shevardnadze's growing assertiveness in all aspects of foreign and security affairs, the coordination between the state and Party organs became informally underwritten by the close rapport that existed between the respective patrons of these two foreign policy bureaucracies. Despite occasional friction, representatives from each organization continued to work closely together in hammering out the details of Soviet policies towards the West and the Third World. According to Yakovlev:

Close and fruitful cooperation exist[ed] with the U.S.S.R. Foreign Ministry. There are, of course, differences in the approaches to certain questions, and that is only natural. But the petty bureaucratic "tug-of-war," which only damaged the cause [previously], has disappeared.⁷⁷

While internally coordinated, the informal foreign policy network headed by Shevardnadze and Yakovlev, in practice, was self-sustained and functioned with considerable autonomy from the Ministry of Defense and other "outside" groups. As suggested by the criticisms made during the 1988 Foreign Policy Conference, there was unambiguous dissatisfaction with the excessive secrecy of the Ministry of Defense, and with the deleterious consequences that the reluctance to exchange data had on the effectiveness of Soviet diplomacy in the past. To redress this issue, Shevardnadze and his coterie mounted a concerted effort to secure independent access to all information "that applied to their sphere of competency."⁷⁸

⁷⁶The most obvious benefactors of Dobrynin's lobbying efforts included First Deputy Minister Y. Vorontsov; and Deputy Ministers A. Bessmertnykh, V. Loginov, and V. Petrovsky. See James Nichol, *Perestrioka of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Gorbachev Era*, p. 5.

⁷⁷Pravda, 23 June 1990, p. 3. Parenthesis added by author.

⁷⁸"The 19th All Union CPSU Conference: Foreign Policy and Diplomacy," pp. 18-19.

The cornerstone of this effort to insulate the foreign ministry's control over the conduct of Soviet diplomacy was the creation of the Directorate for Questions of Arms Limitation and Disarmament, headed by deputy minister V. Karpov.⁷⁹ This directorate was delegated a broad mandate to consolidate and monitor all of the foreign ministry's arms control negotiating efforts. Moreover, Karpov's agency was staffed by professional military personnel, such as K. Mikhailov, who were recruited directly from the General Staff for their technical expertise on weapons systems and arms control. According to "insiders" formerly situated both within the diplomatic corps and the General Staff, this recruitment tactic reflected Shevardnadze's desires for establishing his ministry's autonomy from the Ministry of Defense in negotiating Soviet arms control proposals, and for laying the basis for its eventual monopoly of the Soviet security agenda. This directorate served as a vehicle for concentrating diplomats and soldiers who were both favorably disposed towards his ideas of arms control and directly accountable to him.⁸⁰ On several occasions, Shevardnadze remarked that this body not only enabled the foreign ministry to "cope with the volume of work that was required for keeping pace with US-Soviet arms negotiations," but provided the mechanism for producing "realistic, complex assessments of the threats to Soviet security, free from strong external pressure from anybody [within the bureaucracy]."⁸¹

The creation of a military section within the International Department headed by the experienced Soviet arms control negotiator, Lt. General V. Starodubov, paralleled the efforts by the foreign ministry to establish credible expertise in military-political affairs

⁷⁹Prior to this appointment, V. Karpov was the chief Soviet negotiator during the SALT II talks and the preliminary rounds of the INF negotiations.

⁸⁰Personal interviews with N. Kosolopov; V. Mizhin; V. Tatarnikov; General Yu. Lebedev, in Moscow, on 28 July 1992; and General N. Chervov, in Moscow, on 20 August 1992.

⁸¹"The 19th All Union CPSU Conference: Foreign Policy and Diplomacy," p. 31.

outside of the Ministry of Defense. According to Starodubov, the new ID section served as a haven for progressive military experts on arms control to infuse "realism" directly into Soviet diplomatic initiatives, unfettered by the "inertia that prevailed in certain circles within the Ministry of Defense." While this body served as the locus for integrating political and military-technical imperatives into Soviet arms control policies, its direct subordination to politicians in the Central Committee deprived Starodubov's office of its "objectivity" in overseeing the formulation of a new outlook on security affairs.⁸² In this regard, the military section served as an important instrument for Yakovlev to wield in directing Soviet foreign and security policy.

Delegated responsibilities to administer Soviet foreign policy and closely wedded to the personal authorities of Yakovlev and Shevardnadze, this informal foreign policy network echoed preferences for redressing the cross-cutting pressures that arose in the previous Soviet foreign policy apparatus. Tasked solely with reaching international agreements in a new cooperative security environment, the Soviet foreign policy establishment condemned earlier missed opportunities for securing foreign collaboration. Blame was placed squarely on the shoulders of those groups, both domestic and international, that favored military over political approaches to promoting Soviet national security, and were responsible for dragging the country into "costly arms races with adverse economic and social consequences."⁸³ Previous fixations on competitive opportunism and on strict quantitative indicators of parity were seen as contributing to the impasse in international negotiations.⁸⁴ As a consequence, there was an upswell of

⁸²Personal interviews with Generals V. Starodubov and N. Chervov, in Moscow, on 20 August 1992.

⁸³See especially the initial critique of "suboptimal" Soviet foreign policy decision-making by then Deputy Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh in "The Art of Weighing Possibilities," *New Times*, 46 (1987), pp. 6-8. See also *Pravda*, 27 May 1988, p. 1.

⁸⁴See the range of criticisms of the static, competitive approaches to Soviet diplomacy emanating from the foreign policy establishment in "The 19th All Union CPSU Conference: Foreign Policy and Diplomacy," p.

interest among empowered foreign policy "insiders" for redirecting Soviet diplomacy and placing it on a footing that featured aggressive breakthrough negotiating tactics designed to capitalize on opportunities for international accommodation. This encouraged the pursuit of dynamic approaches to Soviet diplomacy and military-political affairs that hinged on a willingness to embrace asymmetric proposals for ensuring strategic stability with the West.

Continuing a long standing Soviet tradition, the rights to define military mission requirements and to guide the weapons acquisitions process remained the *de facto* province of the Soviet military-industrial complex. From Gorbachev's ascension to his final demise, the Soviet Armed Forces, in particular the General Staff, together with the Defense Department of the Central Committee remained the repositories for key authorities governing the formulation and implementation of military strategy, as well as the allocation of defense-related resources. As was the case during the Brezhnev era, this bifurcated administrative structure was divided along professional military and defense industrial lines.

Military science, which constituted the broad technical criteria for determining the missions of Soviet strategy in a possible war and the organization and readiness of the Armed Forces, remained the *de facto* preserve of the professional military. According to D. Yazov, the defense minister at the time, "the Ministry of Defense controlled the practical military consequences of the decisions reached by the political leadership through its development of operational, mobilizational, and other plans for using the branches of the Armed Forces, services, and special troops." Within the ministry, the General Staff determined the strategic implications of new weapons technology, the

16; and V. Shlykov, "Strong is the Armor: Tank Asymmetry and Real Security," *International Affairs*, 12 (1988), p. 39.

relative advantage of offensive versus defensive operations and tactics, and the mobilization requirements linked to the evolving character of war.⁸⁵

The High Command secured its informal control over war-fighting requirements through its continued representation at the highest political level. Akhromeyev, former chief of the General Staff, as a member of the Political Commission retained a voice at the hub of the *de facto* national security policy-making structure. Moreover, Akhromeyev enjoyed the personal respect of the General Secretary who, as confirmed by informed accounts, personally deferred to him on military-technical issues related to arms reduction proposals and the military's mission requirements.⁸⁶ As an institution, the General Staff supplemented its formal structural advantage as the secretariat of the Defense Council, with its informal role as the staff arm of the inter-departmental working group of the Political Commission. With one of its representatives chairing the working group, the professional military was assured practical control over the military agenda, including the flow of operational analyses associated with the use of force to the political leadership.⁸⁷

In exercising its authority over mission requirements, the High Command was insulated from intrusive political oversight by nature of its monopoly of raw military-

⁸⁵"*Moscow Domestic Service*, 3 July 1989, as translated in *FBIS-SOV-89-127*, 5 July 1989, p. 40.

⁸⁶Personal interviews with V. Tatarnikov; and A. Chernyaev. As the confusion surrounding the formal lines of authority intensified following the creation of the Office of the President, Akhromeyev continued to function as the guru of Soviet military strategy in an informal capacity as personal advisor to the President. While Akhromeyev's personal ascendance elevated the stature of the General Staff and its control over the military's operational agenda, it intensified intra- defense ministry divisions. In his memoirs, Akhromeyev states that his growing status ruffled the feathers of those in the office of the Minister of Defense, who sought to subordinate the General Staff to broader ministerial concerns and limit its interaction with "outside" organizations. See S.F. Akhromeyev and G.M. Kornienko, *Glazami marshala i diplomata*, p. 93. According to Chernyaev, when Akhromeyev became advisor to Gorbachev on military technical matters, clashes between the former chief of the General Staff and the Defense Ministry became more commonplace.

⁸⁷According to Shevardnadze, the General Staff, as the secretariat for the working group, played the key role in "coordinating positions and elaborating directives" which were then passed up the the leadership. *Pravda*, 26 June 1990, p. 3.

technical data concerning Soviet force posture. Despite the unprecedented flourishing of competent "unofficial" centers for defense analysis and strategic modeling that emerged largely within the institutes of the Academy of Sciences and outside of the traditional national security bureaucracy, the Ministry of Defense continued to control the dispersal of detailed information on Soviet military forces. Academics and members of the specialist community, while actively engaged in the discourse on military issues, generally had to rely on foreign source materials and the generosity of the Ministry of Defense for the empirical data that informed their sophisticated analyses, especially in the area of Soviet conventional force capabilities. Despite the growing respect that certain civilian analysts engendered among military men, due mostly to their collaboration with retired officers, they did not participate directly in the drawing up of doctrinal statements.⁸⁸ Thus, the erosion of the defense ministry's monopoly of "scientific" analysis of force effectiveness notwithstanding, the General Staff retained its exclusive authority over military-technical policy by remaining the sole repository of operational data on Soviet forces.

The empowerment of the High Command to design Soviet military strategy induced specific preferences that had to be accommodated in Gorbachev's grand strategy. In shouldering this responsibility, the professional military had to come to grips with the prevailing condition of strategic parity that rendered moot the very notion of victory in a

⁸⁸While civilian specialists were vocal participants in the debates over strategic stability and "scientific" analysis of force effectiveness, they lacked an intrinsic power base or source of regularized authority. In particular, they relied on the information provided by the professional military. As is discussed below, they owed their stature directly to the bargaining arrangements that arose in the context of the informal national security process. This sense of being beholden to the professional military for conventional operational data was expressed in personal interviews with two leading civilian analysts of military affairs, A. Kortunov, head of section at the Institute of U.S.A. and Canada, in Moscow, on 18 August 1992; and A. Arbatov, head of Department of Disarmament at the Institute of World economy and International Relations, in Moscow, on 15 May 1992. This was reiterated in personal interviews, from the military's perspective, by Colonel Yu. Kirshin, in Moscow, on 19 August 1992; and V. Tatarnikov. For detailed accounts of the civilian challenge to the military's claim to exclusive authority over defense analysis, see Benjamin S. Lambeth, *Is the Soviet Defense Policy Becoming Civilianized?* R-3939-USDP (Santa Monica: RAND, August 1990), pp. 17-34; and Kimberly Martin Zisk, *Engaging the Enemy*, pp. 120-130.

nuclear war. Echoing consternation expressed by earlier iconoclasts over the futility of traditional war-fighting missions in an era of strategic parity, military officials acknowledged that the prevention of nuclear war had become the decisive objective of military strategy. Convinced of the "catastrophic consequences" attendant to a nuclear exchange, the senior military leadership showed a preference for enhancing "strategic stability," as well as for maintaining parity in terms of mutual capabilities to deliver retaliatory strikes, rather than on the basis of a numerical equality in strategic forces.⁸⁹

The recognition of the utter senselessness of nuclear war generated an interest within the High Command for pursuing mutual efforts to improve security and stability. Strategic parity and mutual deterrence were not seen as ends in themselves, and had to be supplemented by political approaches aimed at "reducing, and ultimately completely eliminating, the threat of nuclear war." In dealing with the task of preventing war, Akhromeyev and his staff openly accepted that Soviet security had become more of a "political problem, beyond the scope of military-technical means." As a result, there was burgeoning interest on the part of the senior military leadership to support diplomatic efforts at achieving negotiated reductions in opposing strategic arsenals; albeit at levels that preserved parity and mutual deterrence.⁹⁰ Moreover, there was broader concern for

⁸⁹See especially V.V. Korobushin, "K uvelichennoi effektivnoste voenno-nauchnoi issledovaniya," *Voennaya mysl'*, 5 (May 1988), p. 1; Marshal V. G. Kulikov, "K voenno-strategicheskomu paritetu i dostatochnosti oborone," *Voennaya mysl'*, 5 (May 1988), p. 4; *Krasnaya zvezda*, 3 January 1989, p. 3; *ibid.*, 23 February 1988, p. 2; B. Kanevsky and P. Shabardin, "K voprosu o sootnoshenii politiki, voiny, raketn- yadernoi katastrofy," *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'*, 10 (October 1987), p. 122. For a sample of similar references to the catastrophic character of nuclear war, see also S.F. Akhromeyev, "Prevoskhodstvo sovetskoi voennoi nauki i sovetskogo voennogo iskusstva," *Kommunist* 3 (February 1985), p. 62; and *Trud*, 21 February, 1988, p. 2. For earlier accounts, see especially N. Ogarkov, *Istoriya uchit' bditel'nosti* (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1985); and M.A. Gareyev, *M.V. Frunze- Voennyi teoretik* (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1985).

⁹⁰See especially *Sovetskaya rossiya*, 21 February 1987, p. 1; and A.F. Akhromeyev and G. M. Kornienko, *Glazami marshala i diplomata*, pp. 86-87. According to Akhromeyev, the major bone of contention within the Ministry of Defense was over the nature of Soviet unilateral concessions. He makes explicit reference to acrimonious relations between members of the General Staff, who supported "in principle" the concept of unilateral concession in nuclear arms control negotiations, and former Minister of Defense Sokolov, who labeled unilateral concessions "intolerable." *Ibid.*, pp. 92-93. For further evidence of support within the General Staff for Soviet unilateral concessions in strategic arms reductions talks, see M.V. Gareyev,

establishing non-provocative “rules of engagement” between nuclear powers in order to reduce the chance of either direct or indirect confrontation. According to one informed source, the High Command became acutely sensitive to creating mutually agreed upon parameters for superpower engagement in regional conflicts as a means for establishing a brake to unpremeditated escalation into an unwinnable nuclear war.⁹¹

This reevaluation of fundamental mission requirements by Soviet military planners gained further impetus from developments in non-nuclear weapons technology. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, a revolution in weapons technology, marked by fundamental developments in microelectronics, sensors, munitions, and directed energy systems, came to fruition that dramatically altered the prevailing security environment. Emerging technologies allowed for the fusion of advanced data processing systems and a variety of optical, radar, infra-red and laser sensors into conventional weapons and reconnaissance systems. These developments made it technically feasible to create a lethal synthesis of firepower, accuracy, and range in conventional weapons suitable for employment in a variety of combat zones and under all types of weather conditions.⁹² In all respects, the cornucopia of technological developments in weaponry that became operational during the Gorbachev era radically reshaped the character of a potential battlefield.

"Voennaya doktrina organizatsii Varshavskovo Dogovora i eye prelomleniye v mezhdunarodnoy politika," *Vestnik Ministerstva Inostrannykh Del SSSR*, 1 (22 June 1987), pp. 52-62.

⁹¹Personal interview with Yu. Kirshin. See also discussion in Raymond Garthoff, *Deterrence and the Revolution in Soviet Military Doctrine*, pp. 115-127.

⁹²Achievements in microcircuitry, explosives, and directed energy, for example, made possible the development of "smart weapons" capable of delivering a large number of munitions over great distances to targets with pinpoint accuracy. Advances in information processing and automation significantly improved the capacity of communications and reconnaissance systems that, in turn, dramatically altered the promise for battlefield management at the operational and tactical levels. "Emerging Technologies: An Uncertain Future," *Strategic Survey 1983-1984* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1984), pp. 43-46. See also James Digby, "Precision-Guided Weapons," *Adelphi Paper* 118 (Summer 1975).

This revolution in weaponry served as the catalyst for a dramatic reassessment of Soviet military planning priorities. Building on earlier reservations expressed in certain military circles, General Staff representatives began to equivocate openly regarding the traditional Soviet deep strike offensive mission, in view of the "qualitative leap" in conventional weaponry. In particular, there was growing anxiety over the vulnerability of massed, numerically superior, and echeloned Soviet troop formations-- the pillars of the earlier strategic plan for creating offensive breakthroughs-- in an environment dominated by precision guided munitions and reconnaissance strike complexes.⁹³ This prompted strong interests in "leveling" offensive and defensive combat activities within a non-provocative operational scheme that placed renewed emphasis on the disruption, defeat, and repulsion of the enemy's attacking forces.⁹⁴

In connection with this dramatic shift in emphasis to defensive operations, the High Command reaffirmed the importance of weapons modernization to meet the challenge presented by new-in-principle technologies. Changes to operational plans were seen as necessary but insufficient if taken in isolation of a qualitative upgrading of military hardware.⁹⁵ General M. Moiseyev, who succeeded Akhromeyev as chief of the General Staff at the end of 1988, stated explicitly that the new emphasis on defensive

⁹³M.A. Gareev, *M.V. Frunze*, pp. 240-244; and V.G. Reznichenko, ed. *Taktika* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1987), p. 24.

⁹⁴V.N. Lobov, "Khotya ugroza umen'shilas," *Novoye vremya* 29 (July 14, 1989), p. 9; and *Krasnaya zvezda*, 3 June 1990, p. 2.

⁹⁵See especially emphasis placed on qualitative improvements in the arsenal as the harbinger for Soviet success on a future battlefield in G. I. Gladkov, "O poniatii 'vysokotochnoe oruzhie,'" *Voennaya mysl'* 8 (1989), pp. 38-43. These sentiments were echoed by spokesmen from across the military services. The most vociferous advocates outside of the General Staff, however, could be found in the air force and navy. See brief discussion in Stephen Blank, "New Strategists Who Demand the Old Economy," *Orbis* 36:3 (Summer 1992), pp. 365-378.

operations demanded “the transition to qualitative parameters for the building and development of the Armed Forces.”⁹⁶

These preferences for qualitative innovations to operational planning and weapons acquisition were also induced by the military leadership’s growing appreciation for the resource stringency that confronted the Soviet Union. By the latter half of the 1980s, an earlier minority opinion for “doing more with less” gained a wider constituency within the High Command.⁹⁷ Senior officers openly asserted that numerical superiority in weapons systems was neither affordable nor relevant for compensating for technological deficiencies in the arsenal. As stated by Yazov, “quantitative approaches toward accomplishing defense tasks have become obsolete and inefficient from a strictly military point of view.”⁹⁸ Instead, the High Command underscored the need for making productive use of scarce economic resources and intensively incorporating new technologies into the modernization process, so as “to permit the military to cope with its tasks with a smaller range of military weapons and equipment.”⁹⁹ Moiseyev

⁹⁶*Izvestiya*, 22 February 1990, p. 3. See also V. Shabanov, “Adequate Armaments are Vital,” *Soviet Military Review*, 3 (1987), pp. 2-5. This point was reaffirmed in personal interviews with General V. Lobov; and V. Tatarnikov.

⁹⁷See suggestive comments by Ogarkov, in *Krasnaya zvezda*, 9 May 1984, pp. 2-3; and by Col. S. Bartenev in “*Ekonomika i voennaya moshch*,” *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil* 14 (1980), pp. 66-74. See also discussion in Abraham S. Becker, *Ogarkov's Complaint and Gorbachev's Dilemma* R-3541-AF (Santa Monica: RAND, December 1987), pp. 14-24.

⁹⁸*FBIS-SOV*, 1 March 1990, p. 15. Others, in emphasizing the imperative for fielding a small high quality fighting force, warned that numerically superior forces were in fact likely to become more vulnerable of a future battlefield dominated by reconnaissance strike complexes, as a result of high forces-to-space ratios and the density of required deployments. For a sample of this line of argument, see especially V. Bondarenko, “*Nauchno-tehnicheskyy progress i voennyi dela*,” *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil* 21 (November 1986), p. 14.

⁹⁹For Akhromeyev’s statements on this point, see especially *Rabotnichesko delo*, 6 December 1988, p. 1. See also Defense Minister Sokolov’s comments in *Pravda*, 23 February 1986, p. 1. Another prominent voice for qualitative reform of the arsenal was General V. Shabanov, Deputy Minister of Defense and Chief of the Armaments Directorate of the Ministry of Defense. For select commentary on the issue, see especially *Krasnaya zvezda*, 18 August 1989, p. 1; *Krasnaya zvezda*, 15 August 1986, pp. 2-3; *Trud*, 28 September 1990, p. 3.

unambiguously affirmed these sentiments when he stated that the critical issue confronting the army was not the amount of inputs allocated for defense, but the "quality of tanks, ships, and aircraft available to perform new and complex mission requirements."¹⁰⁰

The pinch of the economic predicament also provided the catalyst for general acceptance of "sufficiency" in defense planning. By 1987, for instance, Akhromeyev declared that the basic principle governing the outfitting of the Armed Forces was the preservation of a "rough military equilibrium at a level sufficient to ensure reliable defense of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact states."¹⁰¹ The last Soviet chief of the General Staff, V. Lobov, carried this point even further when he lobbied for weaponry that was both "capable and economical."¹⁰² Other military spokesmen echoed this concern by stressing the need for allocating only those resources necessary for ensuring "sufficient" defense from outside attack. While debate raged on within the military over the precise definitions and operational significance of the terms "reliable defense," "defensive sufficiency," and "reasonable sufficiency," the High Command generally recognized the overarching imperatives for conserving on resources in their approaches to

¹⁰⁰*Izvestiya*, 22 February 1990, p. 3. See also D.T. Yazov, *Na strazhe sotsializma i mira* (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1987) p. 33. These concerns for "qualitative renewal" were ultimately codified in the draft plan for military reform published by the Ministry of Defense in November 1990. This document placed a premium on "cost-effectiveness" and the "upgrading and development of new spheres of military equipment and advanced technologies" for reducing the technological lag. Others chose a slightly different path for articulating the interdependence of the economy and military-technical policy. These writers stressed the need for reinvigorating the economic base as a means for generating the weapons technologies demanded for operations in the new era. See especially discussions in Russell Bova, "The Soviet Military and Economic Reform," *Soviet Studies* 40:3 (July 1988), pp. 385-405; George C. Weickhardt, "The Soviet Military-Industrial Complex and Economic Reform," *Soviet Economy* 2:3 (July-October 1986), pp. 193-220; and *Krasnaya zvezda*, 3 December 1986, pp. 2-3.

¹⁰¹*Krasnaya zvezda* 9 May 1987, p. 1.

¹⁰²Personal interview with V. Lobov. See also statements in *Krasnaya zvezda*, 28 October 1991, p. 2.

re-equipping the arsenal and fulfilling mission requirements that were precipitated by practical resource constraints.¹⁰³

New preferences for qualitative renewal and cost-effectiveness in military-technical policy were manifest in the plethora of complaints concerning the weaponry delivered to the arsenal. For example, in the wake of the accidental sinking of the Soviet submarine, *Komsomolets*, there was an outpouring of criticism of "design defects" in naval systems and components. These critiques honed in on the escalating costs, measured in both material and human resources, tied to the delivery of sub-standard equipment to the navy.¹⁰⁴ Similarly, air force personnel openly took the Ministry of Aviation and specific design bureaus to task for delivering aircraft that did not meet modern combat specifications and lacked "state-of-the-art" support systems. In addition to carping on the absence of safety features and mechanical problems, complaints were leveled specifically at problems encountered with the integration of smart munitions and advanced guidance systems with modern airframes that was deemed critical for the deployment of qualitatively competitive aircraft.¹⁰⁵ Also, several analysts publicly

¹⁰³For discussions of the debate over the criteria and implications of "reasonable sufficiency," "defensive sufficiency," and "reliable defense," see especially Stephen Meyer, "Sources and Prospects of Gorbachev's New Political Thinking on Security," *International Security* 13:2 (Fall 1988), pp. 144-150.

¹⁰⁴See especially *Sovetskaya rossiya*, 6 September 1990, p. 4; *ibid.*, 26 April 1990, p. 4; *Krasnaya zvezda*, 15 March 1990, p. 2; *Izvestiya*, 13 May 1990, p. 4; *Izvestiya*, May 9, 1991, p. 3; *Izvestiya*, 8 September 1990, p. 3; *Izvestiya*, 8 October, 1990, p. 2; *Krasnaya zvezda*, 21 December 1990, p. 2; *Pravda*, 12 May 1989, p. 4; *Pravda*, 7 January 1990, p. 6; *Izvestiya*, 16 July 1990, p. 6; and I. Kolton, "Ukhodim zavtra v more... vernemsya?" *Moskovskii novosti*, 23 (June 9, 1991), p. 15. For more general complaints of the quality of naval hardware, see V. Kuzin, "Avianesushchie kreisera: my znali, chto delali," *Morskoi sbornik* 2 (1992), pp. 33-41; *Krasnaya zvezda*, 23 November 1988, p. 2; *ibid.*, 15 February 1991, p. 2; and *Izvestiya*, 11 July 1991, p. 7. According to a former Soviet admiral and a naval combat theoretician, there was a direct connection between the nature of the navy's growing dissatisfaction and the growing need for sophisticated technology for conducting power projection and anti-submarine warfare in the new technological era. See interviews with Admiral N. Markov ; and Captain B. Makeev.

¹⁰⁵For a sample of the range of complaints regarding platforms and infrastructure in the airforce, see especially *Pravda*, 11 November 1990, p. 2; *Aviatsiya i kosmonautika*, January 1991, pp. 2-3; *Krasnaya zvezda*, 19 August 1990, p. 3; *Krasnaya zvezda*, 17 August 1991, p. 3; *Krasnaya zvezda*, 1 May 1990, pp. 1-2; *Krasnaya zvezda*, 19 March 1991, p. ; *Krasnaya zvezda*, 1 November 1990, p. 2; *Krasnaya zvezda*, 6 December 1991, p. 2; *Izvestiya*, 30 July 1989, p. 1; *Rabochnaya tribuna*, 22 December 1990, p. 1, 5; and *Aviatsiya i kosmonovtika*, 7 (July 1990), pp. 18-20.

lambasted the increasing inferiority and impotence of the mainstay of the Soviet army—the tank. There was acknowledgment that its growing obsolescence and diminishing cost-effectiveness was due largely to revolutionary advances in anti-tank weaponry and glitches in the development of Soviet reactive armor.¹⁰⁶

These complaints were not confined to obscure technical issues by low ranking military engineers. Senior military officials chimed in with a chorus of critiques of the general quality of the hardware in the arsenal. General Shabanov, for example, pointed to serious shortcomings in the integration of technological innovations into modern Soviet weaponry. He was especially perturbed over what he perceived to be a general lag

in the technical standard of a number of models of weapons in terms of extremely important parameters such as reliability, durability, energy consumption, weight and size. Our science and industry lag behind in the sphere of developing radioelectronic weapon systems, thermal imaging instruments and night vision instruments, and communications and control systems...¹⁰⁷

Lobov similarly did not mince words, and in a scathing critique made reference to the abundance of "junk and obsolete equipment" in the arsenal.¹⁰⁸ This was echoed by Marshal E. Shaposhnikov, commander of the Air Force, who complained of the perverse situation confronting the Air Force where it was tasked with competing in a revolutionary combat environment but was supplied with "few high quality and many low quality

¹⁰⁶See especially discussions in V. Slykov, "I tanki nashi bystry," *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'* 9 (September 1988), pp. 117-129; *ibid.* 11 (November 1988); and Peter Schweizer, "The Soviet Military Goes High Tech," *Orbis* 35:2 (Spring 1991), pp. 197-200. There were also complaints surrounding the performance of new armored personnel carriers in various climates. See especially *Krasnaya zvezda*, 12 February 1991, p. 2. This was conveyed in personal interviews with V. Lobov; and A. Kortunov, 18 August 1992.

¹⁰⁷*Krasnaya zvezda*, 21 August 1989, p. 2; See also his statements in *Krasnaya zvezda*, 15 August 1986, pp. 2-3; and *Krasnaya zvezda*, 15 November 1988, pp. 1-2.

¹⁰⁸V. Lobov, "Voennaya reforma: tseli, printsipy, soderzhanie," *Kommunist* 13 (September 1990), p. 19.

bombers, fighters, etc... ."109 Finally, in a comment that revealed the crux of the military's acute anxiety over the growing backwardness of the arsenal, especially in those areas most affected by the intensifying technological revolution, Moiseyev stated directly that:

Soviet weapons are somewhat behind the best foreign models insofar as outfitting with radioelectric and optical electronic equipment and information processing and transmitting equipment is concerned.¹¹⁰

These complaints were symbolic of a growing estrangement between the military and defense industry, and were part of a general indictment of the process of Soviet weapons acquisitions. In the context of the widening gap between capabilities and requirements in the arsenal, defense industry increasingly became the object of scorn in the Soviet military press. While this was undoubtedly part of a concerted ploy on behalf of the professional military leadership to divert blame for the failings of the Soviet system, it nonetheless revealed the limits of the defense ministry's authority to govern Soviet military-technical policy. What it suggested was that while the High Command was in charge of devising operational art, it remained a mere supplicant in the procurement process. Military officials did not possess real authorities to accept or reject weapons systems. These rights remained the *de facto* preserve of the defense industrial establishment.

In exercising full control over weapons acquisitions the Soviet defense industrial establishment remained shielded from the close scrutiny of the Ministry of Defense and other outside organizations. As inferred from the professional military's scathing

¹⁰⁹*Krasnaya zvezda*, 15 September 1990, p. 2. See also his complaints in *Izvestiya*, 10 August 1990, p. 7; *Komsomolskaya pravda*, 26 August 1990, p. 1.

¹¹⁰*Pravitel'stvennyi vestnik*, 9 (February 1991), pp. 11.

indictment of the weapons acquisitions process, Soviet defense industrial administrators continued to exert exclusive control over the dispersal of funds to weapons producers, and thus “called the tune” with respect to technical requirements for the arsenal. Enjoying full discretion over resource allocations, the red directors could afford to disregard the interests of the customer, the defense ministry, and reward themselves for extending production lines rather than for introducing technologically innovative or reliable weapons into the arsenal.¹¹¹ Much to the chagrin of the High Command, this autonomy fostered a “take what we give you, or else” mentality among defense industrialists that, from the military’s perspective, resulted in the absorption of “sub-standard” equipment into the arsenal.¹¹² This administrative independence of the defense industrial network was vividly captured by Marshal Shaposhnikov’s exhortation that he dreamed of the day when the defense ministry could say to the producers, “Thanks guys; take this for your good intentions, but you won’t get any more money.”¹¹³ According to senior military officials, the key to disciplining this producer arrogance and bolstering the efficiency and quality of weapons acquisitions rested with the

¹¹¹*Aviatsiya i kosmonovtika*, 7 (July 1990), pp. 18-20; *Rabochnaya tribuna*, 22 December 1990, p. 5; See also analysis in Peter Almquist, “Soviet Military Acquisition,” pp. 141-145.

¹¹²This comment was made by E. Shaposhnikov in *Izvestiya*, 10 August 1990, p. 7. See also A. Tabak, “Chest' mundira i chest' armii,” p. 11. According to several officials, it was precisely the “diktat” of defense industry that compelled the absorption of sub-standard equipment into the arsenal. Following the 19th Party Conference in September 1988, for example, Yazov chided those working in the military R&D sector for their irresponsibility, and blamed rampant organizational inertia in scientific research for delays in the delivery of “high quality and reliable armaments and military hardware.” See *Krasnaya zvezda*, 14 August 1988, p. 1. For similar indictments of the structure of military R&D, see also *ibid.*, 8 May 1987, p. 2; *ibid.*, 22 August 1987, p. 2; and *ibid.*, 29 October 1987, p. 2.

¹¹³*Izvestiya*, 10 August 1990, p. 7. In driving the point home, he stated that “if the tactical-technical characteristics are less than what is demanded, then we will pay correspondingly less.” See *Krasnaya zvezda*, 15 September 1990, p. 2.

establishment of the defense ministry's direct oversight of a competitive bidding process; something that it clearly lacked at the time.¹¹⁴

The basic structure of the defense industrial apparatus remained in tact from the Brezhnev period. Situated atop the Soviet defense industrial apparatus remained the Defense Department of the Central Committee. According to two senior defense industrial officials at the time, this body served as the "highest link in the chain of defense industrial management," ultimately responsible for communicating the interests of the defense industrial lobby to the top leadership and ensuring the smooth operation of this sector.¹¹⁵ Similarly, the stature of the Defense Department remained underscored by the privileged position that its leadership occupied within the informal national security structure. Prior to 1988, for example, Zaikov's position both as chairman of the Political Commission and Secretary for Defense Industry within the Central Committee secured for the department a direct voice within the national security elite. His successor in the reconstituted Central Committee apparatus, O. Baklanov, was a member of the inter-departmental working group, and was personally involved in drafting position papers for Soviet negotiating teams.¹¹⁶ Moreover, the various organizations that comprised Soviet defense industry retained their *de facto* independence, and received support directly from

¹¹⁴In a particularly poignant remark, Shaposhnikov attributed the technological sophistication of Soviet fighter aircraft to what he interpreted as real competition between the Mikoyan and Sukhoi design bureaus; while in contrast, ascribed the general problems encountered with Soviet long-range bombers to the monopoly position of the Tupolev design bureau. See *Izvestiya*, 10 August 1990, p. 7. On several occasions former Chief of the General Staff, V. N. Lobov, went so far as to argue that as the single manager of the defense budget, the Ministry of Defense would be able to ensure that "the military bought only what it needed, not what it was obliged to accept." See especially V. Lobov, "Voennaya reforma: tseli, printsipili, soderzhanie," p. 18-19; *Krasnaya zvezda*, 15 September 1990, p. 2; and *ibid.*, 23 October 1991, p. 2.

¹¹⁵Transcript of interviews conducted by Andrew J. Aldrin and Peter Almquist with O. Baklanov, Central Committee Secretary for Military and Defense Industry Policy from 1988-1991, and O. Belyakov, former head of the Department of Defense Industry, in Moscow, on 23 June 1991, p. 15.

¹¹⁶Transcript of meeting with Oleg Baklanov, p. 15. With the transformation of the formal decision-making structure and Zaikov's subsequent departure from the Politburo in 1990, Baklanov assumed membership on both informal organs, as well as became the head of the defense department of the president's staff and member of the Defense Council.

the state budget on the basis of institutional demands. Until 1989, for example, research institutes continued to receive funds based on their own submissions for personnel and material needs, not on the cost effectiveness or substance of their research.¹¹⁷

The *de facto* separation of authority within the defense industrial apparatus reinforced the traditional conservatism of defense industry in meeting the demands for technological innovation, higher quality, and more exacting standards, despite changes to the security environment. This continuity of preferences within the Soviet defense industry was manifest in the responses to the new security environment. Rather than pointing to its revolutionary implications, for the most part, the red directors used it as justification for preserving the fundamental structure of Soviet defense decision-making and quantitative levels of military output. There was a prevalent view within the defense industrial community that the military was increasingly "biting-off more than it could chew" in its romance with technology. According to several defense industrialists at the time, "there were many in the professional military ranks that did not completely understand that technology by itself was not the solution; the fighting force was only as good as the technical competence and discipline of our soldiers permitted."¹¹⁸ There was also concern that the lure of high technology threatened to outpace the military's capacity to absorb such advances, and would come at the expense of providing the necessary amount of weapons systems that could be easy to use and maintain. In this regard,

¹¹⁷Personal interviews with V. Surikov; and E. Fedosev.

¹¹⁸Personal interviews with A. Isaev; E. Fedosev; and V. Shlykov, long-time Soviet defense industrial insider, in Moscow, on 12 December 1994. This theme was publically aired, albeit in an Aesopian manner, in the aftermath of the Persian Gulf war, where defense industrialists, in response to the direct criticisms of the performance of Soviet weaponry, vilified the poor technical training and preparedness of combat troops in employing sophisticated technology. There was also an attempt to downplay the effectiveness of high-technology employed by the U.S.. See especially *Izvestiya*, 16 March 1991, p. 4; and *Pravitel'stvennyi vestnik*, 2 (1991). Defense industrialists also insisted that the technological complexity demanded of new systems made it imperative that they, the real technical experts, remain the progenitors of Soviet military technology. As remarked by a leading Soviet aircraft designer following an argument with two senior officers about an aircraft they did not want, "A good tailor educates his customers tastes." See quote in Peter Almqvist, "Soviet Military Acquisition," p. 138.

defense industrialists maintained that the "qualitative renewal" necessitated by the new environment had to take place at the troop training level, not at the design and production stages of weapons procurement.

Similarly, in response to the clamoring for defense downsizing and efficiency, the leadership of the defense industrial hierarchy remained adamant about retaining control over the conversion policy agenda. It was their contention that the most effective manner to tap the technological potential of defense industry for the broader civilian economy was to diversify the activities of weapons manufacturers. Therefore, they championed the notion of increasing the amount of resources channeled to defense industry and its control over more areas of civilian production. This was expressed most aptly by Minister of Defense Industry, I. Belousov, who posed the rhetorical question "Who besides defense workers can really solve this problem?"¹¹⁹ According to Baklanov, "the main point of conversion [was] not the redistribution of available resources," from the military to the civilian sector. Instead, it was that military industries must "share with purely civilian sectors the scientific and technical potentials they have built up."¹²⁰

The net result of the informal structure of national security decision-making was the continued *de facto* compartmentalization of authority. This separation of responsibility empowered certain elites and bureaucracies with narrow and divergent preferences for grand strategy. In particular, it created tension among diplomatic, military, and defense industrial groups. On the one hand, the foreign policy establishment remained committed to the dynamic pursuit of international reconciliation with the West. While the High Command shared similar preferences for qualitative and non-aggressive steps at bolstering Soviet security, it sought to preserve its control over

¹¹⁹*Moskovskaya pravda*, 24 October 1989, pp. 1-2.

¹²⁰*Pravda*, 9 December 1990, p. 3.

security policy and restrict unilateral concessions. On the other hand, these concerns for qualitative improvements in military-technical policy and reorienting mission requirements brought the professional military into direct conflict with the preferences for stasis within defense industry. Given the uncertainty of his position, Gorbachev's political success depended upon the accommodation of these divergent policy preferences in his strategy of *new thinking*.

The Resurgence of Informalism in Russian Grand Strategy Decision-Making

Like its Soviet predecessors, the Yeltsin regime was tasked with formulating grand strategy in an elastic institutional setting. The banning of the Communist Party and dissolution of the Soviet state in 1991 not only spurred constitutional uncertainty, but decapitated the informal arrangements that were in place to cement authority and distribute policy benefits. Consequently, the new Russian leadership confronted the immediate problem of crafting a practical policy-making mechanism in a highly atomized polity to cope with the realities of Russia's new security environment. In doing so, the leadership had to delineate clearly jurisdictional boundaries and accommodate a new set of policy preferences in order to secure its political legitimacy.

In view of these political incentives, and with stalemate between and among the different branches of government stunting the growth of democratic procedures and shielding officials from public scrutiny, Yeltsin and his advisors seized the window of opportunity to solidify a distributional network of decision-making authority. These informal institutional arrangements were premised on patronage and *de facto* monopolies of information, empowering certain actors with partial rights to make policy decisions free from accountability to the parliament and the Russian public. In fact, a significant

proportion of presidential edicts and governmental decrees were "processed outside of the constitutional mechanisms for preparing state decisions," and were implicitly tailored towards satisfying the substantive preferences of a handful of designated organs.¹²¹ Given the radical changes to the constitutional backdrop, the shape of this informal process evolved during the first two phases of the post-communist transition.

To consolidate executive authority at the highest level, Yeltsin exploited the vagueness in the initial Russian constitution to establish the Security Council as the *de facto* coordinating mechanism for national security decision-making. In practice, Yeltsin manipulated the two-tiered structure of the council and his ambiguous legal mandate as president to subordinate governmental and legislative rivals, to appoint political allies, and to parcel out real administrative responsibilities to select governing bodies. What emerged, according to one Russian political commentator, was an organ for managing the "democratship" of Russian national security; a mechanism for sidestepping the constitutionally ambiguous separation of powers and for administering the *de facto* allocation of concentrated executive authority.¹²²

At the decision-making level, Yeltsin exploited constitutional provisions regarding voting membership on the Security Council to create an "inner circle" of elites on issues of national security. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the council was

¹²¹ *Itogi*, 2 February 1995, as translated in *FBIS-SOV-95-026*, 8 February 1995, pp. 10-13. According to another Russian commentary, "the specific path taken by any given edict remains unknown in the majority of cases. It is very difficult to comprehend hair-splitting relations between various intra-Kemlin structures responsible for preparing presidential decisions." See *Kommersant-daily*, 8 June 1995, p. 4. For other comments by Russian officials on the highly informal structure of decision-making, see especially S. Yushenkov in *Nevskoye vremya*, 1 March 1995, p. 1, as translated in *FBIS-SOV-95-048*, 13 March 1995, p. 16; G. Popov in *Izvestiya*, 24 December 1994, p. 5; and Yu. Kozlov in *Rossiia*, 47 7 December 1994, pp. 1, 4, as translated in *FBIS-USR-94-139*, 27 December 1994, pp. 1-3. For commentary rejecting accusations of an imperial president, see *Rossiiskie vesti*, 22 February 1995, p. 40; and Yu. Kalmykov, former Minister of Justice and member of the Security Council, and E. Pain, presidential advisor, respectively in *Komsomolskaya pravda*, 20 December 1994, p. 3; and *Izvestiya*, 10 February 1995, pp. 7, 9. This was confirmed in personal interview with E. Pain, in Santa Monica, on 18 February 1995.

¹²² See commentary by F. Burlatskii in *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 17 February 1995, p. 3.

designated by law as an inter-branch body, composed of five permanent members from parallel executive, governmental, and legislative structures. Using legal authorities assigned to the president to chair the body and to appoint two of the other four voting members-- the prime minister and the secretary-- Yeltsin, in effect, altered formal power relationships and created a *de facto* hierarchy among representatives of constitutionally equivalent state bodies. Yeltsin's elevated position on the council not only subordinated legislative representation, which after December 1992 included the speaker of the Supreme Soviet, but enabled him to appoint his own lieutenants among the voting membership. Moreover, given that Security Council decisions were reached by majority vote, the president enjoyed *de facto* control over internal deliberation.¹²³

In addition, Yeltsin exploited his power of appointment to pack the second-tier of non-voting members of Security Council. As chairman of the council, he could select the membership at his own discretion. In practice, he appointed the Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs, as well as representatives from the presidential apparatus, each of whom were simultaneously beholden to him, as president, in their respective formal governmental posts. Thus, by combining the powers of appointment delegated to the president and chairman of the council, and by selecting loyal allies to occupy dual executive posts, Yeltsin effectively isolated parliamentary rivals and formed a private cadre of politicians and functionaries to govern Russian national security at the heart of the state structure.

With his power and influence established on the Security Council, Yeltsin was able to act unilaterally, vesting the organ with wide discretion to manage grand strategy policy-making. Specifically, he revised the voting membership's original mandate as an

¹²³Personal interview with E. Pain, in Washington, D.C., 17 October 1995. See also *Moskovskiy novosti*, 7 (14 February 1993), pp. 10; and *Obshchaya gazeta*, 3 (19 January 1995), p. 8, as translated in *FBIS-SOV-95-027-S*, 9 February 1995, pp. 36-37.

inter-branch coordinating mechanism, turning it into an executive arm of the president. First-tier members were delegated authorities to oversee the "coordination" of executive branch foreign and security policies, and to monitor the implementation of decisions reached by the council and the president. In practice, this meant that voting members served collectively to rubber-stamp decisions that were prepared by the council's staff and "recommended" by respective non-voting members. That the council's secretary (supervisor of the staff) and second-tier representatives were appointed by Yeltsin, as well as consisted of the heads of respective ministries, reflected a commitment to confining executive control over national security to those organs directly beholden to the president and possessing core expertise in specific policy domains. As observed by one former member of the council, "we were instructed to vote first, and discuss later" decisions that were the "function and competence" of other executive organs.¹²⁴ Shrouded in secrecy and shielded by the council's norm of collective decision-making, individual members were freed from public and legislative accountability for their voting.

More significant, Yeltsin informally ceded powers to the Security Council's permanent staff to supervise the allocation of decision-making authorities for specific national security policies. At the crux of this effort were successive appointments to the position of Security Council Secretary individuals who maintained extensive ties both to the former Soviet *de facto* national security apparatus and to Yeltsin personally. This was aimed explicitly at capitalizing on the *de facto* advantages offered by such personnel for "coordinating the activities of executive organs," as well as at compensating for the practical illegitimacy of the mandate granted to successive prime ministers, who had

¹²⁴See especially commentary by Yu. Kalmykov, in *Novaya Yezhednevnyaya gazeta*, 23 December 1994, p. 2, as translated in *FBIS-SOV-95-020-S*, 31 January 1995, pp. 18-19. For discussion of Yeltsin's unilateral moves to elevate the Security Council, see *Kommersant*, 6-13, July 1992, p. 2; and *Moskovskiye novosti*, 19 July 1992, p. 4.

neither working experience nor informal ties in the realm of national security.¹²⁵ In fact, this included power to parcel out decision-making autonomy among second-tier members of the council and their respective governmental organs. According to insider accounts, the secretary and his staff effectively served as the linchpin for assigning and securing respective policy domains among competing government bodies, and for processing their decisions to the voting membership of the council and president for *pro forma* approval. Thus, the real policy-making action took place before and after the formal convening of the Security Council, through non-transparent channels arranged by the council's staff that empowered select organs to make independent decisions without bearing the risks or liabilities of policy failures.¹²⁶

With respect to foreign policy, the Security Council's staff formed a special Foreign Policy Commission to serve as the prime locus for executive decision-making. Headed by the council's secretary, membership on this commission included the Ministers of Defense, Interior, Security, Justice, Foreign Economic Relations, and Foreign Affairs. The organ was explicitly charged with "preparing projects and decisions for the president concerning principal directions of foreign policy in the sphere for ensuring national security."¹²⁷ Given the commission's ranking membership and direct access to the president, it effectively functioned as the highest organ engaged in strategic

¹²⁵*Izvestiya*, 7 July 1992, p. 3.; and *Rossiiskie vesti*, 19 December 1992, p. 1. Yu. Skokov, who was appointed secretary in April 1992, was a former Soviet defense industrial manager with close ties to the reconstituted Russian defense establishment and heavy industry. Skokov's subsequent removal was purportedly attributed to his ambitions for exceeding his informal mandate as "supervisor" of Russian national security decision-making. See *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 8 May 1993, p. 1, 3. The successive appointments of Ye. Shaposhnikov and O. Lobov to the position of Security Council Secretary continued the practice of placing loyal allies to the president, who simultaneously maintained extensive connections to the former Soviet national security establishment.

¹²⁶Personal interviews with V. Kataev; and E. Glubakov, former staff member, Department for Defense Industrial Affairs, Council of Ministers of the Russian Federation, in Moscow, on 12 December 1994. See also *Kommersant-daily*, 26 October 1993, p. 3; and *Rossiiskie vesti*, 7 March 1995, p. 2.

¹²⁷*Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 3 February 1993, p. 7.

planning. Its *de facto* institutional clout was also bolstered by the significant exodus of experienced former Soviet diplomats at the foreign ministry that resulted from the turnover of personnel and the paltry salaries offered to potential experts from the broader foreign policy community relative to the burgeoning lucrative opportunities presented by the private sector . Thus, in the words of the foreign minister, "the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was not responsible for fundamental decisions on foreign policy matters," and took its lead in executing diplomacy directly from the Security Council commission.¹²⁸

Despite this executive mandate, the commission lacked an independent staff and relied, in practice, on the foreign ministry to formulate and implement directives. In fact, the ministry was the main repository for foreign intelligence gathered by various governmental organs, and the lone executive branch agency with qualified and geographically proximate personnel to conduct protracted negotiations. Also, even though the professional ranks of the ministry were decimated by the outflow of experienced Soviet diplomats, the close personal relationship between the foreign minister and the president ensured that the ministry would retain a voice during final executive deliberations. As a result, the foreign ministry enjoyed considerable autonomy to shape the diplomatic agenda and undertake initiatives, while remaining absolved of direct executive responsibility.¹²⁹

There was a caveat, however, to this streamlined informal channel of executive decision-making. Compounding the uncertainty intrinsic to the constitutionally stipulated

¹²⁸*Komsomolskaya pravda*, 9 June 1992, p. 3. Prior to the commission's legal codification in December 1992, it operated informally under the supervision of G. Burbulis, former state secretary and eminence grise of the executive branch. See Mikhail E. Bezrukov, "Institutional Mechanisms of Russian Foreign Policy," in Leon Aron and Kenneth M. Jensen, eds., *The Emergence of Russian Foreign Policy* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1994), p. 73.

¹²⁹Personal interview with staff members of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Moscow, on 14 October 1993. For more on Yeltsin's reliance on the foreign ministry as an executive policy-making arm, see also *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 18 November 1992, p. 7.

separation of executive and legislative powers was the *de facto* presence of an alternative body of foreign policy expertise operating within the parallel parliamentary structure. Specifically, the Russian Supreme Soviet Committee for International Affairs and Foreign Economic Relations enjoyed practical autonomy not only to conduct hearings on the performance of the foreign ministry, but to participate directly on select Russian foreign delegations. Staffed by experienced former Soviet diplomats and influential members of private Russian "think tanks," the committee retained expertise on par with that possessed by the foreign ministry. The committee also had limited discretionary funds to send its members abroad to negotiate directly with foreign interlocutors, outside of executive channels. Moreover, individual members maintained extensive informal connections with their former peers in the ministry that secured for them access to important information.¹³⁰ As a result, this parliamentary committee wielded considerable *de facto* authority to compete with the foreign ministry in supervising Russian foreign policy.

In practice, the strict compartmentalization of Russian foreign policy decision-making fostered competing preferences at the center of the informal apparatus. On the one hand, because the foreign ministry was directly responsible for improving Russia's foreign relations and economic ties, it possessed a strong incentive to capitalize on the opportunities for international cooperation provided by the prevailing security environment. Granted substantial leeway to solicit international assistance to relieve Russia's deep economic crisis and to establish Moscow's international reputation as a "reliable partner and natural ally" of democratic states, the foreign ministry saw as its priority objective the need to embrace a strong Western orientation. As summed by the

¹³⁰Personal interview with staff members from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For discussion of the composition and expertise of the committee, see especially Suzanne Crow, "Ambartsumov's Influence on Russian Foreign Policy," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Weekly Report* 2:19 (7 May 1993), pp. 36-41.

foreign minister, the principal task was to "drag Russia by its bootstraps into the club of Western great powers" in order to reap the benefits of economic, military, and political integration.¹³¹

On the other hand, the parliamentary Commission on International Affairs and Foreign Economic Relations retained a different set of foreign policy preferences. As both an alternative claimant to supervisory authority and the institutional appendage to a rival branch of government, the commission had a strong incentive to challenge the policies advocated by the foreign ministry, while staying attuned to the realities of the prevailing security environment. According to the former head of the commission, the objective was to maintain a constant level of pressure on the ministry, while not treating it as a "Carthage that absolutely must be destroyed" and remaining sensitive to the strategic imperative for international reconciliation.¹³² With the foreign ministry's ardent endorsement of a pro-Western posture, the door opened for the commission's advocacy for a more Eastern orientation to Russia's strategic engagement, while still favoring improved and stable strategic relations with the West. In practice, this nuanced difference consisted of a preference for diversified foreign relations with an accent on strategic accommodation in Russia's immediate Eurasian geopolitical environment.¹³³

¹³¹*Rossiiskii vestnik*, 3 December 1992, p. 2. For an outline of the foreign ministry's declared policy goals of ingratiating Russia with its new found partners in the West, see especially *Diplomaticheskii vestnik*, 1 (January 1992), p. 13; and Andrei Kozyrev, "Russia: A Chance for Survival," *Foreign Affairs*, 71:2 (Spring 1992), pp. 1-16. See also discussion in S. Neil MacFarlane, "Russian Conceptions of Europe," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 10:3 (1994), pp. 242-245.; and Hannes Adomeit, "The Atlantic Alliance in the Soviet and Russian Perspective," in Neil Malcolm, ed., *Russia and Europe: An End to Confrontation?* (London: Printer for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1994), pp. 31-54.

¹³²See statement by Evgenii Ambartsumov, as cited in Suzanne Crow, "Ambartsumov's Influence on Russian Foreign Policy," p. 41.

¹³³See, for example, policy guidelines specified by V. Lukin, "Our Security Predicament," *Foreign Policy*, 88 (Fall 1992), pp. 57-75; and S. Rogov, "Rossiya i SShA v mnogonolyarnom mire," *SSha: Ekonomika, Politika, Ideologiya*, 10 (October 1992), pp. 3-14.

In contrast to this *de facto* overlap of executive and legislative foreign policy mandates, the rights to govern military affairs were concentrated in the Ministry of Defense. Within the Security Council, for example, the defense minister wielded exclusive authority to supervise Russian defense policy, in deference to his personal loyalty to Yeltsin and the expertise housed within the ministry and the General Staff. Like its Soviet predecessor, the Russian defense ministry retained a monopoly on information pertaining to Russian force posture and the technical aspects of military strategy, operational art, and tactics. Unlike the Soviet system, however, the ministry also enjoyed autonomy to develop the political and economic principles governing military strategy and operational art. This was revealed specifically in the *de facto* procedures surrounding the formulation of Russian military doctrine that precluded civilian input.¹³⁴

Similarly, the defense ministry exercised *de facto* control over defense industrial policy-making. Within the Security Council, the defense minister, as the only ranking member of the Russian defense establishment, exerted practical control over decisions regarding the R&D and production of military hardware. The council's inter-departmental commission devoted to issues of defense industry was, in practice, dominated by representatives from the professional military and headed by a self-described defense industrial "outsider" to the Yeltsin inner circle.¹³⁵ This authority vested in the High Command extended to the selection of enterprises for receipt of state

¹³⁴Civilians, such as the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Security Council Secretary, enjoyed only indirect advisory roles and were precluded from participating directly in the formulation of Russian military doctrine. In fact, only the defense ministry's version of the doctrine was sent to the Security Council, where upon it was passed intact with only perfunctory deliberation in November 1993. See especially comments by deputy chairman of *Goskomoboronprom*, V.r Glybin, in *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 7 September 1993, p. 5; and by a former staff member of the Russian Security Council, in Vladislav Chernov, "Significance of the Russian Military Doctrine," *Comparative Strategy*, 13 (1994), pp. 161-166.

¹³⁵See especially comments by M. Malei, former presidential advisor on strategic issues of the defense industry, in *Komsomolskaya pravda*, 17 September 1993, pp. 1, 3.

subsidies and thus, by default, provided the ministry a leg up in the battle with other state bodies in setting the conversion policy agenda. In fact, senior officials that shared formal mandates to supervise defense industrial affairs, including the chairman of the State Committee for the Defense Branches of Industry (*Goskomoboronprom*) and the presidential advisor on defense industrial issues, were typically denied access to Yeltsin or to Security Council decision-making deliberations, as well as to the executive branch's defense industrial agenda.¹³⁶ Moreover, to undergird this authority, the defense ministry established the Council on Military-Technical Policy as a forum for bolstering its competence and for working directly with defense industrialists to resolve issues of broad concern to the military industrial complex.¹³⁷ Thus, in practice, the Russian military was transformed from a mere supplicant in the weapons acquisitions process to a demanding customer, enjoying *de facto* financial and programmatic control over defense industrial affairs.¹³⁸

Consistent with its informal institutional autonomy to decide the gamut of military-political, military-technical, and defense industrial policies, the Russian Ministry of Defense maintained competing substantive preferences. Given its exclusive authorities to determine the political and strategic components of doctrine and the character of the prevailing security environment, the military evinced little interest in nuclear war-fighting. As the organization directly charged with waging war, the military remained acutely sensitive to the limited operational utility of nuclear weapons and averse to the

¹³⁶See especially complaints issued by M. Malei, in *ibid.*; and *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 2 October 1993, pp. 1-2; and by V. Glybin, in *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 7 September 1993, p. 5.

¹³⁷This body was supervised directly by the Deputy Defense Minister for Armaments Policy, and united "more than 100 leading arms specialists, scientists, directors of the largest defense plants, generals, and senior officers and experts from the Russian Armed Forces, General Staff, Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the Ministry of Security." *ITAR-TASS*, 28 May 1993, as translated in *FBIS-SOV-93-104*, 2 June 1993, p. 40.

¹³⁸*Kommersant-daily*, 4 August 1993, p. 3.

uncontrolled destructiveness associated with their use on the battlefield.¹³⁹ Reminiscent of the Soviet era, the High Command endorsed arms control initiatives aimed at reducing strategic levels consistent with preserving minimum deterrence against all possible nuclear threats.¹⁴⁰ Moreover, because the High Command was now authorized to devise the political, as well as technical aspects of nuclear doctrine in an era dominated by MAD and economic stringency, there was also new interest in expanding the reliance on nuclear deterrence as a political stopgap to vulnerabilities at the conventional level. Specifically, there was widespread support for conditionally abandoning the declaratory policy of "no-first-use" and extending the Russian "nuclear umbrella" to deter attacks not only against Russia but also against Russian troops and allies. This sympathy for lowering the nuclear threshold reflected a political concern for infusing nuclear policy with the "maximum unpredictability of Russia's actions in case of its involvement in military conflicts," as a cost-effective means for compensating for conventional inferiority and deterring potential aggressors.¹⁴¹

Vested with exclusive prerogatives over military-technical policy, the High Command was also predisposed towards developing a robust conventional strategy to meet the challenges presented by the revolution in military affairs. Below the nuclear threshold, the military was interested primarily in defeating both global aggressors and local enemies through the conduct of mobile, flexible, high precision warfare. With respect to military strategy and tactics, this included steadfast commitment to the

¹³⁹See for example comments in M. A. Gareev, "Ha nekotorykh voprosakh Rossiiskoi voennoi doktriny," *Voennaya mys'*, 11 (November 1992), pp. 2-9.

¹⁴⁰This included maintaining sufficient nuclear forces to deter "strategic" threats posed not only by the U.S. and its Western Allies, but Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and Belarus that inherited nuclear weapons from the disintegration of the Soviet Union. See John W.R. Lepingwell, "START II and the Politics of Arms Control in Russia," *International Security* 20:2 (Fall 1995), pp. 65-75.

¹⁴¹See especially discussion in S. M. Rogov, "Novaya voennaya doktrina Rossii," *SShA*, 5 (May 1994), pp. 6-7.

preparation for both offensive and defensive operations under any variant of large-scale warfare or peace-keeping intervention. In response to the non-linear character of a future battlefield dominated by new weapons technologies, the High Command resisted thinking seriously about distinctions between low-intensity and large-scale warfare, and explicitly jettisoned any pretension of planning for absolute offensive or defensive combat activities. In short, Russian military officers clung to operational and tactical concepts that featured maximum exploitation of firepower, maneuverability and counter-strikes as appropriate for combat on all types of battlefields.¹⁴²

Consistent with these operational requirements, the Russian High Command sought to use its newly acquired control over weapons acquisitions to field a "lean mean" fighting force into the 21st Century. Recognizing that approximately 70 percent of the inherited Soviet arsenal would be obsolete by the turn of the century and confronting onerous financial constraints imposed by necessary defense downsizing, the professional military embraced qualitative improvement as the harbinger to success across all azimuths of reform to force structure. This was tantamount to a preference for allocating monies to military R&D rather than procurement, with specific emphasis on the development of "cutting edge" battle management systems and new-in-principle precision weapons.¹⁴³

¹⁴²See, for example, I. N. Vorob'ev, "More on Counteroffensive," *Military Thought* (english), 1 (1994), p. 13; and M. A. Gareev, "Ha nekotorykh voprosakh Rossiiskoi voennoi dokriny," p. 4.

¹⁴³See especially A. A. Kokoshin, "Protivorechiya formirovaniya i puti razvitiya voenno-tekhnicheskoi politiki Rossii," *Voennaya mysl'*, 2 (February 1993), pp. 2-9; D. A. Afinogenov, "Voennye voprosy bezopasnosti Rossii," *ibid.*, pp. 10-14; and V. M. Semenov, "Sukhoputnye voiska: zadachi i problemy razvitiya," *ibid.* 6 (June 1993), pp. 24. With respect to battle management systems, the priority was placed on high-tech automated systems for command and control, fire control, communications, space-based reconnaissance, navigation, and electronic warfare. With respect to weapons systems, military officials consistently underscored a priority for the development and production of advanced, new-in-principle, mobile, non-nuclear, precision weapons, and the creation of highly effective, multi-functional, long-range, and realtime operational fire systems.

In contrast to these military-technical concerns, however, the Ministry of Defense also harbored a strong preference for allocating scarce resources to alleviate manpower and social pressures that were simultaneously afflicting the reconstituted defense establishment. Confronting huge housing and social dislocation costs linked to the return to Russian soil of over 500,000 troops and their families deployed throughout the inner and outer circles of the former Soviet empire, military officials were drawn to fixate on the social welfare of the armed forces. This was compounded by the need to find the funding necessary to raise salaries and living standards to an acceptable level to ensure recruitment for a more professional officer corps and enlisted army. With the depletion of manpower pools and troop readiness-- owing to the persistence of extensive draft evasion, widening draft deferral opportunities, and the loss to Russia of draft age populations from the non-Russian former Soviet republics-- the High Command had to turn increasingly towards shoring up the social and economic welfare of the armed forces. Given the inexperience with overseeing the armaments side of the defense budget and the relative organizational clout of those offices within the defense ministry charged with overseeing salaries, training, and housing construction, the pressures for maintaining proper living conditions and troop readiness pulled at the seams of the High Command's simultaneous commitment to qualitative improvements in the R&D and procurement of new military hardware.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴Personal interviews with G. Feshin and V. Baranov, chief specialists, Defense Industry and Conversion Department of the Russian Ministry of Defense, in Moscow, on 15 December 1994. According to Feshin and Baranov, Kokoshin's armaments directorate was dwarfed by those departments within the Ministry of Defense tasked with hammering out social policies, troop readiness, and housing issues. The directorate, in particular, was headed by the lone civilian deputy minister and staffed by only 250 experts, as compared to the staff of roughly 20,000 tasked with supervising manpower and social policies. In fact, Kokoshin's staff had to rely mostly on an informal circle of experts on armaments and weapons technology drawn from the former Soviet defense industrial apparatus. Moreover, the defense ministry's financial directorate lacked a staff trained to supervise weapons acquisitions accounting. As a result, the directorate's first priority rested with the familiar tasks of improving the welfare and training of Russian officers and servicemen. See especially *Krasnaya zvezda*, 10 February 1993, p. 1-2.

In the aftermath of the October 1993 shelling of the Supreme Soviet that broke the stalemate between the presidential and legislative branches of the central government, the Russian executive leadership overhauled the aforementioned informal national security apparatus. In accordance with the new constitution and the attendant ambiguities in the delineation of rights and responsibilities between presidential and governmental organs, the senior leadership informally re-allocated partial decision-making authorities among executive agents. In an effort to reward loyal supporters during the crisis and to mitigate against their future disaffection, Yeltsin once again moved swiftly to delegate policy-making autonomy without establishing transparency or oversight mechanisms.

At the executive level, Yeltsin downgraded the role of the Security Council. By the middle of 1994, the council had been transformed from an elite "coordinating body" to a hollow "consultative organ," nominally tasked with preparing documentation for the president. For all practical purposes it ceased functioning as a critical distributional mechanism, as meetings were postponed indefinitely and its directives were typically ignored. According to Kremlin insiders, work within the Security Council apparatus in general had become "increasingly bureaucratic" and "cumbersome," with many staff level organs "not even meeting once every six months."¹⁴⁵

In practice, the Security Council was eclipsed by a cadre of presidential sycophants. With the vestiges of civic accord shattered by the bloody dissolution of parliament, Yeltsin found himself critically dependent upon a small group of trusted allies for his political survival. As a consequence, select personnel in the president's information, analytical, and security administrations rotated control over the "coordination" of executive policy-making in the area of national security. In the first

¹⁴⁵ *Komsomolskaya pravda*, 17-20 February 1995, p. 5; *Ibid.*, 20 December 1994, p. 3; *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 30 April 1994, p. 1, 3; and *Interfax*, 7 June 1994, as translated in *FBIS-SOV-94-110*, 8 June 1994, p. 20.

half of 1994, the Expert-Analytical Council was created under the aegis of the Presidential Administration to overcome the parallelism among executive bodies in supervising the formulation and implementation of policies. This organ, with a full-time staff of 26 analysts, was chaired by S. Filatov, Yeltsin's chief of staff and loyal ally.¹⁴⁶ For a brief period following the re-organization of the presidential apparatus in Summer 1994, these tasks were informally transferred to the newly formed Senior Policy Councils attached to the Russian presidency. In particular, two assistants were assigned to the president for the expressed purposes of channeling information from and assigning partial authorities to select national security organs within the governmental apparatus.¹⁴⁷ Possessing a small staff and only a few ties to the ministerial apparatus, however, this organ was quickly relegated to the sidelines within the presidential administration. These duties informally gravitated to the Presidential Protection Service, under the leadership of A. Korzhakov, a long-time crony and chief of the president's bodyguards. According to inside sources, Korzhakov, because he controlled access to the president and supervised an analytical unit consisting of over 100 former Soviet KGB foreign intelligence agents, effectively usurped control over the president's foreign policy agenda by the end of 1994.¹⁴⁸

This successive re-shuffling within the presidential apparatus increasingly left executive decision-making to a narrow band of personal advisors that operated outside of official channels. According to one member of the presidential administration, the absence of transparency created a "court of intrigues" among those closest to the chief executive. Granted wide discretion to filter information flowing to the president, yet not

¹⁴⁶*Novaya yezhednevnyaya gazeta*, 8 June 1994, p. 1; and *Kommersant-daily*, 30 August 1994, p. 3.

¹⁴⁷*Komsomolskaya pravda*, 17-20 February 1995, p. 5; and Igor Ryabov, "Universal Soldier Without a Military Uniform," *New Times*, 8 (February 1994, pp. 14-15).

¹⁴⁸*Izvestiya*, 7 December 1994, p. 1, 4; and *Ibid.*, 24 January 1995, pp. 1-2.

directly accountable for the implementation of national security policies, this select group "acted out of their own selfish interests," in formulating and communicating strategic guidelines.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, given the small size and relatively insular nature of each advisory body, the presidential administration found itself increasingly divorced from the activities carried out within the governmental apparatus that created a wide gulf between executive and administrative control. As a result, select ministries and state committees, while not privy to the president's inner circle, exercised *de facto* autonomy to shape and implement respective national security policies free from executive oversight or public accountability.

Against this backdrop, practical control over the foreign policy agenda was consolidated within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The strengthened personal bond between the foreign minister and the president, and the constitutional deprivation of legislative authority, in effect, conceded to the ministry *de facto* autonomy to take diplomatic initiatives and coordinate their implementation. According to a former presidential advisor, despite the foreign minister's official claims of dutifully complying with "the president's foreign policy," in actuality, Yeltsin was completely dependent on the foreign ministry for defining policy guidelines and supervising Russian international activities.¹⁵⁰ Moreover, with the transfer of personnel and emasculation of the Security Council apparatus, the foreign ministry effectively wielded exclusive jurisdiction over policies pertaining to the "near abroad," in addition to its control over traditional diplomacy.

¹⁴⁹Personal interview with E. Pain, in Washington, D.C., on 18 October 1995. See also Pain's commentary in *Izvestiya*, 10 February 1995, p. 4. For similar accounts, see *Komsomolskaya pravda*, 20 December 1994, p. 4; *Kommersant-daily*, 8 June 1995, p. 4; and interview with former Russian Minister of Justice, Yu. Kalmykov, in *Novaya yezhednevnyaya gazeta*, 23 December 1994, p. 2, as translated in *FBIS-SOV-95-020-S*, 31 January 1995, pp. 18-19.

¹⁵⁰See comments by Andranik Migranyan in *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 10 December 1994, p. 3.

Given the overriding strategic imperative for international reconciliation and the vacuum of power in the former Soviet space, this concentration of authority fostered a newfound preference within the ministry for balancing a Western orientation in foreign relations against Russia's great power interests along its periphery. While remaining averse to the restoration of the Soviet empire, ministry officials noticeably retreated from the earlier liberal internationalist predisposition, underscoring preferences for promoting great power partnership while simultaneously asserting Russia's legitimate national interests in the near abroad. This extended, in particular, to the supervision of regional peace-keeping operations and to the protection "by all necessary means" of the rights of the Russian diaspora living on former Soviet territory.¹⁵¹

The post-October 1993 informal institutional adjustments also affected defense-related policy-making. With respect to military-political and military-technical affairs, the Russian High Command continued to wield *de facto* autonomy. Yeltsin's gratitude to the professional officer corps for its support during the crisis and the absence of legislative oversight reinforced deference to the defense ministry's *de facto* authority over the operational planning and outfitting of the armed forces. Specifically, the ministry retained exclusive rights to determine the allocation of defense outlays among troop training, weapons acquisitions, and housing and social support.¹⁵² Furthermore, the military was granted considerable discretion to decide conscription deferment policies. Given the prevailing conditions of economic austerity and technological backwardness afflicting the armed forces, there were lasting preferences for devoting scarce resources to both alleviating immediate social problems and renewing the military R&D base at the

¹⁵¹See statements by foreign minister Kozyrev in *Segodnya*, 19 January 1994, p. 2; *Ibid.*, 1 February 1994, p. 1. For discussion of this re-focusing of priorities accorded by the foreign ministry, see S. M. Rogov, "Rossiya i zapad," *SSha: Ekonomika, Politika, Ideologiya*, 3 (March 1995), pp. 3-14.

¹⁵²I.N. Vorob'yev, "More on Counteroffensive," p. 13.

expense of building-up the standing arsenal. This was magnified by the continuing organizational hegemony of those departments and directorates within the defense ministry that were expressly charged with supervising manpower and training issues.¹⁵³

The autonomy over traditional military affairs notwithstanding, the High Command lost its *de facto* corner on Russian defense industrial policy-making. In practice, governance of the flow of monies to the defense establishment was divided among three organs within the central state apparatus. The Ministry of Finance, as part of a broader mandate to formulate the federal budget, effectively determined aggregate expenditures for defense and conversion. With a staff of approximately 70 specialists trained in the former Soviet defense industrial establishment, the ministry became the locus of expertise on macroeconomic issues facing the defense sector. Tasked specifically with controlling inflation and balancing the government's accounts, the ministry pursued a clear organizational objective-- reduction of the federal budget deficit-- with little substantive interest in monitoring the allocation of defense outlays to individual programs and services.¹⁵⁴ As a consequence, the exclusive rights to channel state support for specific defense and conversion purposes were assumed by the Ministries of Defense and Economics, respectively. With the parliament constitutionally stripped of powers to alter the basic parameters of the state budget proposed by the Ministry of Finance and precluded from enforcing its legally stipulated sub-aggregate funding levels within the defense and conversion budgets, these two ministries were free

¹⁵³According to military officials, this "dominance" was the product of the size and competence of those directorates in charge of financial and manpower issues. Personal interviews with G. Feshin and V. Baranov. See also *Krasnaya zvezda*, 8 December 1994, p. 2.

¹⁵⁴Personal interviews with E. Glubakov; and A. Koulakov, head, Division for Defense Industry, Union of industrialists and Entrepreneurs, in Moscow, on 10 December 1994. See also *Krasnaya zvezda*, 22 October 1993, p. 3.

to distribute respective funds at their own discretion.¹⁵⁵ For the defense ministry, this was tantamount to receiving *carte blanche* to divert budgetary allocations expressly for manpower and R&D issues; for the Ministry of Economics, however, this freedom reinforced a preference for supporting large-scale conversion programs that offered the greatest financial and social relief to struggling defense production facilities.¹⁵⁶

Similarly, *de facto* programmatic control over Russian defense industry was split between the defense ministry and *Goskomoboronprom*. While the former retained supervision of the weapons acquisitions process, the latter emerged as the prime organ charged with formulating and overseeing state and regional conversion programs. Conferred status of a state committee in November 1993, *Goskomoboronprom* attracted the support of the enterprise directors and increased the number of former Soviet defense industrial administrators on staff. This influx of personnel steeped in the defense industrial community, permitted the committee to counter the defense ministry's earlier attempts to deal directly with enterprise managers and to elevate the defense industrial agenda from the margins of weapons acquisitions. In practice, this entitled *Goskomoboronprom* to wield *de facto* authorities to establish the initial list of defense enterprises barred from privatization, to manage the state's shares and corporate veto rights at "de-statized" firms, and to devise specific projects earmarked for receipt of state

¹⁵⁵Personal interview with A. Arbatov, member, Committee for Defense, State Duma of the Russian Federation, in Moscow, on 9 December 1994.

¹⁵⁶Personal interview with S. Kolpakov and D. Ponomarev, contractors on defense industrial affairs for the Ministry of Economics, in Moscow, on 5 December 1994. According to these "insiders," the ministry's Department for the Economics of the Defense Complex and Conversion was staffed by former specialists of the Soviet State Planning Committee (Gosplan), who had extensive experience administering state subsidies to the defense industry. Moreover, as the organ charged with defraying the social dislocation costs experienced by reprofiling defense enterprises, there was an informal priority on allocating funds to production facilities that tended to employ more workers and support more services for the local community than did R&D or design facilities.

subsidies.¹⁵⁷ While free to craft these programs without bearing financial responsibilities, the committee sought to minimize the number of defense enterprises subject to privatization. Moreover, as the committee increasingly assumed the role of mouthpiece for defense industry, it too had a substantive preference for large-scale conversion policies that were aimed primarily at alleviating the hardship imposed on massive defense production facilities by Russian military downsizing.¹⁵⁸

Thus, by the end of 1994 Russian national security policy-making closely resembled the institutional character of its Soviet predecessor. In spite of overt attempts to demolish the political and administrative organs of the old Soviet order and to infuse democratic proceduralism and separation of powers, the Russian leadership quickly settled into another informal modus of exchange premised on the distribution of narrow decision-making authorities. At the top, Yeltsin surrounded himself with a group of loyal personal aides, who served increasingly to shield the president from political challenge. In practice, this band of advisors censored information received by the president, limited access to him, and wielded executive decision-making authorities free from public, legislative, and governmental accountability. Similarly, *de facto* administrative control resided in a select group of governmental agents. These organs, cut off from access to and supervision by the president, enjoyed considerable autonomy to shape and carry out policy responses to Russia's newfound security environment. As *de facto* claimants of decision-making authorities, these agents of the state were free to tailor substantive responses to parochial preferences without shouldering national responsibilities.

¹⁵⁷Personal interviews with E. Glubakov; and Vitaly Shlykov. The term "de-stated" refers to the various forms of reduced state ownership in defense enterprises. In contrast to private firms, this includes "corporatized" plants in which the state holds either majority shares or golden shares (20-30 percent) with veto authority over management decisions. See distinction in Kevin P. O'Prey, *A Farewell to Arms?: Russia's Struggles With Defense Conversion* (New York: The Twentieth Century Fund Press, 1995), pp. 37-40.

¹⁵⁸Personal interview with S. Kulik, Senior Analyst, Department of Conversion, Institute of USA and Canada of the Russian Federation Academy of Sciences, in Moscow, on 15 December 1994.

Conclusion

In sum, constitutional anarchy breeds a distributional process of grand strategy decision-making. Pressures emanating from a state's security environment are filtered through an array of informal institutional arrangements that delegate partial authorities and empower narrow policy preferences. As evidenced by the Soviet and Russian cases, these practical distributional institutions become deeply entrenched and self-centered in authoritarian and democratic systems alike. Left to their own devices, politicians and functionaries allow these narrow mandates to consume policy-making, with deleterious consequences for overarching national interests. The strategic implications of this institutionally driven parochialism will be addressed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6

THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF SELF-DEFEAT: International Over-Zealousness and Under-Achievement as Products of Decisional Uncertainty

As discussed in the previous chapter, politicians cope with constitutional uncertainties by informally dividing *de facto* control over specific policy domains among themselves and key administrative actors in return for restraint on political opportunism. This self-stabilizing arrangement, in effect, empowers certain elites and bureaucracies with narrow substantive policy preferences. To demonstrate this point, I traced the emergence of *de facto* institutional arrangements and described the range of attendant policy concerns that had to be accommodated by central executives in order to ensure the formation and maintenance of a smooth policy-making processes. In this chapter, I will show that despite the political rationality and expediency, these practical efforts at "buying-off" potential domestic challengers and functionaries come at a price of aggregating, rather than reconciling extreme and conflicting policies. A systemic by-product of these distributional policy-making processes is a proclivity for adopting self-defeating grand strategies.

This chapter specifically examines the implications of the informal institutionalization of decision-making for the adoption of over-zealous and under-achieving grand strategies. As discussed below, the inherent agency problems attendant to the informal parceling out of autonomous control over diplomatic, military, and defense

industrial policies undermine a government's capacity to balance foreign commitments with national capabilities in responding to international threats or opportunities. The consolidation of distributional political arrangements assures that key actors will pursue narrow self-interests, resulting in unbalanced and excessive responses to prevailing international conditions. Over-zealous strategies, therefore, emerge out of the aggregation of myopic policies for responding to pressures for international competition that are contradictory and outstrip national capabilities for realizing these aims. Alternatively, under-achieving strategies arise as those with actual control over diplomacy are similarly free to exploit prevailing winds of international cooperation for parochial purposes, making unreciprocated concessions to foreign adversaries that outpace the state's relative military standing.

The primary test of the argument rests with detailed analysis of the informal institutional sources of under-achievement that bedeviled the Gorbachev regime. I demonstrate that by parceling out authority for the different dimensions of grand strategy to secure his continued ascendance within the leadership, Gorbachev was forced to bind the fortunes of *new thinking* to a political coalition that promised something for everyone: increased international accommodation for the foreign policy community; qualitative improvements in military strategy and hardware for the High Command; and continued extensive growth for defense industry. The problem was that this political formula, while tailored to satisfying the policy preferences of empowered domestic constituencies, was overly-concessionary at the international level. On the one hand, the foreign policy establishment remained committed to the pursuit of international reconciliation with the West at all costs. While the High Command shared similar preferences for qualitative and non-aggressive steps at bolstering Soviet security, it was free to pursue offensive policies aimed at obstructing unilateral concessions. On the other hand, static policies adopted by defense industry directly contradicted those embraced by the professional military for

meeting new mission requirements and qualitatively improving military-technical policy, as well as undermined those policies promulgated by the foreign policy establishment that were aimed at reaping a "peace dividend." As a consequence, Gorbachev's strategy of *new thinking* was marred by diplomatic maneuvering that, while innovative in style and content, outpaced and contradicted changes to Soviet military strategy and defense resource allocations. In the end, the informal institutional arrangements proved intractable and made it extremely difficult for Gorbachev to arrest the widening gap between strategic commitments and capabilities, leading ultimately to the peaceful collapse of the Soviet Union's geostrategic standing.

The chapter also juxtaposes this episode of self-defeat to the contrasting cases of over-zealousness and under-achievement that were characteristic of the Brezhnev and initial Russian grand strategies, respectively. With the earlier Soviet case, I demonstrate that the structure of delegation determines the coherence of grand strategy, irrespective of the prevailing nature of the security environment. The informal segmentation of decision-making among party ideologues, defense industrial elites and foreign ministry personnel compelled Brezhnev to preside over an internally inconsistent diplomatic campaign that was politically successful but operationally bankrupt. In practice, attempts at buying-off first- and second-tier actors to preserve his elevated leadership position combined conflicting policies for international cooperation and competition at the center of the Soviet strategy for *peaceful coexistence*, producing excessive demands on the defense establishment. With the Yeltsin case, I show that the strategic implications of distributional politics hold for both authoritarian and democratic political structures, as agency costs marred the quality of Russia's initial grand strategy as well. The implicit autonomy of the foreign policy establishment to solicit partnership and aid from the West converted exogenous pressures for international reconciliation into a steady course of unilateral diplomatic concessions that

bore little relation to Russia's continued status as both a nuclear power and regional military hegemon.

Brezhnev's Over-Zealous Strategy of Peaceful Coexistence

The informal parceling out of control over the different dimensions of grand strategy saddled Brezhnev with the task of accommodating a narrow set of policy preferences. As the *de facto* power broker, his continued standing as *primus inter pares* within the leadership hinged on his ability to satisfy the substantive concerns of key actors within the informal national security policy-making establishment. This institutional constraint assured that conflicting policy preferences between and among the segmented foreign policy establishment and the military-industrial complex would be aggregated rather than reconciled in grand strategy. Given the cooperative-competitive character of the security environment at the time, this also meant that the fusion of these contradictions would be marked by excessive diplomatic commitments that were not only provocative to international adversaries, but grossly out of touch with respective shifts in military strategy and the defense industrial agenda. Thus, it was not that Brezhnev and the Soviet leadership were psychologically impaired from making the hard choices to redress the over-zealous character of the strategy of peaceful coexistence, but that they were prevented from doing so by the informal institutions that were in place.

On the foreign policy plane, Brezhnev's "offensive detente" strategy bore the distinct marks of the segmented process within which it was informally devised and implemented; consisting of strong impulses to formalize the Soviet Union's newly acquired superpower status and regulate the arms race, to improve Moscow's relative military

standing, and to support anti-imperialist groups in the Third World.¹ On the one hand, openings to the West remained consistent with the pragmatic aims of crisis prevention and restraint in foreign policy urged by Gromyko and the traditional diplomatic corps. This was evidenced by Moscow's willingness to conclude the Basic Principles Agreement, the Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War, the SALT I and SALT II strategic arms control agreements, and the Helsinki Final Act. Alternatively, the heavy hand of the High Command was reflected in the glaring loopholes in Soviet arms control negotiating strategies that allowed steady increases in deployments of new weapons systems to proceed unabated, and the dogged pursuit of military advantage in the European theater and the Middle East. Finally, Soviet policies towards regional conflicts in Southeast Asia, southern Africa, and Latin America throughout the 1970s remained closely tied to the global struggle against imperialism, as advocated by Suslov and administered by the International Department (ID).

These different strains of foreign policy were neatly packaged and sold to respective constituents under Brezhnev's revised "correlation of forces" formula that drew a theoretical connection between the formalization of parity and the pursuit of competitive advantage. The logic behind this strategic synthesis was that regulation of the superpower competition was finally made possible by the success of Moscow's vigilant pursuit of equality with the U.S.. It was argued that the attainment of global capabilities-- military, economic, and social-- provided the decisive impetus for an objective shift in the correlation of forces in Moscow's favor, as well as for the subjective realization on the part of the U.S. of constraints on its international behavior. This equality, particularly on the strategic military level, generated "certain" mutual interests of the two superpowers, including the prevention of nuclear war and negotiated settlement of security issues. This condition,

¹The term "offensive detente" is adapted from Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 246-250.

however, did not preclude conflict between opposing social systems. Rather, the restraint imposed on the U.S. by the Soviet Union's achievement of strategic parity paved the way for Moscow to seize opportunities to promote the international class struggle and worldwide campaign against imperialism while holding U.S. global power in abeyance and avoiding war.² By using this formula, Brezhnev was able to accommodate within a single strategy of peaceful coexistence the competitive and cooperative policy preferences shared by key factions of the *de facto* national security community.³

The problem for Moscow's international standing was that while trade-offs between upholding obligations to regional and ideological allies, preserving military advantages, and facilitating global crisis prevention could be intellectually finessed, in practice they could not. Core foreign policy objectives promulgated by salient actors were not only intrinsically contradictory, but outpaced changes to military strategy and defense resource allocations embraced by the other constituent members of the informal policy-making establishment. The amalgamation of competing preferences in Soviet arms control policies, and policies towards the Middle East and national liberation movements, for example, rendered each policy internally inconsistent and permitted an incoherent international strategy to unfold dramatically over the course of the ensuing decade. Moreover, sharpening contradictions between and among each policy strain complicated the High Command's war-fighting requirements and were neglected by the preferred military

²See for example, L. I. Brezhnev, *Leninskoy kursom: rechi i stat'i*, vol. 5 (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoy literatury,), p. 317. See discussion in Margot Light, *The Soviet Theory of International Relations* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), pp. 268-293; and Allen Lynch, *The Soviet Study of International Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 89-107.

³This synthesis was codified in Article 8 of the 1977 Soviet Constitution that read: "The foreign policy of the U.S.S.R. is aimed at ensuring international conditions favorable for building communism in the U.S.S.R., safeguarding the state interests of the Soviet Union, consolidating the positions of world socialism, supporting the struggle for of peoples for national liberation and social progress, preventing wars of aggression, achieving universal and complete disarmament, and consistently implementing the principle of the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems." See *Konstitutsiya (Osnovnoy Zakon) Soyuz Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik*, Moskva, 1978, p. 21.

strategy for launching a large-scale conventional offensive in Europe. Similarly, foreign policy inconsistencies and the aggressive military strategy were incompatible with defense industrial policies aimed at flattening growth in military procurement and increasing consumer production.⁴

The informal institutional constraints were felt at the center of Brezhnev's strategy of peaceful coexistence in Soviet arms control policies and negotiating strategies throughout the 1970s. While a precise rendering of the evolution of Soviet objectives in the major arms control processes of the period is beyond the scope of this study, the evidence suggests that in each, decision authorities were severely segmented.⁵ In fact, at both the elite and staff levels, operative control over Soviet negotiating positions and the generation of military-technical requirements in the arms control dialogue with the West were divided between the informal diplomatic network and the High Command.

In practice, Gromyko and his subordinates in the foreign ministry were delegated the task of spearheading negotiations with the U.S. for the limitation of offensive and defensive weapons, both strategic and conventional. By most accounts, the assigned objectives for each process were to secure agreement with the Americans that would not only lend predictability to the arms race and regulate its escalation, but that would validate the Soviet Union's status as a superpower. Given this mandate, what mattered most to this informal diplomatic network were the political benefits of prolonged participation in the arms control processes, especially the international prestige garnered from being treated as

⁴According to Arbatov, Brezhnev's "correlation of forces" formula was merely a "verbal screen" for selling realist policies while satisfying those elements in the leadership committed to preserving Soviet ideological "virginity." See G.A. Arbatov, *Zatyannuvsheesya vyzdorovlenie, 1953-1985: Svidetel'stvo sovremennika* (Moskva: Mezhdunarodnaya otnosheniya, 1991), pp. 189-190.

⁵For seminal accounts of the evolution in Soviet arms control policies during the period, see especially Raymond L. Garthoff, *Detente and Confrontation* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1985); John Newhouse, *Cold Dawn: The Story of SALT* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1973); and Thomas W. Wolfe, *The SALT Experience* (Cambridge: Ballinger 1979).

a military equal to the U.S. and formal declarations of the prevention of war.⁶ To ensure control over this part of the Soviet arms control agenda, Gromyko and select foreign ministry officials were ceded authority to bargain directly with their counterparts. While not authorized to make decisions on the spot, they had considerable discretion to hammer out negotiating frameworks with foreign interlocutors in discrete back channels that bypassed and exceeded the mandates conferred upon formal negotiating teams. The Soviet ambassador to the U.S., for instance, was personally instructed by Brezhnev on several occasions to take the initiative in pushing progress towards consummating the SALT I and Vladivostok Accords with senior American officials, despite conservative rumblings within the Politburo at the time. This *de facto* authority to preempt concurrent negotiations taking place through formal channels allowed Brezhnev and Gromyko to infuse a strong presumption of support for arms control within the leadership, as well as provided them with decisive input on issues related to the general structure of Soviet proposals.⁷

Simultaneously, professional military representatives were granted unprecedented authority to play a direct and major role in overseeing the military-technical dimension of Soviet arms control policy. Grechko (and Ustinov following his death) enjoyed significant leeway to determine the concrete military ramifications of Western proposals, as well as had final say on Soviet bargaining positions that dealt with specific numbers and types of

⁶ For example of Gromyko's views on the role of arms control in Soviet foreign policy, see A.A. Gromyko, *Pamyatnoe* (Moskva: Politizdat, 1988), pp. 201, 204-206. See also discussion in Coit Blacker, *Hostage to Revolution: Gorbachev and Soviet Security Policy, 1985-1991* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1993), pp. 38-41.

⁷ Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence* (New York: Times Books, 1995), p. 201; 230-231. For discussion of the likely proponents and opponents of arms control in the Politburo during the 1970s, see especially Philip D. Stewart, James W. Warhola, and Roger Blough, "Issue Salience and Foreign Policy Role Specialization in the Soviet Politburo of the 1970s," *American Journal of Political Science* 23:1 (February 1984), pp. 1-22; Stuart J. Kaufman, "Organizational Politics and the Change in Soviet Military Strategy," *World Politics* 46 (April 1994), p. 371-377; and Richard D. Anderson, Jr., *Public Politics in an Authoritarian State: Making Foreign Policy During the Brezhnev Era* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 195-234.

weapons systems. At the staff level, the second-ranking member of the Soviet negotiating team was typically a representative of the General Staff. As "full" members of the Soviet delegations, they guided discussions over specific military-technical issues, retaining authoritative voice on issues concerning Soviet weaponry and force postures to the exclusion of the other members of the Soviet negotiating team.⁸ Moreover, given monopoly control over deployment schedules and force structure, the High Command enjoyed significant leverage in internal deliberations over arms control issues that directly affected the status of existing and follow-on systems. In effect, this leverage assured the professional military that its core objectives-- the strengthening of Soviet relative military standing and the unobstructed preparation for fighting and winning a major war should deterrence fail-- would be realized in Soviet arms control policies.

The upshot of this severe compartmentalization of political and military-technical decision-making authority was that Soviet arms control policies were internally inconsistent and highly provocative. First, because Soviet negotiating strategy was tailored more towards reaching agreement on lofty political objectives than restricting the quantitative and qualitative arms race, Moscow advanced proposals that not only undermined stable deterrence but confounded war-fighting strategy. Specifically, the Soviets pushed proposals aimed at constraining the basic parameters of the arms race, as evidenced by the endorsement of "equal aggregate" limits in the SALT I and SALT II negotiations, that were trumpeted as politically significant, but that left the door open for both sides to pursue war-fighting advantages via the deployment of fourth generation systems and restricted

⁸Repeated attempts by foreign ministry officials to circumvent the Soviet military in the various arms control processes met with little success, given the High Command's monopoly of intelligence on Soviet force structure and deployments. See especially Raymond L. Garthoff, "The Soviet Military and SALT," in Jiri Valenta and William C. Potter, eds., *Soviet Decisionmaking for National Security* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), pp. 142-146.

verification measures.⁹ This strategy, while it secured the deployment of on-going modernization programs and protected numerical advantages in deployed manpower and armored forces in the European theater, allowed the U.S. to surge ahead with technological advances across the full panoply of strategic, theater, and tactical nuclear systems, as well as to exploit fully the lethality of its tactical advantages in strike aircraft in Europe. In fact, subsequent NATO deployments of Pershing II intermediate range missiles and ground launched cruise missiles in Europe, together with the innovative Western synthesis of new deep-strike conventional war-fighting doctrines with "emerging technologies," radically undermined Soviet military planning for victory during a prolonged conventional phase of engagement.¹⁰

Second, the *de facto* separation of authority to decide weapons deployment schedules subverted the international credibility of Soviet negotiating strategy. This was dramatically revealed in the cases involving the deployment of SS-20 intermediate-range missiles and the development of the Krasnoyarsk radar station. Because the High Command retained exclusive authority to present deployment packages to the leadership

⁹The most visible manifestation of this unwavering commitment to pursuing military advantage through arms control was the refusal to entertain limits in the SALT I process on "heavy ICBMs" or curbs on Soviet throwweight advantages. This reluctance to constrain Soviet war-fighting capabilities also was evinced by the rejection out-of-hand of the Carter Administration's March 1977 Comprehensive Proposal for deep cuts in strategic systems, as well as by the uncompromising commitment to the preservation of asymmetrical advantages and restriction on data exchanges throughout the course of the decade long Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions negotiations. See especially Coit D. Blacker, "The MBFR Experience," in Alexander L. George, Philip J. Farley, and Alexander Dallin, eds., *U.S.-Soviet Security Cooperation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 129-131. Soviet fourth generation systems included the SS-17, SS-18, and SS-19 ICBMs, the SS-20 IRBM, the Yankee and Delta class strategic submarines, and the SS-N-8 and SS-N-18 SLBMs. Some analysts argue that the Soviet military, in fact, did accept marginal limits to its follow-on deployments of counter-force ICBMs. These accounts, however, are based on speculations related to the potential rates for production of weapons systems during the late 1960s that we cannot verify for certain. See especially Michael MccGwire, *Military Objectives in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1987), p. 269; and Raymond L. Garthoff, "The Soviet Military and SALT," pp. 146-152.

¹⁰See discussion in Rose E. Gottemoeller, *Conflict and Consensus in the Soviet Armed Forces R-3759-AF* (Santa Monica: RAND, October 1989); and Kimberly Martin Zisk, *Engaging the Enemy: Organizational Theory and Soviet Military Innovation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 120-141.

free from the direct challenge of outside critics, there was little consideration during both episodes for the negative diplomatic externalities of the military's unabated modernization efforts. According to several insider accounts, in both cases the military leadership flaunted its partial authority to follow through with its pre-determined modernization schedules, cognizant of the likely international reaction but insulated from paying a domestic political cost by the deference to tacit boundaries that existed within the leadership.¹¹

Moscow's involvement in the Middle East provides another vivid illustration of the explosive contradictions upon which Soviet foreign policy was founded throughout the 1970s. Beginning with the signing of the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with Egypt in 1971 and ending with the acrimony surrounding Moscow's credibility as a reliable ally in the aftermath of the Lebanon Air War in 1982, the Kremlin's behavior in the region reflected the conflicting extremes to which the tension between advances toward crisis prevention and normalization in relations with the U.S. and the pursuit of competitive advantages pulled Soviet foreign policy. The Kremlin, for example, undertook to accelerate arms deliveries to Egypt in 1973, providing Sadat the unprecedented wherewithal to launch a major offensive against America's strategic ally Israel, at the very moment that Moscow's long sought after coziness with Washington was flourishing. Capped by the American nuclear alert during the Yom Kippur War, this dual track policy produced the exact confrontation that the Soviet leadership collectively sought to avoid in signing the

¹¹ According to Arbatov, Gromyko refused to oppose Ustinov's decision out of concern for preserving the stability of the informal policy-making mechanism at a time when Brezhnev's health was rapidly deteriorating. On the Krasnoyarsk issue, he maintains that opponents of the development of the radar, who recognized its violation of the ABM treaty, were prevented from directly challenging the military's prerogative to control the decision agenda regarding weapons deployments. G.A. Arbatov, *Zatianuvsheesiya vyzdorovlenie*, pp. 236-238. According to another Soviet foreign ministry official at the time, Brezhnev willfully condoned this action as compensation for the military's respect for his efforts to push through the Vladivostok Accords that, in turn, involved concessions to the American appeal for dropping the contentious issue of "forward base systems." See discussion in Strobe Talbott, *Endgame: The Inside Story of SALT II* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 191979), p. 73.

Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War at the Washington Summit several months earlier. Similarly, the subsequent dichotomy in Soviet foreign policy between efforts to expand the regional client base and to impose a superpower condominium on the Arab-Israeli conflict, resulted not only in Moscow's exclusion from the Camp David peace process, but in the alienation of its most prized regional ally, Egypt. All in all, Soviet foreign policy in the Middle East during the high Brezhnev period was a bust, having both brought Moscow perilously close to global confrontation with the U.S. and marginalized its presence in the region.¹²

At the root of the Soviet leadership's inability to come to grips with the painful trade-offs in reconciling increasingly aggressive policies in the region with detente and the diplomatic search for a stable presence in the Middle East, was the fragmentation and myopic exploitation of decision authority embodied by the informal institutional setting. Within the core leadership group, Brezhnev and Gromyko wielded considerable discretion to formulate Soviet diplomacy in the region. While members of the inner circle, such as Andropov, Suslov, and Podgorny, had input, they tended to defer to Gromyko, given the latter's extensive involvement in negotiations and access to privileged information processed by foreign ministry personnel on the ground. At the staff level, the foreign ministry played the key role in handling negotiations with both the U.S. and allies in the region. According to Dobrynin, nearly all high-level diplomacy related to the Middle East was conducted *via* his secret channel with senior American officials that in Moscow took

¹²The post-October 1973 debacle in Soviet-Middle East policy was capped by the abrogation of the treaty with Egypt in 1976; and Moscow's increasing dependence on extremist forces, such as Syria, Libya, Iraq and Iran, for a foothold in the region. By the end of the decade conflicts among these allies increasingly paralyzed Soviet policy and left the Kremlin outside of the Arab-Israeli peace process. For detailed discussion of the contradictions that bankrupted Soviet Middle East policy throughout the 1970s, see especially Robert O. Freedman, *Soviet Policy Towards the Middle East Since 1970*, 3rd edition (New York: Praeger Press, 1982); Alvin Z. Rubenstein, *Red Star on the Nile: The Soviet-Egyptian Influence Relationship Since the June War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977); and Karen Dawisha, *Soviet Foreign Policy Towards Egypt* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979).

place under Gromyko's direct auspices.¹³ In addition, the foreign ministry, through its network of diplomats on station in the region, maintained significant control over the collection and dissemination of information and intelligence on the internal political situation within client states. Soviet ambassadors to Egypt and Syria, for instance, played crucial roles in directly communicating and assessing the diplomatic appeals by senior politicians in respective host countries to Brezhnev and Gromyko.¹⁴

Vested with this mandate, it was mainly up to Gromyko's informal network to balance diplomatic interests in advancing Soviet influence in the region and strengthening Moscow's voice in the Arab-Israeli peace process, while keeping efforts at crisis prevention with the U.S. on track. The result was an unwavering push to cement a joint diplomatic effort with the U.S. to prevent the outbreak of war between respective clients, as well as consistent lobbying of regional allies to seek political solutions to conflicts both with Israel and among themselves. Prior to and during the October 1973 War, for instance, Gromyko and the foreign ministry spearheaded Soviet diplomatic efforts to preserve Moscow's relationship with the United States, undertaking a series of initiatives aimed at warning Washington of the impending crisis, and subsequently at brokering a cease-fire between warring regional actors. Gromyko, in particular, went as far as to

¹³Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, p. 289. According to statements by former foreign ministry personnel, Brezhnev and the other elites, in practice, deferred to Gromyko's judgement on handling these issues. This was especially the case after Gromyko's appointment as a full member of the Politburo in 1973 and Podgorny's simultaneous downgrading. Another example of the ascendancy of the foreign ministry on these issues, was the formation of a four-man task force set up in the Kremlin charged with providing the senior leadership with necessary materials, data, and preparing draft decisions regarding Soviet diplomacy during the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war. See comments cited in Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 170. See also discussion in Viktor Israelyan, *Inside the Kremlin During the Yom Kippur War* (University Park, PA: Penn State University, 1995), pp. 33-35.

¹⁴See Galia Golan, "Soviet Decisionmaking in the Yom Kippur War," in Jiri Valenta and William C. Potter, eds., *Soviet Decisionmaking for National Security*, p. 192; Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, pp. 184, 200. According to G. Kornienko, first deputy foreign minister at the time, Brezhnev relied mainly on informal conversations with Gromyko in shaping Soviet diplomacy during and after the October 1973 War.

outpace the rest of the Soviet leadership by crafting a memorandum with Kissinger that called for a peace agreement supervised under U.N. auspices, so as to forestall any possible confrontation between American and Soviet armed forces in the region. Simultaneously, he and his subordinates went to great pains to counsel Egyptian restraint, imploring Sadat to postpone the initial offensive across the Suez Canal, as well as pressuring Cairo to sue for peace with Israel before the tide of battle changed against it for good.¹⁵

The authority vested in Gromyko's informal diplomatic apparatus notwithstanding, Brezhnev parceled out parallel responsibility to supervise military relations with client states in the Middle East to the High Command. According to numerous insider accounts, Brezhnev deferred to Grechko and senior military officers in the formulation and implementation of policies concerning the delivery of arms and military assistance to client states in the region. Grechko, for instance, was personally active in major discussions with Arab leaders about their military requirements, and negotiated agreements on the establishment of Soviet naval and air basing rights in the region and the use of Soviet military personnel to train indigenous armies. The High Command was also free to authorize Soviet military operations in the region, as well as maintained autonomy to shape the composition and time tables of arms deliveries to demanding clients.¹⁶ This *de facto*

¹⁵According to Dobrynin, Brezhnev, at Gromyko's urging, warned President Nixon during his St. Clemente visit of the rising probability of the outbreak of war months prior to the Egyptian and Syrian initial assault on Israel. See Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, p. 288. Similarly, Gromyko took the lead in brokering Moscow's three proposals for internationally supervised cease-fire agreements. According to one eyewitness, Gromyko's commitment to averting potential confrontation with the U.S. led him to contradict Brezhnev's personal appeal for collective action with Washington in dispatching peace-keeping troops to the region. As a result, Brezhnev was forced to take matters into his own hands, issuing both the proposal for joint military action and the threat of unilateral military action directly to the American leadership. See especially Viktor Israelyan, *Inside the Kremlin During the Yom Kippur War*, pp. 135-149. Moreover, in the aftermath of the confrontation with the U.S., Gromyko expressed strong reservations for sinking too much into relations with independent-minded Arab leaderships. See, for example, *Pravda*, 20 April 1975, p. 2

¹⁶See especially Viktor Israelyan, *Inside the Kremlin During the Yom Kippur War*, p. 56-86; and Mohamed Heikal, *The Sphinx and the Commissar* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978); and Karen Dawisha, *Soviet Foreign Policy Towards Egypt*, pp. 146-150.

authority was underwritten by the defense ministry's monopoly control of data related to the military situation in the region, during both peace-time and war. Throughout the decade, for example, the Soviet military maintained missions on the ground that were instrumental for processing and communicating detailed and informed assessments of Egyptian and Syrian defense capabilities, as well as that retained exclusive access to military intelligence gathered from satellite and aerial reconnaissance assets.¹⁷

Given this limited autonomy to oversee military policy in the region, the High Command pursued its own set of parochial policies. In short, the professional military adopted policies designed to maintain steady defense relations with local clients, ensure that allies in the region received the proper training and equipment to fight and win a war of attrition in the region, secure Soviet access to regional naval and air bases, and avert direct engagement with American forces.¹⁸ Following the return of Soviet military advisors to Egypt in 1972, the High Command vigorously embraced policies aimed at restoring the Soviet Union's reputation as a reliable supplier of advanced weaponry, and at humiliating Israeli forces backed by American military assistance. As evidenced in the period leading up to and during the 1973 October War, Grechko and other members of the High Command were free to carry out comprehensive rearmament policies and continued air- and sea-lift operations, designed to upgrade Egyptian war-fighting capabilities, at the same time that Gromyko undertook diplomatic efforts to broker a cease-fire. This parochial fixation

¹⁷See especially Karen Dawisha, *Soviet Foreign Policy Towards Egypt*, p. 146-150. See also Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, pp. 245-246; and Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, p. 289. According to one former Soviet insider, this information advantage relative to other national security organs did not ensure that the defense ministry had accurate intelligence relative to the military intentions of Arab client states. In fact, throughout the Yom Kippur War, "Soviet military leaders had only vague ideas about the strategy of the war Egypt and Syrian officers were planning to conduct," and consistently complained that their Arab counterparts "did not listen to Soviet military advise." See Viktor Israelyan, *Inside the Kremlin During the Yom Kippur War*, pp. 55-56.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

on outshining American military assistance to Israel and securing military outposts in Egypt and Syria drove the High Command to adopt rearmament policies that, in effect, repeatedly undermined Soviet diplomatic efforts aimed at reaching negotiated settlement. This was achieved by the repeated delivery of offensive weaponry that strengthened the resolve of the Arab states to continue the fighting. According to one Soviet military commentator, this contradiction was "bureaucratically pre-determined," as Brezhnev had to satisfy two tendencies within the leadership-- those demanding restoration of military ties with Arab clients and those advocating diplomatic solution to the conflict-- out of respect for the implicit autonomy enjoyed by each group.¹⁹

The third major contradiction in Soviet foreign policy at the height of the Brezhnev period was between the pursuit of detente with the U.S. and commitment to competitive advantage in the Third World as part of the global struggle against imperialism. In contrast to the sparse attention and sober view regarding the post-imperialist prospects for the Third World in Brezhnev's report at the 24th Party Congress in 1971, by the middle of the decade the Soviet leadership began to assume a more aggressive posture in support of national liberation movements in the developing world. As evidenced by Moscow's deepening assistance to Marxist-Leninist vanguard parties in Angola, Ethiopia, and South Yemen, Mozambique, Nicaragua, and Cambodia this resurgence was premised largely on ideological assessments of the prospects for institutionalizing a "socialist orientation"

¹⁹Personal interview with Colonel Yu. Kirshin, in Moscow, on 19 August 1992. See also Viktor Israelyan, *Inside the Kremlin During the Yom Kippur War*, pp. 66-77. Brezhnev issued his threat of unilateral action after receiving battlefield intelligence from the military that Israel was intensifying its attack on the Egyptian Third Army, when in fact the fighting had actually stopped. Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, pp. 245-246; 170-172, 182-188; 198-245 Golan; Both on the eve of the crisis and during the war, Brezhnev, in deference to the competing policies generated by Gromyko and Grechko, undertook efforts at seeking a superpower condominium to terminate the conflict, while simultaneously accelerating arms deliveries to Cairo in order to restore relations with the Egyptian military. According to several other political insiders, the military also exercised its authority, unbeknownst to the political leadership, to prepare Soviet paratroopers for possible intervention and to conduct naval maneuvers in the region at the height of the crisis.

within local regimes. Despite dissonant rumblings within the expert community that harped on the inappropriateness of existing "structural requisites" for the consolidation of socialist development in the developing world, the leadership aggressively undertook the promotion of national liberation movements and the active interference in the internal processes of Leninist state-building that was unfolding in client states.²⁰ By the mid-1970s-- as a number of very economically under-developed, self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist regimes began to emerge in the Third World at the same time that the U.S. found itself in the throes of the post-Vietnam malaise-- the Kremlin became increasingly cavalier in providing direct and proxy military and economic assistance aimed at fostering "proletarian internationalism." In doing so, it began to flaunt the risks of stumbling into confrontation with the U.S.. By the end of the period, however, the substantial hard currency and opportunity costs of supporting weakly institutionalized ideological allies and the political price of undermining U.S support for the SALT II treaty, revealed the incompatibility of these exploits with Soviet global objectives. According to one commentator, this reckless pursuit of conflicting policy strains not only wasted scarce resources, but "squandered the Soviet image as a status-quo power" that was integral to the legitimacy and stability of Moscow's superpower relations with the U.S..²¹

²⁰For extensive discussion of the burgeoning critique of the leadership's embrace of the "socialist orientation" program, see especially Elizabeth K. Valkenier, *The Soviet Union and the Third World: An Economic Bind* (New York: Praeger, 1983); Jerry F. Hough, *The Struggle for the Third World* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1986); and Scott Allan Bruckner, *The Strategic Role of Ideology: Exploring the Links Between Incomplete Information, Signaling, and 'Getting Stuck' in Soviet Politics* (Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1992). For description of the leadership program, see *Gosudarstvo sotsialisticheskoi orientatsii* (Moscow: Nauka, 1975). This renewed commitment to placing relations with developing states on a more pure Leninist footing was confirmed in personal interview with K. Brutents, former deputy chief of Middle East and Latin America at the International Department, in Moscow, on 11 October 1993.

²¹G.A. Arbatov, *Zatyanuvsheesya vyzdorovlenie, 1953-1985*, p. 235. The costliness, both politically and economically, of this ideological activism in Soviet Third World policy was acknowledged by Soviet policy-makers in the wake of Brezhnev's death. See especially Karen Brutents, "Osvobodivshiesya strany v nachale 80-kh godov," *Kommunist*, 3 (February 1984); and "Rech' General'nogo Sekretariya Ts. K. KPSS tovarishcha Iu. V. Andropov," *Kommunist*, 9 (June 1983), pp. 14-15.

The ideological assertiveness in Soviet policy towards the Third World was a direct manifestation of the segmentation of authority within the Brezhnev leadership. In practice, Suslov determined the Soviet agenda in the Third World, maintaining exclusive control at the elite level of Moscow's relations with liberation movements. Throughout the period, Brezhnev openly deferred to Suslov's grand designs "to demonstrate solidarity" with ideological and anti-imperialist allies in the developing world.²² Moreover, Gromyko, who was the recognized authority on relations with the West, carried very little stature in high level deliberations over Soviet Third World activity. According to several inside accounts, Gromyko reluctantly accepted the fact that his reports on American complaints of Soviet activity in Angola, Ethiopia, and Somalia were not taken seriously. This frustration notwithstanding, he conceded this *de facto* authority to Suslov without challenge. In deference, he deliberately neglected to stay abreast of Soviet policies in Africa, as indicated by his off-the-cuff dismissal of Black Africa as an insignificant international arena and the relative infrequency of meetings held with staff members of the foreign ministry's African desk.²³

The International Department enjoyed parallel administrative autonomy to supervise Soviet relations with Third World client states. Ponamarev and his lieutenants not only spearheaded the theoretical campaign to put Soviet relations on a pure Leninist track, but exclusively coordinated Moscow's communications with and assistance to national liberation movements. The foreign ministry and the scholarly community, on the other hand, were typically marginalized in this process. Foreign ministry personnel on station in Zimbabwe, for example, were reportedly "out of the loop" in Moscow and informally discouraged from sending transmissions that contradicted the ideological program pursued

²²Personal interview with K. Brutents.

²³Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, p. 403-404; Arkady N. Shevchenko, *Breaking With Moscow* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), pp. 189-191, 152.

by representatives of the ID. Similarly, academics were strictly beholden to 'patrons' in the ID for passing their research reports and memoranda on to Brezhnev and Suslov. As suggested by several accounts, staff members at the ID typically "buried" reports submitted by outside analysts that were highly critical of Soviet policy towards Africa and inconsistent with the department's ideological line.²⁴

The upshot of these contradictory currents in Soviet foreign policy was an extensive set of international commitments. Delegated limited authority to promote world-wide recognition of the Soviet Union's status as a superpower and parity with the U.S., the informal diplomatic network committed the Kremlin to abide by open-ended codes of conduct in the spirit of reducing international tension and conflict. The Basic Principles Agreement and the Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War, for instance, bound the Soviet leadership to "do everything possible to avoid military conflict." Alternatively, the freedom granted the High Command to govern the military-technical dimension of Soviet arms control policies, locked the Soviet leadership into a qualitative arms race to forestall America's technological breakout potential. Finally, the autonomy ceded to the ideological establishment produced deeper Soviet commitments to long-term, large-scale, and costly involvement in the developing world. Though the *de facto* leadership was satisfied by the extension of these foreign commitments, it lacked the capacity to reconcile them with policies related to the preparation and procurement of military forces.

In practice, Brezhnev's efforts to aggregate inconsistent preferences of salient foreign policy constituencies saddled the High Command with obligations that it was

²⁴This information was conveyed in personal interviews with N. Simoniya, head of Section on Africa at the Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), in Moscow, on 6 July 1992; and G. Mirskii, head of Section on the Middle East at IMEMO, in Moscow, on 24 July 1992. It is interesting to note that Brutents acknowledges receipt of such reports, but argues that it was "politically infeasible" for ID personnel to forward them on to Ponamerev and Suslov at that time. He argues that it was not until Andropov's tenure that such reports could begin to circulate within the leadership. Personal interview with K. Brutents.

neither inclined nor prepared to meet. Enjoying its own limited autonomy to determine military strategy and force structure in response to prevailing security conditions, the High Command was free to pursue parochial military-technical policies with little regard for diplomatic or ideological commitments. In fact, the fixation on preparing for a major conventional offensive in Europe generated war-fighting plans and a force structure that were incompatible with both diplomatic attempts to restrict the escalation of a superpower confrontation to strategic nuclear war and ideologically inspired commitments to project Soviet and proxy military power to the Third World. Ironically, just at the moment when Soviet foreign policies demanded more flexible military options, the High Command narrowed its focus in developing operational concepts and combat capabilities without reference to Moscow's growing international obligations.

The split between diplomatic and military policies arose at the epicenter of Brezhnev's strategy of peaceful coexistence. In pursuit of its high priority objectives of reinforcing the mutual deterrent stand-off and averting all-out nuclear war, the *de facto* diplomatic network aggressively pursued bilateral agreements with the U.S. to establish principles for behavior and constraints on military escalation. Beginning in April 1972, Brezhnev and Gromyko went so far as to propose "mutual understandings" with Washington to rule out a strategic nuclear exchange, even in the event of a limited nuclear war between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. In fact, Gromyko tied the convening of the Washington Summit in 1973 to progress towards the Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War.²⁵ Subsequently in 1976, the informal diplomatic network stepped up international efforts to agitate the no-first-use issue. This produced a series of conditional

²⁵See discussion in Raymond L. Garthoff, *Detente and Confrontation*, pp. 294, 334-344. During these negotiations, Brezhnev reportedly remarked to Kissinger that only select members of the ruling elite were apprised of the Peaceful Nuclear War project. Within the foreign ministry, the Department for Planning and Foreign Policy Measures was created in 1971 to oversee specifically the formulation of position papers and coordination of Soviet diplomatic efforts aimed at codifying basic principles in superpower relations and the prevention of nuclear war.

statements on Soviet support for mutual renunciation of the first-use of nuclear weapons, culminating in Brezhnev's famous 1982 public pledge of Soviet unilateral restraint. Both of these diplomatic gestures committed the Soviet Union to avoiding the unlimited use of nuclear weapons except in retaliation for massive strikes on Soviet territory.²⁶

Delegated limited authority to formulate and carry out war-fighting plans in the event of deterrence failure, the military did not adhere to the assumptions and principles that informed diplomatic efforts to prevent the outbreak of nuclear war. In contrast to the political leadership's circumspection about the inevitability of massive retaliation to the introduction of nuclear weapons, the High Command rejected the viability of preparing for and containing a limited nuclear war. Subtle distinctions notwithstanding, senior military staff members reiterated that any clash between the two social systems involving nuclear weapons would be "decisive," necessitating unlimited retaliation. According to authoritative sources, this was codified in Soviet war plans at the time that stressed a "readiness to launch decisive nuclear strikes" against the enemy's strategic, operational, and tactical counter-force and counter-value targets "in retaliation for any attempt at the use of nuclear forces, even that of a limited nature."²⁷

In addition, Soviet military strategy and force structure were tailored almost exclusively towards waging a decisive conventional offensive in the European theater. The

²⁶For the subtle advocacy within the leadership for limited nuclear options and, by implication, selective nuclear targeting, see Brezhnev's speech in *Pravda*, 9 May 1975, p. 1. See also discussion in Kimberly Martin Zisk, *Engaging the Enemy*, pp. 108-119.

²⁷See, for example, Ghulam Dastagir Wardak, *The Voroshilov Lectures*, 1, ed., Graham Hall Turbville, Jr. (Washington, D. C.: National Defense University Press, 1989), pp. 247, 298-299. See also discussion in Kimberly Martin Zisk, *Engaging the Enemy*, pp. 102-119; and Stuart J. Kaufman, "Organizational Politics and Change in Soviet Military Policy," pp. 364-367. This was subsequently affirmed by then-Chief of the General Staff, Marshal N. V. Ogarkov, who boldly stated that "any limited use of nuclear weapons (would) inevitably lead to the immediate use of the sides' entire nuclear arsenals. Such is the harsh logic of war." See N. V. Ogarkov, *Istoriya uchit bditel'nosti* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1985), p. 89. The pervasiveness of this view among members of the General Staff was confirmed in personal interviews with General V. Tatarnikov, aside to Marshal S.F. Akkromeyev, in Moscow, on 13 October 1993; and General N. Chervov, in Moscow, on 20 August 1992.

General Staff explicitly ruled out the possibility that a campaign in Europe could be anything other than a major war, with victory achieved only by the successful employment of a decisive offensive.²⁸ As is now clear from declassified materials, the High Command's preferred approach to combat was to raise the nuclear threshold by planning for victory in a prolonged conventional phase. For example, the only Warsaw Pact strategy on the books called for a five-pronged offensive launched from East Germany to Czechoslovakia, characterized by the combination of massed, but controlled, firepower and maneuver operations that would substitute for the effects of nuclear strikes.²⁹ This preoccupation with mobility and firepower was also reflected in the resurrection of strategic concepts of theater military actions (TVDs) that called for thinking and preparations for massive operational breakthroughs and deeps strikes to encircle and destroy enemy forces. Indicative of the primacy of this mission in Soviet war planning was the concerted attention devoted to developing a flexible structure of unified operational control across multiple theaters of combat, and the formation of Operational Maneuver Groups (OMG) designed to exploit rapidly frontal breakthrough opportunities and wreak havoc behind enemy lines before the West could make a firm decision about using nuclear weapons.³⁰ All of these efforts, in effect, assured that the Soviet military would not be able to uphold political

²⁸Ghulam Dastagir Wardak, *The Voroshilov Lectures*, p. 77.

²⁹Lothar Ruhl, "Offensive Defense in the Warsaw Pact," *Survival* 33 (September-October 1991), pp. 442-450. According to this source, the Warsaw Pact forces did not have the training or engineering equipment necessary to conduct defensive operations in the European theater.

³⁰For detailed discussion of the highly offensive characteristics in Soviet military planning at the time, see especially Phillip A. Peterson and John G. Hines, "The Conventional Offensive in Soviet Theater Strategy," *Orbis* 3 (Fall 1983), p. 703; C. N. Donnelly, "The Soviet Operational Manoeuvre Group," *International Defense Review* 15:9 (1982), pp. 1177; Dale Herspring, *The Soviet High Command 1967-1989*, pp. 86-94, 137-145, 174-187; and Phillip A. Peterson and Notra Trulock III, "Soviet Views and Policies Toward Theater War in Europe," in Bruce Parrott, ed., *The Dynamics of Soviet Defense Policy* (Washington, D.C.: The Wilson Center Press, 1990), pp. 229-256. For summary of the offensive character at the tactical level, see especially David M. Glanz, "Spearhead of Attack: The Role of the Forward Detachment in Tactical Maneuver," *The Journal of Soviet Military Studies*, 1:3 (September 1988), pp. 306-338.

commitments to limit a war in Europe and avert escalation should the West introduce nuclear weapons onto the battlefield.

A corollary to this preoccupation with planning and preparing for a major conventional offensive in Europe was the downgrading of the power projection mission in support of national liberation movements in the Third World. By the mid-1970s, Soviet military strategy was conspicuously silent on the role of the Red Army beyond defense of the homeland that was forcefully articulated at the beginning of the decade. Ustinov, in several speeches to client states in the developing world, omitted reference to a power projection mission and explicitly reiterated that Soviet combat forces were intended solely for national defense. Notwithstanding occasional rhetorical endorsement of local wars, the High Command was no longer optimistic about preventing such military engagements from escalating into superpower confrontations, and ceased planning for sustained ground or naval combat operations in the Third World. In deference to the need for modernizing theater warfare, the navy was forced to jettison its earlier pretensions to having an independent strategic mission as an instrument of coercive diplomacy and support for liberation movements. This was reflected in the scaled-back deployment patterns of Soviet naval vessels in the Middle East following the October 1973 war and the repeated reticence to augment the Fifth Eskadra in subsequent regional crises.³¹

In addition, the militancy of Soviet commitments to the Third World and the increasing requirements for waging a major conventional war in Europe collided with the *de facto* defense industrial agenda. Ironically, at the same time that the nation's foreign policy and professional military leaders embraced expansive commitments, albeit in

³¹For a taste of Ustinov's rebuff, see especially discussion by Stephen S. Roberts, "The October 1973 Arab-Israeli War," in Bradford Dismukes and James McConnell, eds., *Soviet Naval Diplomacy* (New York: Pergamon, 1979), pp. 192-220; Bradford Dismukes and Kenneth G. Weiss, *Mare Mosso: The Mediterranean Theater*, Professional Paper No. 423 (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, November 1984), pp 2-8; and Mark Katz, *The Third World in Soviet Military Thought* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982).

different directions, the Soviet leadership began to step-up efforts aimed at rationalizing expenditures within the defense sector in response to gripping resource stringency. Because of the administrative autonomy enjoyed by the leaders of Soviet defense industry, however, this shift took shape in a manner that neither decisively reoriented the real flow of resources to the defense sector, nor corresponded to the requirements generated by Soviet overseas commitments and the shift in military strategy.

According to revised 1982-1983 CIA estimates, the Soviet defense burden remained constant throughout the high Brezhnev period. As the growth rate of Soviet GNP slowed to approximately 2 percent a year in 1976, so too did the rate of growth in military spending, remaining at a constant 13-14 percent of total output. Specifically, aggregate defense spending growth in constant rubles declined from 4-5 percent a year to an annual average of 2 percent beginning in 1976. Moreover, this dampened acceleration of military spending was primarily the result of the flattening of procurement growth that lasted through the mid-1980s.³²

Overall, this slowdown in the growth of military spending on weapons systems reflected a deliberate policy decision that was inconsistent with the new directions in Soviet foreign policy and defense plans.³³ A disaggregated picture reveals that the falling rates of production varied among specific categories inversely with budding diplomatic and defense requirements. First, contrary to the diplomatic objective of bolstering strategic deterrence

³²U.S. Congress, Joint Economic Committee, *Allocation of Resources in the Soviet Union and China-1983* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1984). For comprehensive comparison of explicit criteria and implicit assumptions underlying the diverse Western estimates of the size and rate of growth of Soviet military expenditures during the period, see especially James H. Noren, "The Controversy Over Western Measures of Soviet Defense Expenditures," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 11:3 (1995), pp 238-276.

³³The length of the slowdown and the fact that it affected all of the military services suggest that this decline in growth rates was not merely a manifestation of technical bottlenecks or the end of a procurement cycle. For detailed discussion of the intentional aspects of the slowdown, see especially Richard K. Kaufman, "Causes of the Slowdown in Soviet Defense," *Soviet Economy* 1:2 (January-March 1985), pp. 9-31; and Abraham S. Becker, *Sitting on Bayonets: The Soviet Defense Burden and the Slowdown of Soviet Defense Spending*, RAND/UCLA Center for the Study of Soviet International Behavior, JRS-01 (December 1985).

and reducing the usability of nuclear weapons, the data show that the drop in the number of offensive strategic weapons procured and deployed outpaced the slowdown in the number of strategic defensive and theater nuclear weapons added to the arsenal for the years 1977-1982. While absolute reductions in the growth of strategic offensive systems appeared to jibe with arms control restrictions, this pattern of relative decline in growth was more consistent with upgrading Soviet war-fighting preparation for a limited nuclear war than with reinforcing assured destruction capabilities.

Similarly, the change in military investment priorities revealed a downgrading of naval ship-building and transport aviation programs that ran counter to the activist policy in the Third World. Over the course of the 1978-82 period, for instance, there was a net loss of seven deployed destroyers, and the number of cruisers deployed increased by only three (as compared to seven in the previous 5 year period). Moreover, only the lead ship in a new class of underway replenishment vessels was constructed, and only two *Ivan Rogov*-class high speed, long-range lift ships were built. In fact, the numbers of procured landing and amphibious transport ships and strategic air-lift assets increased sporadically and at lower rates than during the previous decade. Given the long-lead times in ship-building and the fact that the Soviet Navy was never strong in under-way replenishment, this lack of investment in logistics and supply ships, as well as amphibious and heavy-lift vessels, assured that Moscow's power projection capabilities would remain quite limited for the distant future.³⁴

Finally, the slowdown in military spending growth rates did not coincide with the rising military-technical demands attendant to the new emphasis on preparation for a "conventional option" in Soviet military planning. In general, disaggregated estimates show that the rates of production for all types of heavy armor and equipment leveled out or

³⁴See data cited in Richard F. Kaufman, "Causes of the Slowdown in Soviet Defense ," pp. 19-27.

fell throughout the 1977-82 period. Tank production, for example, was about a quarter below the 1966-70 mark in both 1971-75 and 1976-80, and somewhat lower still in 1981-1985.³⁵ More surprisingly, the increased requirements for operations and maintenance outlays, engendered by the development of OMGs and the premium on command and control for theater-level combat, was met with a 70 percent drop in constant ruble spending in the 1971-88 period as compared to the years 1956-70.³⁶ Furthermore, that military R&D was the most rapidly growing component of the defense budget, increasing, in real terms, at about six percent and driving the two percent annual increase in military expenditures, flew in the face of the High Command's insatiable appetite for a quantitative defense build-up of systems with a proven track record.

These defense spending amendments notwithstanding, the Soviet defense industrial establishment continued to reap parochial benefits. Even though the direct burden on the economy associated with military expenditures remained constant, the scale of social opportunity costs of the Soviet defense industry actually increased. With the shrinking rate of growth and decline in factor productivity in the overall economy, the defense industry, which too had soft budget constraints and was no more efficient at employing inputs, continued to siphon-off a disproportional amount of high quality resources owing to deflated prices, under-stated factor costs, limited spillovers, and priority claims of the military economy.³⁷ Moreover, the upward shift in R&D spending reflected the value of

³⁵Abraham S. Becker, *Ogarkov's Complaint and Gorbachev's Dilemma: The Soviet Defense Budget and Party-Military Conflict*, R-3541-AF (Santa Monica: RAND, December 1987), p. 45. See also Richard F. Kaufman, "Causes of the Slowdown in Soviet Defense," pp. 19-27.

³⁶James H. Noren, "The Controversy Over Western Measures of Soviet Defense Expenditures," p. 246-247.

³⁷See, for example, Gur Ofer, *The Opportunity Cost of the Nonmonetary Advantages of the Soviet Military R&D Effort*, R-1741-DDRE (Santa Monica: RAND, August 1975); Arthur J. Alexander, *Perestroika and Change in Soviet Weapons Acquisition*, R-3821-USDP (Santa Monica: RAND, June 1990); and Christopher M. Davis, "The High Priority Military Sector in a Shortage Economy," in Henry S. Rowen and Charles Wolf, Jr., *The Impoverished Superpower: Perestroika and the Soviet Military Burden* (San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies Press, 1990), pp. 155-184.

resources channeled to scientific research institutes and design bureaus, and did not indicate growth in high-technology outputs that threatened established practices within the VPK.³⁸

In addition, there is circumstantial evidence to suggest that the loss incurred by the defense industrial sector due to low growth of military procurement was mostly off-set by increased outlays for consumer production at defense enterprises. According to several former-defense industrial administrators, funding for military production continued to flow at an increasing rate throughout this period, as more money was allocated in support of established civilian endeavors.³⁹ This trend was corroborated by the assurances coming from Brezhnev and Ustinov that the military had everything that it needed, and their public appeals to defense industry for improving the level of machine-building output and availability of consumer goods.⁴⁰ This rhetoric was reinforced by the transfer of personnel and increased production of consumer goods and agricultural equipment within the defense sector. These additional obligations to the civilian economy consisted largely of the upgrading of existing production lines, and did not disrupt military production levels or established relations within the informal defense industrial establishment.⁴¹

The result was that the Soviet strategy of "peaceful coexistence" in the 1970s and early 1980s was over-zealous. The leadership repeatedly committed itself to active

³⁸An indication of the employment of these funds for incremental modernization, rather than revolutionary innovation, can be found in the emerging critique of the poor scientific-technological outputs of defense industry by ranking officers such as Ogarkov and Pavlovskii. See especially discussion in Rose Gottemoeller, *Conflict and Consensus in the Soviet Armed Forces*.

³⁹Personal interviews with V. Kataev and V. Popov, former staff members of the Department of Defense Industry of the Central Committee, in Moscow, on 13 October 1993.

⁴⁰*Pravda*, 9 May 1979, p. 1; and *Ibid.*, 24 February 1981, p. 1. See also discussion in Dale Herspering *The Soviet High Command, 1967-1989*, pp. 154-160; and Jeremy R. Azrael, *The Soviet Civilian Leadership and the High Command: 1976-1986* R-3521-AF (Santa Monica: RAND, June 1987).

⁴¹See especially discussion in Peter Almquist, "Soviet Military Acquisition: From a Sellers' Market to a Buyers' Market," in Susan L. Clark, *Soviet Military Power in a Changing World* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), Julian Cooper, *The Soviet Defense Industry: Conversion and Reform* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1991).

adventurism in the Third World and to fighting and winning a major conventional war against the West that outstripped its efforts aimed at regulating the strategic relationship with the U.S. and reducing the military burden. *De facto* institutional constraints mitigated against the inclination or capacity of the leadership to restore balance across the different dimensions of grand strategy. Only after the prevailing winds of the security environment shifted by the mid-1980s were there political incentives to make adjustments within the informal decision-making mechanism.

Gorbachev's Strategy of Under-Achievement: Unilateral Diplomatic Concessions and Defense Industrial Build-Up

Soviet grand strategy following the ascension of Mikhail Gorbachev was quite different from that under Brezhnev. Confronting a more benign security environment, Gorbachev encountered a revised mix of *de facto* policy preferences that had to be satisfied in order to establish implicit order to Soviet policy-making. In parceling out responsibility for the different dimensions of grand strategy, he tied the fortunes of *new thinking* to a political coalition that promised something for everyone-- increased international accommodation for the foreign policy community; qualitative improvements in military strategy and hardware for the High Command; and continued extensive growth for defense industry. The problem was that this political formula, like that of his predecessor, provoked self-defeat at the international level. In practice, it led to strategic under-achievement, characterized by concessionary diplomatic initiatives that outpaced and contradicted changes to Soviet military strategy and defense resource allocations.

On the foreign policy plane, this process unfolded dramatically. By giving-off practical control over Soviet diplomacy to Shevardnadze and Yakovlev (and their subordinate networks), Gorbachev intensified a radical turnaround in Soviet international

commitments. This informal delineation of authority rendered *new thinking* acutely vulnerable to the particular incentives for reaching political accommodation with the West that pervaded the foreign policy establishment. As evidenced by the policies towards the reduction of intermediate range missiles in Europe, conventional arms reductions, and German reunification this preference for reaching international agreement began to take on a life of its own, with repeated instances of Soviet unilateral concessions to the West made at critical stages during the endgame of negotiations.

One of the first instances of Soviet diplomatic capitulation under Gorbachev occurred during the Intermediate-range Nuclear Force (INF) negotiations. Following the stalemate at the Reykjavik summit, the Soviets decided unilaterally to break the Gordian knot in arms control by dropping the last of their time-honored stipulations for a separate INF treaty with the U.S.. In February 1987, Moscow delinked progress in the talks to agreement on SDI. This was quickly followed by acquiescence to American pressure for intrusive verification procedures in March, and by acceptance of the "global double zero" option in April. With respect to the latter, the Soviets not only agreed to eliminate all of their intermediate- and short-range missiles, but offered to ban the SS-23 tactical missile that had an operational range below the treaty threshold. More surprising, they did so without demanding compensatory restrictions on the American Lance-2 tactical missile that was slated for deployment in several NATO countries.⁴²

Close examination of the final path to the INF treaty reveals that the agency costs tied to the delegation of foreign policy authority were decisive in provoking Moscow's string of unreciprocated concessions. By this time, the informal diplomatic network assumed full control over Soviet arms control policy, as both Shevardnadze and Yakovlev

⁴²Although the Bush administration subsequently agreed to ban the deployment of tactical missiles, it did so in response to the realities of the changing political landscape in Eastern Europe and not as part of the INF treaty. For discussion of this point from the Soviet perspective, see especially S.F. Akhromeyev and G.M. Kornienko, *Glazami marshala i diplomata*, p. 133.

began to consolidate positions within the Political Commission and their respective bureaucracies.⁴³ Moreover, as revealed in a letter Gorbachev sent to President Reagan during the summer of 1987, Shevardnadze was delegated "all the necessary authority" to negotiate the final details of the INF agreement.⁴⁴ This, however, constituted part of a much broader mandate to "jump start" the disarmament process and to generate momentum for the overall improvement in U.S.-Soviet relations. The overriding concern of the foreign minister and his coterie at this stage was to redress the counterproductive strains in Soviet relations with the West that were instigated by the initial deployment of Soviet SS-20 intermediate-range missiles, and to further progress towards establishing a lasting peace in Europe that was conducive for providing a diplomatic cover for domestic restructuring. According to Shevardnadze, what was at stake was not merely the substance of the treaty, but the prospects for a complete abolition of a certain type of weaponry that carried direct implications for the "survival of humanity," not to mention Soviet national interests. Thus, Shevardnadze felt compelled to concede unilaterally to the separation of SDI and the inclusion of tactical-operational missiles in the final treaty document so as not to let the opportunity slip for creating a dramatic breakthrough in relations with the West.⁴⁵

⁴³This is suggested by Shevardnadze's growing assertiveness in conducting diplomacy, and especially his marked willingness to critique openly the foreign policy establishment and oversee major personnel changes. Also, Yakovlev was appointed to the Political Commission during the summer of 1987, shortly before Soviet negotiators formally accepted the "global double zero" option in the Geneva talks. The timing of his appointment suggests that he may have been critical in tipping the balance on Soviet INF concessions during the endgame of negotiations.

⁴⁴Raymond L. Garthoff, *The Great Transition: American-Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1994), pp. 305, 319.

⁴⁵See especially Eduard Shevardnadze, *Moi Vybor: v zashchitu demokratii i svobody* (Moskva: Novosti Press, 1991), pp. 155-63. Shevardnadze's fixation on the bigger picture of giving disarmament talks in general a new lease on life was confirmed in personal interviews with Y. Kvitziiskii, chief negotiator during the INF talks, in Moscow, on 13 August 1992; and V. Mizhin, former foreign ministry representative at the Geneva talks, in Moscow, on 11 October 1993. For evidence of the preoccupation within the foreign policy community with redressing the counterproductive policy of SS-20 deployments, see especially Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, "The Art of Weighing Possibilities," *New Times* 46 (1987), pp. 6-8; and Aleksandr Bovin, "The World on My Personal Computer: Breakthrough," *Moscow News* 10 (1987), p. 3. The Soviet diplomatic core felt added pressures from the pending American presidential elections for

Empowered and motivated to pursue a pro-active concessionary INF policy, the diplomatic community was shielded from direct oversight within the informal policy-making structure. At the highest level, delegation arrangements within the Political Commission facilitated the cooptation of the military. According to Akhromeyev, while the High Command reluctantly supported a ban on both SS-23 and Lance-2 missiles, it was adamantly opposed to a Soviet unilateral concession. This opposition was circumvented within the Political Commission where Akhromeyev was personally pressured by the other ranking members to respect Shevardnadze's authority and to swallow his objections on "political" grounds. At one point, Zaikov specifically instructed the marshal "to take stock" of the new division of labor within the national security policy-making elite before presenting his arguments.⁴⁶

At the administrative level, technical experts from the General Staff and Defense Ministry were not invited to participate in the internal deliberations that preceded the final Soviet concession on SS-23 missiles. Akhromeyev contends that this exclusion was deliberate, and was part of Shevardnadze's ploy to confine technical assessments of his package to experts within the foreign ministry, who in practice had no interest in rejecting

consummating the treaty as quickly as possible during this period. The fear was that if they waited too long, President Reagan would become less accommodating as he pandered to American conservatives in an effort to get their vote. Personal interview with V. Zagladin, former first deputy of the ID of the Central Committee, in Moscow, on 29 July 1992. See also discussion in Jonathan Haslam, *The Soviet Union and the Politics of Nuclear Weapons in Europe, 1969-87* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 153-174.

⁴⁶See especially S.F. Akhromeyev and G.M. Kornienko, *Glazami marshala i diplomata*, pp. 91, 128-135. Akhromeyev asserts that in order to ensure that he complied with the informal division of labor within the Political Commission, he was excluded from the 28 April meeting between Gorbachev, Shevardnadze and Schultz where the concession on SS-23s was officially presented. According to several other "insiders," Akhromeyev and other members of the High Command were chided for their SDI gambit during the Reykjavik summit and were instructed not to derail negotiations in the aftermath of the "double zero" proposal. This was conveyed in personal interviews with V. Tatarnikov; N. Chervov; and V. Kataev and V. Popov. Chernayaev contends that after this episode, Akhromeyev respected the division of labor at the top and became instrumental in pushing through the final treaty proposal. Personal interview with A. Chernyaev, Gorbachev's foreign policy advisor, in Moscow, on 11 October 1993.

their boss' initiative. As a consequence, there was no "outside" check on the determination to conclude the INF agreement within the informal foreign policy apparatus.⁴⁷

This episode set the precedent for greater Soviet concessions made during the course of the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) arms control talks. Starting with the June 1987 announcement of a defensive Warsaw Pact military doctrine, followed by Gorbachev's U.N. declaration in 1988 of deep unilateral reductions, and culminating in the formal ratification of the CFE agreement in 1991, the Soviets repeatedly acquiesced to risky moves and went far beyond the retrenchment necessitated by the changes to the geopolitical landscape in Eastern Europe and centrifugal pressures emanating from within the Soviet Union. Throughout the negotiations, Moscow made a series of wrenching unilateral concessions regarding the types of weaponry, disposition of military forces, geographic parameters, data exchanges, and verification procedures covered by the treaty. Taken together, these concessions constituted deep asymmetric reductions both on terms and at a pace favorable to the West that came at the expense of a balanced Soviet force structure. In the end, Moscow not only caved in to Western demands concerning precise limits on the deployment of a given type of weapon within Europe "from the Atlantic to the Urals" (the "sufficiency rule") and on the number of forward based weapons and troops, but felt compelled to recant its own military's initiatives to reclassify and re-deploy weapons systems.⁴⁸

The major impetus for the deep asymmetric reductions in Soviet conventional arms stemmed from the diplomatic corps broad responsibility for stabilizing the eroding Soviet

⁴⁷S.F. Akhromeyev and G.M Kornienko, *Glazami marshala i diplomata*, p. 132. According to other sources, Shevardnadze also solicited assessments from civilian scientists and experts who favored dynamic approaches to arms reductions. This group assumed in their analysis a dynamic margin in nuclear parity which called for asymmetric reductions to bolster strategic stability. See discussion in John Van Oudenaren, *The Role of Shevardnadze and the MFA in the Making of Soviet Defense and Arms Control Policy R-3898-USDP* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1990) pp. 34.

⁴⁸See discussion below of these two incidents.

geostrategic position in Europe. Following the consummation of the INF agreement, the civilian foreign policy establishment informally exercised near complete control over the promulgation of conventional arms control policies. As suggested by Shevardnadze's growing assertiveness, including demands that "all major innovations in defense development be verified at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to determine whether they correspond juridically to existing international agreements and to stated political positions," this control was tantamount to near veto power over the diplomatic dimension of security policy.⁴⁹ The leeway granted to Shevardnadze was also manifest in the open promotion by the foreign ministry of novel concepts emanating from the academic community. In particular, the publication of a series of path breaking articles by "outside" specialists framed the debate regarding deep, asymmetric, and unilateral Soviet reductions.⁵⁰ Finally, the extent to which the civilian foreign policy specialists dominated the process was underscored by the complete absence of Soviet military representatives during the last round of bilateral talks where the final concessions were made that paved the way for the signing of the CFE treaty in November 1990.

The vetting of Soviet conventional arms control proposals through the informal foreign policy establishment constituted only part of the diplomatic agenda. In 1989, as decline had transformed from a looming threat to a pressing reality, the Soviet foreign policy community became empowered to reach agreements that could be used to retard the arms race and enlist Western aid in slowing down the pace of changes to their geostrategic

⁴⁹"The 19th All-Union CPSU Conference: Foreign Policy and Diplomacy," *International Affairs*, 10 (October 1988), p. 19. See also *Moskovskie novosti*, 25 December 1988, p. 8. According to a recently declassified Politburo document, throughout this period the foreign ministry was informally delegated the authority to "coordinate" the activities of all Soviet institutions involved in dealing with transnational organizations. See citation in Raymond L. Garthoff, *The Great Transition*, p. 400. For detailed discussion of Shevardnadze's assertiveness following the signing of the INF agreement, see John Van Oudenaren, *The Role of Shevardnadze and the MFA in the Making of Soviet Defense and Arms Control Policy*.

⁵⁰See especially V. Zhurkin, S. Karaganov, and A. Kortunov, "Reasonable Sufficiency- Or How to Break the Vicious Circle," *New Times*, 40, 12 October 1987, pp. 13-15.

position. In this context, Shevardnadze, Yakovlev and their subordinates became preoccupied with the search for a diplomatic anchor to stabilize the Soviet Union's precarious *status quo* position. This produced overwhelming incentives to accelerate progress in the CFE talks and to prevent "minor" substantive issues from obstructing greater hopes for eliciting a "strategic partnership" with the West.⁵¹ As Shevardnadze candidly admitted after his resignation:

The point was to stop the arms race. The Americans were in fact ahead of us on some weapons. But if we did not conclude an agreement there was no stopping them. Therefore we sometimes considered to let them maintain some superiority, since we, too, retained guarantees of our security.⁵²

In carrying out this task, the foreign policy community functioned with considerable autonomy. Within the Political Commission, Shevardnadze and Yakovlev enjoyed almost complete discretion to set the conventional arms control agenda. According to Shevardnadze, while there was some opposition to demilitarizing Moscow's strategic posture in Europe, "established procedure" within the Political Commission ensured his final say on all proposals advanced to American interlocutors.⁵³ At the highest level,

⁵¹Personal interviews with A. Chernyaev; V. Mizhin; and S. Oznobichev, deputy director, arms control section, Institute of U.S.A. and Canada, in Moscow, on 16 September 1993. In an interview following his resignation, Shevardnadze reveals that his preferences for solidifying a partnership with the U.S. were at odds with Gorbachev's domestic political interest in siding with the defense ministry in its gambit to reclassify weaponry after signing the CFE agreement. See "Vybor Eduard Shardnadze," *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'*, 10 (October 1991), p. 6-7. For discussion of the broader Soviet diplomatic agenda in Europe that emerged in 1989, see especially Coit Blacker, *Hostage to Revolution*, pp. 114-131; and William C. Wohlforth, *The Elusive Balance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 272-292.

⁵²"Vybor Eduard Shevardnadze," p. 9.

⁵³*Ibid.* Shevardnadze openly asserts in this interview that he received "a great deal of help" from Zaikov in ironing out differences with other committee members and streamlining decision-making so as to ensure that his input was decisive. According to Ligachev, these measures, while constituting the *modus operandi* in the Political Commission, were not formally approved by the Politburo. In fact, he claims that many of the decisions regarding conventional force reductions, including those articulated by Gorbachev, were "not cleared or even discussed" within the Politburo. See especially Raymond L. Garthoff, *The Great Transition*, p. 367.

professional military representatives were forced to respect the division of labor and to defer to the initiatives advanced by their political associates. In the period leading up to Gorbachev's 1988 U.N. speech, for instance, Akhromeyev and Yazov were put in the awkward position of having to scold their peers in the military for dragging their feet in adapting to the reform-oriented directives prescribed by the political leadership.⁵⁴

Moreover, despite assertions by Akhromeyev and Moiseyev that the High Command wholeheartedly endorsed the proposals for unilateral asymmetric reductions months before Gorbachev's pronouncement, the absence of details and expression of open skepticism in the press that followed suggest that the pace and extent of these measures was a "tough pill" for the military to swallow.⁵⁵ As one of Akhromeyev's closest aides confided, the military did not have a choice in the matter since "the politicians firmly controlled the negotiating agenda." In practice, he characterized the High Command as a mere supplicant in the process, tasked with formally endorsing proposals, preparing final reports, and implementing policies based upon the decisions worked out previously by politicians on the Zaikov commission.⁵⁶

⁵⁴*Krasnaya zvezda*, 13 August 1988, p. 2; *Ibid.*, 18 November 1988, pp. 1-2; and *Rabotnichesko delo*, 6 December 1988, p. 1,4.

⁵⁵Akhromeyev claims that the concept of unilateral radical reductions originated in the General Staff. He asserts that the High Command began to toy with the idea of drastic, asymmetric, unilateral reductions as early as 1986, and initiated its concrete work on the issue by summer 1988. See especially S.F. Akhromeyev and G.M. Kornienko, *Glazami marshala i diplomata*, p. 73, 86;97. This was also confirmed in a personal interview with N. Chervov. For subsequent criticisms of the proposal, see especially *Krasnaya zvezda*, 15 December 1988, p. 2, *ibid.*, 23 March 1989, p. 2. Shortly after Gorbachev's U.N. speech, Shevardnadze remarked about the uncertainty surrounding which systems were to be slated for reduction that confirmed the lag in concrete planning on the part of the military. See *Moscow News*, No. 52, 25 December 1988, p. 1. Moreover, Akhromeyev subsequently voiced criticism with the measure, complaining about the unnecessary and expensive reorganization of the Armed Forces that would likely follow. See *FBIS-SOV*, 13 October 1989, p. 98.

⁵⁶Personal interviews with V. Tatarnikov; and N. Chervov. Akhromeyev later revealed that during the second half of 1988, the political members of the commission rejected a series of General Staff numerical recommendations before settling on the final proposal. See discussion in John Hines and Donald Mahoney, *Defense and Counteroffensive Under the New Soviet Military Doctrine R-3982* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1991), p. 103.

This penchant for capitulation extended beyond the realm of arms control. As witnessed in the "Two Plus Four Talks," Moscow proved willing to surrender unilaterally one of the hallmarks of its Cold War strategy: the division of Germany. In the course of only eight months following the crumbling of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, the Kremlin reversed its posture by "giving history a push," conceding not only to German unification but to a united Germany's membership in NATO. Notwithstanding the shelving and resurrection of various demands during the endgame of negotiations-- including calls for a final peace treaty ending World War II, German membership in both NATO and the Warsaw Pact, German neutrality, and the establishment of a transitional "review commission" to determine German eligibility for full sovereignty-- the Gorbachev leadership ultimately caved in to Western demands at an unprecedented pace. Moreover, the price tag of this final concession was less than what the Germans and Americans ever imagined, not to mention lower than what the Soviet collective leadership desperately sought.⁵⁷

The empowerment of an *ad hoc* committee of senior decision-makers was pivotal to the unfolding of the string of monumental concessions to German reunification. Following the 1989 Malta summit, Gorbachev informally narrowed the circle of actors charged with shaping the agenda for coming to grips with the German problem. According to several well informed sources, he specifically delegated authorities for generating options and deciding these issues to a top level group that included Shevardnadze,

⁵⁷Michael R. Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, *At the Highest Levels: The Inside Story of the End of the Cold War* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1993), p. 169; Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), pp. 162-163; and James A. Baker, III with Thomas DeFrank, *The Politics of Diplomacy* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1995), p. 205. According to the accounts provided by Zelikow and Rice and Baker, the members of the Western coalition remained seriously divided over the prospects for rapid re-unification and were caught-off guard by the final Soviet concessions. An example of the uncertainty over the extent of the Soviet retreat could be found in the German foreign minister's presentation of the "Tutzing formula" that envisioned a gradual step-by-step path toward a German confederation, with the former GDR remaining outside of NATO jurisdiction.

Yakovlev, foreign policy advisor Chernyaev, KGB chief Kryuchkov, Prime Minister Ryzhkov, International Department head Falin, personal advisor on relations with socialist countries Shakhnazarov, and deputy head of the International Department Fyodorov. This committee determined such critical issues as the reorientation of Soviet policy towards West Germany and the framework for withdrawal of Soviet troops from Eastern Germany.⁵⁸

Apart from this high level committee, Gorbachev designated Shevardnadze and Yakovlev point men for overseeing the formulation and conduct of Soviet policy during the endgame of negotiations with German and American interlocutors. In practice, the *ad hoc* commission convened only a few times, and mostly prior to Gorbachev's formal acceptance in principle of a united Germany in late January 1989. In the aftermath of this decision, informal authority to do the leadership's bidding in negotiations rested squarely on the foreign minister's shoulders.⁵⁹ Similarly, Yakovlev was informally placed in charge of smoothing the way for domestic political support of official policy made at the highest informal level. According to several of his subordinates, this specifically entailed the silencing of expert critics within the Central Committee foreign policy establishment.⁶⁰

⁵⁸A.C. Chernyaev, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym* (Moskva: Progress Kultura, 1993), p. 346-47; Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, p. 162; and V. Falin, as cited in Hannes Adomeit, "Gorbachev, German Unification and the Collapse of Empire," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 10:3 (1994), p. 219. The major difference between these accounts is that Falin substituted defense minister Yazov for Ryzhkov. Chernyaev rebutted Falin's claims and reiterated that there was no official representative of the Ministry of Defense on this committee. He was quick to remind the author that Akhromeyev participated as a personal advisor to Gorbachev, not as a member of the General Staff. Personal interview with A. Chernyaev.

⁵⁹Eduard A. Shevardnadze, *Moi vybor*, p. 133; and S.F. Akhromeyev and G.M. Kornienko, *Glazami marshala i diplomata*, p. 253. Falin states that the *ad hoc* committee met only once following Gorbachev's January announcement, see discussion in Hannes Adomeit, "Gorbachev, German Unification, and the Collapse of Empire," p. 219.

⁶⁰Michael R. Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, *At the Highest Levels*, p. 186. According to Falin, Yakovlev not only rejected the anxieties of the *Germanisti* within the Central Committee concerning the rapid pace of German unification, but arrogantly retorted, "What is so wrong or terrible about that?" See also Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, pp. 334-335.

Empowered actors operated with significant autonomy in carrying out their tasks. At the elite tier, members of the informal network were shielded from the close scrutiny of their peers. Established institutions, such as the Politburo and Defense Council, were kept out of the loop and, in practice, were forced to defer to decisions reached within *ad hoc* committees. As recounted by Chernyaev, the two Politburo sessions that took place on the eve of Gorbachev's formal acceptance of German unity "dealt with other matters."⁶¹ Ligachev, the official number two in the Party at the time, complained that the decision to accept German unity was made without consultation of the Politburo or its formal review. Moreover, the Politburo proved to be impotent in monitoring the activities of the *ad hoc* decision-making structure, as instructions sent down to negotiating teams were repeatedly ignored. This was evidenced most clearly by Shevardnadze's disregard for the April 1990 directive that specifically reiterated the unacceptability of a reunified Germany as part of NATO.⁶²

Shevardnadze and Yakovlev, in particular, enjoyed almost exclusive control over the negotiating agenda. Starting with the initial discussion of German reunification broached at the Malta summit, Gorbachev excluded the High Command from direct participation in the *ad hoc* deliberations on the German problem. Akhromeyev contends that there was no military check on Shevardnadze's proposals to ensure consistency with Soviet national security interests. Even the marshal, in the capacity as a personal advisor to Gorbachev, was relegated to drafting recommendations based on the parameters outlined by the foreign minister.⁶³

⁶¹A. C. Chernyaev, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym*, pp. 327, 332.

⁶²Raymond L. Garthoff, *The Great Transition*, p. 417.

⁶³S.F. Akhromeyev and G.M. Kornienko, *Glazami marshala i diplomata*, pp. 258-64; and Philip Zelikow and Condoleeza Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, p. 331.

At the administrative level, both Yakovlev and Shevardnadze clamped down on the flow of information to the leadership from their respective bureaucracies. Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Shevardnadze froze out of the internal proposal generating process the Third European Department and the Department for European Socialist Countries, two bodies that tended to be more conservative regarding the pace of German unification. Instead, he relied on close associates who were directly beholden to him to act as his *alter ego* in negotiations both with foreign interlocutors and domestic political actors. As mentioned above, Yakovlev similarly controlled the information flowing from the Central Committee, keeping his subordinates on a tight leash during internal deliberations on Soviet policy.⁶⁴ According to several disgruntled *Germanisti*, this practice stifled the flow of expert analyses that threatened to impede progress in the talks (despite their substantive merit), allowing Shevardnadze and Yakovlev to sell Gorbachev ultimately on German unification within NATO.⁶⁵

While the informal foreign policy network was empowered to pursue its narrow preferences for diplomatic accommodation with the West, it did not control policy-making for military science and weapons procurement. As a result, the Shevardnadze-Yakovlev team was able to retract Soviet international commitments, but remained constrained from ensuring the formulation and implementation of complementary policy adjustments to operational planning and defense resource allocations, which remained the sole preserve of the High Command and the defense industrial establishment, respectively. This

⁶⁴Interview with Yu. Kvitzinskii, 13 August 1992. See also discussion in Hannes Adomeit, "Gorbachev, German Unification, and the Collapse of Empire," p. 219. According to Kvitzinskii, this practice led to considerable confusion within the foreign ministry, resulting in a "surrealistic jumble of ideas," and Shevardnadze's "passivity" in challenging the proposals initiated by the Americans. See Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, pp. 260, 278, 293, 299.

⁶⁵N. Portugalov, asserts that this administrative style squelched proposals emanating from the Central Committee that called for "French-style" status for Germany regarding its affiliation with NATO. See Michael R. Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, *At the Highest Level*, p. 239.

institutionalized separation of authority accentuated the problem of under-achievement in *new thinking*, as policies in these other realms ultimately failed to conform entirely to the implications of the far-reaching diplomatic concessions.

The High Command, which continued to maintain autonomous control over the military-technical sphere of strategy, stonewalled in implementing the full complement of changes to operational art and tactics necessitated by the highly concessionary diplomacy. Despite Akhromeyev's claims that the General Staff had been fully on board in revising the "strictly defensive" Warsaw Pact military doctrine in 1987, as well as proposals for deep Soviet asymmetrical arms reductions in 1988, there is abundant evidence to suggest that commensurate changes to military-technical policy had not been worked out either at the time that diplomatic concessions were announced or within the time frame specified by the political leadership. By Akhromeyev's own admission, the process of military-technical restructuring proceeded "in a contradictory manner and with great difficulty."⁶⁶ This was corroborated on eve of Gorbachev's 1988 U.N. speech, when Shevardnadze publicly chided the military for being "long overdue in drafting and firming up a military doctrine and imparting to it a strictly defensive emphasis."⁶⁷ His subsequent pleas for redressing this laggardness and demands for fully fleshed out planning details by early 1989 fell on deaf ears within the High Command. In fact, the professional officer corps only began to consider concrete proposals for revising operational plans by the middle of 1989, and even then did so with obvious reticence. Moiseyev, Akhromeyev's successor as chief of the General Staff, acknowledged openly throughout 1989 that the senior military leadership

⁶⁶*Krasnaya zvezda*, 13 August 1988, p. 2. The then commander of the Warsaw Pact Forces, General Lushev, reiterated that the structure of military forces in 1987-1988 "did not fully accord with the new doctrine's demands." See *Krasnaya zvezda*, 3 March 1989, p. 3.

⁶⁷"Vystuplenie E.A. Shevardnadze na XX otchetno-vybornoi konferentsii partiinnoi organizatsii mid SSSR," *Vestnik Ministerstva Inostrannykh Del*, 22 (November 1988), p. 13. The foreign minister continued to harp on this issue through 1990. For evidence of this, see Galina Sidorova and Nikita Zholkver, "Losing Enemies," *New Times* 20 (15-21 May 1990), p. 6.

was dragging its feet in the “practical implementation of the requirements of a defensive military doctrine,” specifically with regards to the “organization and conduct of combat actions of a defensive nature.” While he tried to allay anxieties by pointing to noticeable progress along these lines, he did confess that old habits die hard and that it was only natural to expect that vested interests would retard the pace and scope of military restructuring.⁶⁸

Inconsistency between Soviet political commitments and the qualitative developments in military-technical policy was clearly evidenced by the limited reorganization that actually took place prior to the collapse of the union. First, threat assessments emanating from the High Command continued to identify NATO and the U.S. as Moscow’s primary security challenges. Responding to the obvious political and economic pressures for cooperating with the West, military leaders were careful to stress that while the threat had in fact receded, it had not been eliminated. To the very end, the Soviet military viewed the Western alliance’s unmitigated capability to conduct preemptive and massive operations, by either conventional or nuclear means, as the principal threat upon which it had to base force structure and operational considerations.⁶⁹

Second, despite the eventual acceptance of “reasonable sufficiency” as a governing principle of military-technical policy, the High Command continued to define it according to its own precepts and not by those endorsed by the political leadership. On the nuclear level, the military leadership sought in this concept to preserve considerable counterforce capabilities, as revealed by the ongoing modernization and deployments of highly accurate

⁶⁸*Krasnaya zvezda*, 10 February 1989, p. 1; *ibid.*, 23 February 1989, p. 1. This delay was acknowledged by Colonel-General B. Omelichev, first deputy chief of the General Staff, who claimed that only basic planning schedules for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Eastern Europe had been worked out by summer 1989. See *Krasnaya zvezda*, 14 May 1989, p. 2. For more on the tardy response of the defense ministry in addressing political commitments to reduce and withdraw forces, see also discussion in Coit Blacker, *Hostage to Revolution*, pp. 79-80.

⁶⁹Coit Blacker, *Hostage to Revolution*, pp. 82-83.

strategic forces that persisted until Gorbachev's final abdication in 1991. A similar disconnect persisted on the conventional plane. The wording of the final draft military doctrine proposed by the defense ministry at the end of 1990, for instance, suggests that the Soviet military leadership still felt more comfortable characterizing "sufficiency" in terms of guaranteeing the "reliable defense" of the *status quo ante bellum*, a traditional euphemism for the retention of limited offensive capabilities.⁷⁰ Thus, although the professional military proved willing to get by with less than what was necessary to maintain superiority over the enemy, it would not settle for a force structure that could not unambiguously guarantee the "crushing defeat" of invading forces.

This ambivalence was also reflected in the limited degree to which the High Command embraced reforms at the operational and tactical levels of planning. As mentioned above, the technological imperatives of the times generated a strong independent preference on the part of the General Staff to "level" offensive and defensive strains in military science. Accordingly, military leaders no longer defined victory in terms of the annihilation of the enemy's entire military force. Rather, the High Command confined operational objectives to the disruption, defeat, and repulsion of the enemy's attacking forces.⁷¹ Second, there was an unambiguous shift in emphasis to active and passive defensive activities below the strategic level. At the tactical level, large-scale operations were discredited, and the sophisticated incorporation of mobile defensive measures was heralded as the cornerstone of planning. An indication of the sincerity of this new approach was the creation of the Tactical Development Group within the General Staff that

⁷⁰"O voennoi doktrine SSSR," *Voennaya mysl' spetsial'nyi vypusk*, 1990, pp. 24-28. For a detailed elaboration of the specific directions of military reorganization envisioned by the High Command in the aftermath of political decision to withdraw forces unilaterally from Eastern Europe, see Harry Gelman, *The Soviet Turn Toward Conventional Force Reduction R-3876-AF* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, December 1989), p. 42-54.

⁷¹V.N. Lobov, "Khotya ugroza umen'shilas," *Novoe vremya*, 29 (14 July 1989), p. 9; *Krasnaya zvezda*, 3 June 1990, p. 2.

was expressly tasked with overseeing the reorganization of the armed forces to a predominantly defensive orientation.⁷² On the operational level, the priority was placed on resisting the initiative at the very beginning of war. First echelon forces were expected to remain on the defensive for a couple of weeks, employing a combination of active and passive defensive measures aimed at the attrition of invading forces. During this initial period, Soviet forces were expected to "trade space for time," exploiting both position (i.e. passive measures including the use of fortified positions, prepared lines, obstacles, etc...) and maneuver (i.e. aggressive use of tactical retreat, ambushes, deception, etc...) defense actions, as the means for setting the stage for the final eviction of invading forces.⁷³

Despite the unmistakable "defensive" direction in military-technical planning there remained a nuanced, but significant distinction from the proposed political revisions to grand strategy. Whereas diplomatic concessions committed the Soviet Union to sacrificing all capabilities for the conduct of aggressive combat activities, the military's revision did not rule out counter-offensive operations. Unlike their political comrades, military leaders were careful to distinguish between belligerent offensive actions during the initial period of war, and the legitimate transition to counter-offensive measures designed to repulse an

⁷²See for example *Krasnaya zvezda*, 7 January 1989, pp. 1-2; *ibid.*, 2 February 1989, p. 2; *ibid.*, 8 July 1989, p. 2; and I.N. Vorob'ev, "Pochemu taktika okazalas' v zastoe?" *Voennaya mysl'* 1 (1990), p.37-44.

⁷³This theme was reflected in the tone and nature of the majority of articles that dealt explicitly with the use of reserves and second echelon forces, fire assets, and active and passive measures in the context of operational and tactical defense, which appeared in the General Staff's professional journal, *Voennaya mysl'*, from the latter part of 1988 to the end of 1991. For comprehensive reviews of this literature, see especially John G. Hines and Donald Mahoney, *Defense and Counteroffensive Under the New Soviet Military Doctrine*; and David M. Glanz, "Soviet Military Art: Challenges and Changes in the 1990s," *Journal of Soviet Military Studies* 4: (December 1991), pp. 554-555. Glanz demonstrates that the ratio of offensive to defensive articles appearing in the two most important military journals fell steadily from 3:1 in 1986 in favor of offensiveness, to 2:1 in favor of defensiveness by the end of 1989. The author's follow-up research of articles published in 1989-1991 corroborates this finding. For select articles stressing "defensive operations as the primary focus of operational art during the initial phase of combat, see especially G.I. Salmanov, "Sovetskaya voennaya doktrina i nekotoryye vzglyady na kharakter voeny v zashchitu sotsializma," *Voennaya mysl'* 12 (1988); and I.N. Manzhurin, "Nekotorye voprosy podgotovki i naneseniya kontrudarov v oboronitel'nikh operatsiyakh," *Voennaya mysl'* 1 (1989); and V.M. Gordienko, "Manevrennaya oborona," *Voennaya mysl'* 9 (1989).

invading aggressor. As one former chief of the General Staff confided, the political leadership's infatuation with ensuring strictly defensive combat activities at the operational and tactical levels was devoid of "military logic."⁷⁴ Force structure and planning demanded the preservation of "sufficient" capabilities for staging aggressive counter-strikes against the enemy's follow-on forces and deep-strike systems after three or four weeks of defensive combat. While the precise scale and operational objectives of the counter-offensive were never spelled out, the discussion nevertheless carried obvious implications for manning levels, equipment needs, and mobilization schedules that were at odds with the political leadership's strictly defensive thrust of strategy and deep arms reductions.⁷⁵

The policy differences fostered by the institutional separation of control over the military-technical and diplomatic dimensions to grand strategy resulted in two dramatic episodes related to the implementation of conventional arms reductions. First, in 1989-90, as a hedge against the asymmetrical diplomatic concessions made during the CFE talks, the High Command conducted a large scale re-deployment of military equipment, including 16,000 tanks, east of the Urals and outside the treaty restrictions. While this gambit did not constitute a technical violation of the treaty, as it was taken before the treaty went into effect, it was interpreted by the U.S. as a sign of duplicitous intent, and contributed to a

⁷⁴Personal interview with V. Lobov, former Chief of the General Staff, in Moscow, on 6 August 1992.

⁷⁵For the most succinct assessment of the Soviet transition to counter-offensive operations following the initial stage of combat, see especially, John G. Hines and Donald Mahoney, *Defense and Counteroffensive Under the New Soviet Military Doctrine*, pp. 87-100. Some debate exists over the scope and nature of the Soviet commitment to counter-offensive operations. For a contrasting view, emphasizing the disappearance of this aspect of military strategy by the end of 1990, see Kimberly Martin Zisk, *Engaging the Enemy*, pp. 164-173. I contend that some of the confusion stems from misinterpretations of the use of the term "offensive" in military and civilian writings. Based on interviews with leading Soviet military theorists and planners, I conclude that the military never fully conceded to dropping "counter-offensive" operations from military-technical policy. Although, as time marched on and as the topic became politically charged, the High Command made fewer explicit references to it. Moreover, definitions of "sufficiency" for defense without explicit reference to the ability to conduct offensive operations, did not actually exclude considerations of possessing those forces necessary for conducting counter-attacks in the name of restoring the *status quo ante bellum*. This latter oversight has led some Western scholars to surmise that the military ultimately dropped preparation for the counter-offensive from operational planning.

more adamant American stand during the remaining course of negotiations. Second, just as the political concessions were being rendered on final CFE troop and equipment limits, the General Staff unilaterally reclassified three motorized rifle divisions deployed in Europe into categories that exempted their weaponry from treaty reductions. This was deemed to be a direct violation of the spirit and letter of the treaty by the Bush administration that sowed enmity between the sides and stalled progress towards the final agreement. On both occasions, Shevardnadze recounts that he was completely duped by the military and had no recourse to circumventing these obstacles. In fact, it was only after the chief of the General Staff was officially delegated responsibility for directly re-negotiating the points of contention with American interlocutors in May 1991 that the issues were conclusively resolved.⁷⁶

The under-achievement and inconsistency in *new thinking* was even more glaring when talking into consideration the actual defense resource allocation at the time. In contrast to commitments for radical reductions in the standing army, Gorbachev was constrained in sanctioning only modest cuts in military spending. Attendant to his announcement of unilateral troop withdrawals at the end of 1988 was a political commitment to reduce the aggregate Soviet military budget by 14.2 percent during the 1989-1991 period. This included a 19.5 percent reduction in expenditures for the procurement of weapons and other military-related hardware, as well as a 15 percent cut in spending on military R&D.⁷⁷ In addition, the leadership publicly declared its intention to limit the defense burden to 9 percent of Soviet GNP, with outlays for defense in 1989 totaling 77.3 billion rubles. Despite the unprecedented candor and symbolism, these

⁷⁶In other words, it was only when the High Command was formally placed in the position of being unambiguously responsible for obstructing final agreement that the issue of troop reconfiguration was finally resolved. See especially discussion in Michael R. Bechloss and Strobe Talbott, *At the Highest Level*, pp. 363-370.

⁷⁷*Pravda*, 1 January 1989, p. 1.

figures raised more questions than they answered, and sparked considerable controversy among critics both inside and outside the Soviet Union who claimed a drastic understatement of actual defense allocations.

Gorbachev's revelations and promises notwithstanding, there is substantial evidence to suggest that the true size and structure of military spending and the defense burden did not change dramatically over the 1989-1991 period. According to several well-informed sources, orders for military hardware remained constant in real terms throughout the Gorbachev period, despite fluctuations in aggregate defense outlays and the 1991 increase in wholesale prices.⁷⁸ Several Western analyses applying different accounting methodologies corroborate the contention that official Soviet figures significantly understated actual military spending. For instance, by factoring in identifiable "hidden" subsidies in Soviet defense budget statistics and additional "civilian" spending categories to military output, conservative Western estimates indicate a real defense budget that was nearly 22 percent larger than the one officially reported by the Soviets in 1991.⁷⁹ Moreover, when taking into consideration the actual retardation of growth in Soviet GDP during this period, the real defense burden remained nearly constant. According to several Western estimates, for example, the opportunity costs of military expenditures (the value of production forgone by not using these resources in the civilian sector), continued to hover around 11-13 percent.⁸⁰ Therefore, in contrast to the implications of both dramatic

⁷⁸Personal interview with V. Kataev and V. Popov. For Western and Soviet reports on the dramatic understatement in Soviet official claims for defense spending, see especially "Beyond Perestroika: the Soviet Economy in Crisis," a report by the CIA and DIA to the Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress, May 1991; *Ogonek*, 24 (1991), pp. 6-9; and *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, 11 December 1990, p. 1; and Sergei Rogov, "Zagadki voennogo byudzheyta," *Novoye vremya*, 11 (1991), pp. 18-20.

⁷⁹See especially discussion in John Tedstrom, "Glasnost' and the Soviet Defense Budget," RFE/RL Research Report on the U.S.S.R. (19 July 1991), pp. 7-8.

⁸⁰"World Armaments and Disarmament," *SIPRI Yearbook* 1992, p. 207; and *The Military Balance* 1992-1993 (New York: Brassey's, 1993) p. 218.

political commitments for deep military reductions and officially sanctioned cuts in military spending, scarce Soviet resources flowed to defense-related activities at a near constant rate, albeit in a shrinking economy.

While definitive answers regarding the scope of real shifts in Soviet defense spending remain elusive, data published in the Soviet press at the time reveal several trends that point to remarkable inconsistencies with the diplomatic and military-technical dimensions of *new thinking*. First, a comparison of official Soviet budget and expenditure data for 1989 shows that there was a cost overrun of approximately 8 percent for weapons procurement, and an equivalent shortfall in actual spending for military R&D.⁸¹ Second, Soviet defense spending figures for the 1989-91 period demonstrate a distinct pattern of disproportional cuts to R&D. While procurement apparently fell by 4.9 percent in 1990, R&D suffered a 13.7 percent reduction. As a result of these cutbacks, procurement occupied a larger share of the defense budget in 1990 than in 1989, while the R&D share dropped by over 1.3 percent.⁸² This trend was even more acute in 1991, when there was a rise in wholesale prices.⁸³ These patterns suggest that the informal defense industrial lobby was strong enough to exert its preference for protecting procurement relative to other

⁸¹For official 1989 budget figures, see *Izvestiya* 6 August 1989, p. 3; for official 1989 defense expenditures, see *Pravitel'stvennyi vestnik*, 45 (1990). This is the only year for which accounting by both methods is available in the Soviet press.

⁸²This is based on a comparison of the 1989 budget, published in *Izvestiya*, 6 August 1989, p. 3; and the 1990 defense budget, published in *Krasnaya zvezda*, 1 February, 1990, p. 3. According to the then chief of the central financial administration of the Ministry of Defense, the reduction in R&D spending in the 1990 defense budget was attained by "the termination at various stages of development of aviation, naval, and other projects, as well as the conversion of a number of projects from prototype construction to scientific experiment stages of development." While this marked an effort to accelerate the pace of weapons development, it risked increasing the probability of expensive mistakes due to premature decision-making in the design process. See *Krasnaya zvezda*, 1 February 1990, p. 1.

⁸³*Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 12 January 1991, p. 1. Given that procurement expenditures were allowed to increase by 60 percent to off-set the 67 percent raise in whole sale prices, while R&D was excluded from the cost adjustment, it is likely that R&D suffered dramatic reductions relative to both its 1990 level and 1991 procurement spending. See discussion in John Tedstrom, "Glasnost' and the Soviet Defense Budget," p. 8.

line items in the defense budget. This is especially noteworthy, given the premium placed on R&D and the qualitative, as opposed to the quantitative, upgrading of the arsenal made explicit in the comments by members of the High Command and demanded by diplomatic concessions on conventional arms reductions.⁸⁴

In addition to ameliorating the real extent of direct military budget cuts, the defense industrial apparatus managed to mitigate the downsizing pressures that were associated with the political reorientation of grand strategy. Delegated responsibility to oversee the conversion program, the defense industrial establishment ensured that Gorbachev's promise of transitioning "from an economy of armaments to an economy of disarmament" would not lead to the net outflow of resources from the defense sector. This was done by reallocating labor, management and capital resources within the established framework of the defense industries, as well as through the incorporation of additional civilian capacities into the defense sector. The net result was a conversion program that failed to produce any meaningful peace dividend for the national economy, and that preserved Soviet military mobilization capacity, despite diplomatic promises to the contrary.

After significant delay and tinkering with *ad hoc* policy initiatives, a formal draft State Conversion Program was approved in December 1990. This document, which specified allocations and activities for 1991-1995, in effect allowed the defense industrial sector to recoup most of the input losses due to direct cutbacks in military spending. For the period, it designated over 40 billion rubles in support of civilian activities of the defense complex, of which 9 billion rubles were slated for the re-profiling of military-related capacities. The remaining 31 billion rubles were earmarked for new investments in civilian

⁸⁴For a sample of the High Command's substantial misgivings concerning defense cuts to R&D relative to procurement, see especially *Izvestiya* 22 February 1990, p. 3; and *Pravda*, 23 February 1990, p. 2. According to Shabanov, the deputy defense minister in charge of armaments, the new "defensive" orientation in military-technical policy demanded greater expenditures for R&D than the traditional offensive strategy. See especially V. Shabanov, "Novaya politika protiv arsenalov voyny," *Kommunist*, 1 (1990).

production and the mothballing of military production facilities that were scheduled to be withdrawn but not scrapped. The draft program placed the highest incidence of conversion-related investment during the initial period, with budget allocations of 4 billion rubles for 1990 and the provision of 5 billion rubles in 1991. There were additional outlays to cover the retraining of displaced workers and to defray the social costs linked to the planned release of 800,000 employees involved in military production for 1990-1990. According to Baklanov, in addition to the 1 billion rubles earmarked between 1989 and 1992 for these expressed purposes, an additional 6 billion rubles were allocated in 1989-1990 to maintain enterprise labor funds.⁸⁵ While the real value of these allotments was significantly less than was expected, due to the decline in enterprise profitability and drop in production targets supported by the federal budget, the defense sector continued to strain an already overburdened and shrinking state budget with its increasing control over resources for military and civilian production.

This trend also prevailed on the output side of the ledger. Over the 1987-1991 period, the share of the defense industrial complex in the national economy expanded from 16.2 percent to 17.2 percent of GNP. This increase was due mostly to the transfer of civilian capacities to the ministries of the defense complex, and the expansion of both established and new consumer production lines at defense plants. During the 1986-1988 period, for instance, the Ministry of Machine-Building for the Light and Food Industries and Domestic Appliances (*Minlegpishchemash*) was liquidated and its constituent 230 firms were divided up among several defense industrial ministries. This was followed-up by the

⁸⁵Julian Cooper, *The Soviet Defense Industry: Conversion and Reform*, p. 41. It is important to note that of the 300 people who lost their jobs in military production in 1990, 76 percent were re-hired at the same enterprises for production of consumer goods. In 1991, over 60 percent of the planned release of 380,000 workers in the military sector were re-employed for to perform civilian operations at the same defense plants. *Krasnaya zvezda*, 25 June 1991, p. 3.

promulgation of two state resolutions that called for increases in the quality and quantity of civilian production at defense enterprises.⁸⁶

The greatest impetus to the enlargement of the scale of defense industry, however, came from the 1990 State Conversion Program. According to this draft program, the civilian share of the gross output of the military industrial complex was to increase from 43 percent in 1989 to 50 percent in 1990 and 65 percent in 1995, with stable annual levels of military output throughout the 1991-1995 period. Two-thirds of this increase in civilian output was to come from the transfer of civilian capacity, with the remaining one-third from the actual diversification of defense enterprises. In this regard, while defense industry as a whole was to increase its share in the national economy, individual defense plants were not expected to undertake full-scale conversion. In fact, the draft program only envisioned the complete re-profiling to civilian production taking place at 4-6 defense plants and 39 other non-VPK firms, with the remaining burden of diversification spread across 428 enterprises of the defense complex and 61 enterprises of other ministries.⁸⁷

The net effect of the state directed "diversification" program was to preserve the option of increased military production within Soviet defense industry, despite the political ballyhoo surrounding "demilitarization." According to one of the authors of the 1990 State Conversion Program, the policy of spreading out partial conversion among hundreds of enterprises was undertaken in order to maintain at each defense plant "secret regime facilities." that would ensure the retooling of military production in the event of a change in the international climate. Despite subsequent protests from reformist circles, calling for the

⁸⁶For select statements made by ranking defense industrial officials on the need for greater participation of the military sector in producing consumer goods, see especially *Pravda*, 29 June 1986, p. 1; *ibid.*, 19 October 1987, p. 1; *ibid.*, 21 February 1988, p. 1; *ibid.*, 11 March 1988, p. 1; *ibid.*, 23 March 1988, p. 1; *ibid.*, 13 May 1988, p. 1; *ibid.*, 19 November 1988, p. 1; *ibid.*, 26 November 1988, p. 1; *Izvestiya*, 23 November 1986, p. 1; and *ibid.*, 2 March 1988, p. 1.

⁸⁷Julian Cooper, *The Soviet Defense Industry: Conversion and Reform*, p. 37. Of these 428 defense enterprises, only 242 were expected to reduce their military output by 20 percent or less.

release of these scarce resources into the national economy, the retention of this mobilization capacity remained a "sacred cow" for the defense industrial establishment in its quest for attenuating the pressures for downsizing.⁸⁸

On balance, then, Gorbachev's grand strategy was remarkably under-achieving. Ironically, the new leadership, which espoused radically different conceptions for preserving Soviet security than its predecessors, was similarly constrained in bringing military capabilities into line with its new thinking. In responding to the altered security environment, the leadership was institutionally driven to retrench and undertake diplomatic concessions that, in fact, outpaced changes to military strategy and the re-profiling of the defense industrial establishment. Much to its chagrin, this incoherence among the different policy strains lasted up through the final implosion of the Soviet state, relegating Moscow to the diplomatic sidelines of the international scene as it simultaneously continued to rearm and plan for fighting a large-scale war.

The Russian Redux: Under-Achievement in Yeltsin's Grand Strategy

Because the Russian state was devoid of constitutional order during the early phases of the post-communist transition, with policy-making governed by *de facto* distributional mechanisms, the new leadership's initial strategic forays were marred by self-defeat. Like its immediate Soviet predecessor, pressures from the prevailing security environment prescribing international accommodation were corrupted by the immutable

⁸⁸This was originally referenced in Julian Cooper, "Military Cuts and Conversion in the Defense Industry," *Soviet Economy*, 7:2 (1991), p. 132. For critiques of the VPK's attempts to preserve Soviet mobilization capacity in the State Program, see especially "Razoruzhenie i promyshlennost'," *Ekonomika i zhizn'*, 33 (August 1991), p. 11; Aleksei Izymov, "Konversiya? konversiya! konversiya...", *Liturnaya gazeta*, 28 (12 July 1989), p. 11; This was confirmed in personal interview with Vialy Shlykov, former deputy chairman of the Russian State Committee for Questions of Defense, in Moscow on 12 December 1995.

institutional arrangements that were in place to parcel out decision-making autonomy, producing a severe episode of strategic under-achievement. Although President Yeltsin perpetuated the cooperative thrust of Gorbachev's *new thinking*, he was prevented by the informal segmentation of policy-making from reconciling it with the offensive character of military strategy and the diversification of Russia's defense industry. Thus, as in the latter Soviet case, the leadership was saddled with an incoherent grand strategy that was too concessionary in its international commitments, in terms of the global and regional military and defense economic policies that it simultaneously pursued.

During the first stage of transition, the informal division of the Russian foreign policy establishment into two parallel structures-- one linked to the executive branch and the other attached to the Supreme Soviet-- generated internally inconsistent diplomatic initiatives. On behalf of the presidency and government, the foreign ministry retained autonomy to pursue ambitiously "partnership and allied relations with the Western states."⁸⁹ Consistent with its general mandates to prevent Moscow's isolation and to attract foreign investment and assistance, the ministry undertook a series of diplomatic initiatives aimed at integrating Russia into existing Western economic and military structures. Moreover, to ensure a climate propitious for internal reconstruction, the foreign ministry sought to avoid conflict in the near abroad, pursuing bilateral agreements with newly independent states and offering inducements for the establishment of multilateral military and economic coordinating mechanisms. In contrast, the Supreme Soviet Committee for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Economic Activity, championing the rights and treatment of the Russian diaspora, embraced a series of policies directed at reasserting Moscow's dominance in the near abroad. Consonant with its oppositionist mandate, this parliamentary organ also advanced policies that countermanded the foreign ministry's

⁸⁹*Rossiiskie vesti*, 3 December 1992, p. 3.

preoccupation with cultivating ties with erstwhile partners in the "far abroad." As part of a domestic strategy for consolidating his ascendancy against the backdrop of constitutional anarchy, Yeltsin accommodated these conflicting strains into Russia's initial foreign policy.

Ceded exclusive control over the government's diplomatic agenda, the foreign ministry moved freely to ingratiate Russia with former adversaries in the West. In an attempt to facilitate integration into the Western international political economy, the ministry aggressively pursued full membership in and assistance from such organizations as the Group of Seven industrialized nations, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and the World Bank. As declared by foreign minister Kozyrev, the quest for assistance to "set [us] on our feet and become a normal member of the European Community," was the primary goal of Russia's foreign relations.⁹⁰ With respect to security, this was complemented by a diplomatic push for incorporating Russia into such Western alliance structures as NATO, and intensifying Moscow's participation in the CSCE. Similarly, the foreign minister pledged a Russian commitment in February 1992 to honor a long dormant Soviet agreement to return two of the contentious South Kurile Islands in exchange for the conclusion of a peace treaty and normalization of relations with Japan. This determination to forge strategic partnership was also evidenced by the rapid signing of the START II treaty; the participation in UN sanctions against former allies, such as Libya, Iraq, and Yugoslavia; and the initial deference to East Central Europe's course for eventual accession to NATO in August 1993.

Left unsupervised, the foreign ministry pursued to the hilt its narrowly construed agenda to capitalize on the opportunities for bolstering cooperation with the West. Conducting what critics on both the left and right of the Russian political spectrum lampooned as a "diplomacy of smiles," the foreign minister ("Mr. Yes") and his staff

⁹⁰*Interfax*, 29 January 1992, as cited in S. Neil MacFarlane, "Russian Conceptions of Europe," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 10 (July-September 1994), p. 244.

increasingly committed Moscow to unilateral concessions across the gamut of foreign policy issues.⁹¹ In the arms control realm, for instance, the ministry accelerated the conclusion of the START II treaty by proposing radical and asymmetrical reductions on top of those already established by the START I agreement. By embracing the new provisions, the ministry foisted on the Russian military the financial and technical burdens of eliminating the backbone of Moscow's strategic arsenal-- land-based multiple warhead missiles-- and dramatically building up an expensive and vulnerable mobile and silo-based single warhead missile force; both without receiving equitable compensation *via* restrictions on the modernization of U.S. submarine-launched ballistic missiles. From a crisis stability perspective, Russia acquiesced to the emasculation of its strategic deterrent, and became increasingly dependent upon obsolete submarine and bomber legs of the triad that were vulnerable to preemptive strike and lacked reliable communications systems. This instability was compounded by the attendant agreement to participate in the U.S.-directed program to develop a limited anti-ballistic missile system that, if brought to fruition, threatened to undermine the Russian retaliatory capability at the reduced treaty-designated levels.⁹² Moreover, in the haste to consummate the deal, the foreign ministry obliged Russia to adhere to the new restrictions before START I was officially ratified by

⁹¹For nationalist critiques, see *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, 15 January 1992, p. 3; and *Pravda*, 30 October 1992, p. 3. For expositions of the liberal and realist complaints of the foreign ministry's betrayal of Russia's national interests, see especially Alexei G. Arbatov, "Russia's Foreign Policy Alternatives," *International Security*, 18:2 (Fall 1993), p. 21; *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 17 June 1992, p. 7; *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 28 March 1992, p. 4; and Vladimir Lukin, "Our Security Predicament," *Foreign Policy*, 88 (Fall 1992), pp. 57-75.

⁹²Under START I restrictions, the land-based missile force constituted 60 percent of the Russian strategic arsenal. Under the START II ceilings, this force was slated to be reduced to only 15 percent, consisting of new single-warhead missiles at projected cost of 400 billion rubles. See especially analysis by A. Arbatov in *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 28 August 1992, p. 4. For criticisms of the "unreliable, dangerous, vulnerable, and expensive" Russian mobile and silo-based single warhead missile, see especially *Segodnya*, 19 March 1994, p. 10; and John W. R. Leppingwell, "START II and the Politics of Arms Control in Russia," *International Security*, 20:2 (Fall 1995), pp. 73-75. Compounding the short-run strategic stability problems were drastic reductions in the land based force that threatened to undermine the early warning and command-and-communications infrastructure that was in place to secure Russia's "launch on warning" strategy for a retaliatory strike.

all concerned parties, and before Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan signed on to the 1968 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, a stipulation that prevented Russia from fully implementing START I.

In an equally surprising move, the foreign ministry spearheaded an unwavering commitment to join the Western-sponsored Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). As part of an effort to garner favor from the West by demonstrating Russia's credentials as a proponent of the non-proliferation of weapons of massive destruction and their components, the ministry unilaterally aborted the sale of cryogenic rocket engine technology to India in July 1993. By renegeing on the deal, following accusations by the American government that it violated MTCR restrictions, the ministry sacrificed much needed hard currency receipts and Russia's international prestige as a reliable exporter, in return for ambiguous promises of future space cooperation with the United States. This was a particularly generous gesture, given that the U.S. had earlier unsuccessfully offered the same technology to India without construing it as a breach of the MTCR, and continued to work jointly with Israel on the development of related technology.⁹³

The primacy accorded to entente with the West by the foreign ministry was also manifest in Moscow's initial stance on the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. Caught between Scylla and Charybdis in choosing to defend a pan-Slavic identity or to defer to Western-sponsored conflict management, the ministry tilted Russian policy clearly in favor of the latter at the direct expense of the former. Through mid-1992, the ministry proffered a series of proposals that resolutely endorsed the anti-Serb thrust of Western policies, culminating in the May 1992 pledge to honor UN economic sanctions against Serbia for launching the war against Bosnia and Herzegovina. The intense domestic debate over the

⁹³For defense of the compromise by the foreign ministry, see *ITAR-TASS*, 20 July 1993. For critiques of the high-handedness and concessionary behavior of the foreign ministry, see especially *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 17 July 1993, p. 3; *Kommersant-daily*, 20 July 1993, p. 3.

complexity of Russia's predicament notwithstanding, the foreign minister seized the initiative to advance the pro-Western policy on the specific grounds that "Belgrade had brought upon itself the United Nations sanctions by failing to heed the demands of the international community."⁹⁴ The stakes of such acquiescence were particularly high, given the direct and opportunity costs incurred by Russia of abiding by the economic sanctions, the failure of the West to compensate for those losses by the delivery of large-scale foreign assistance, the overwhelmingly one-sided punishment of the Serbian ally, and the exclusion of Russia from critical NATO and EU deliberations on the issue.⁹⁵

Additionally, the foreign ministry's myopic concerns for currying favor with the West produced passivism in Russia's initial policies towards the near abroad. Indicative of the small size and stature of the infrastructure at the ministry responsible for CIS affairs, policies towards the Soviet successor states were *ad hoc* and derivative of the broader Western orientation. Foreign Minister Kozyrev, for example, officially rejected Russia's "special place" in the region and renounced Moscow's pursuit of any great power role that was independent of the international community's interests in stability and conflict management. Instead, he called upon Europe as a whole to take the initiative to manage directly regional peacekeeping.⁹⁶ Moreover, prior to the realization of such an all European security framework, the foreign minister banked on trust and pragmatism among

⁹⁴*Izvestiya*, 22 June 1992, p. 1.

⁹⁵According to parliamentary sources at the time, Moscow's support for the sanctions against Serbia, in conjunction with those against Libya and Iraq, deprived Russian state coffers of an estimated \$16 billion. *Pravda*, 15 December 1992, p. 1. This figure was refuted by the foreign minister, who claimed that it was inflated and premised on heroic assumptions of Serbia's capacity to generate foreign trade earnings to pay for Russian imports. See discussion in Suzanne Crow, "Russia Adopts a More Active Policy," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Weekly Report*, 2:12 (19 March 1993), pp. 1-2.

⁹⁶See especially *ITAR-TASS*, 14 December 1992; and Andrei Kozyrev, "Russia: A Chance for Survival," *Foreign Affairs*, 71:2 (Spring 1992), p. 2-3. According to a former official at the foreign ministry, the section at the ministry responsible for CIS relations was staffed by little more than 10 people, who had limited linguistic abilities for dealing with near abroad countries. See *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 30 July 1992, p. 3.

states in the near abroad to mitigate against the rise of visceral nationalist antagonisms and for cementing close alliance with Russia. The problem of reaching a *modus vivendi* with states in region was effectively postponed by the government during the first year and a half of Russia's independence, as the ministry issued only vague endorsements of respect for national sovereignty and greater Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) integration, and pursued bilateral diplomacy on a case-by-case basis in reaction to specific crises in Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, and the Baltic states.⁹⁷

Standing in stark contrast to the aforementioned global and regional policy concessions promulgated under the auspices of the foreign ministry were a series of policies aimed at re-asserting Russia's great power standing that were simultaneously adopted by the Supreme Soviet. Armed with *de facto* prerogatives to pursue an oppositionist agenda, the Russian parliament went on the offensive to challenge the ministry's pro-Western orientation and to embrace an activist posture in the near abroad. On the global level, the Russian parliament exploited its informal autonomy to savage policies aimed at straightforward integration with the West. With respect to the disputed Kurile Islands, the Supreme Soviet issued directives that openly contradicted the foreign ministry's attempts at rapprochement with Japan. Following closed session deliberations, the committee voted for joint governance of the two smallest islands, with Moscow retaining sole possession of the other two.⁹⁸ Subsequent parliamentary pressure forced Yeltsin, via final deliberations in the Security Council, to cancel abruptly a planned trip to

⁹⁷In practice, the foreign ministry did not designate a mechanism for resolving tensions outside of meetings at the highest levels. Following the escalation of tensions with Ukraine over the Black Sea Fleet, for example, the ministry relied exclusively on summit meetings between Yeltsin and Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk.

⁹⁸*Komsomolskaya pravda*, 29 July 1992, p. 3.

Japan in September 1992, which was to serve as the crowning achievement of the foreign ministry's "civilized" path to resolution of the dispute.⁹⁹

Similarly, the ministry's efforts at promoting strategic arms control fell victim to the Supreme Soviet's parochial mandate. Before the ink was dry on the START II treaty, for instance, the parliament moved to stymie the ministry's attempts at "fast track" ratification. The Supreme Soviet chairman, relying on in-house expert analyses of cost-effectiveness and strategic stability, unilaterally amended the treaty and retarded the process of turning it into law on these grounds. By April 1993, in deference to this *de facto* autonomy, Yeltsin halted the campaign for final ratification until a new constitutional separation of powers was approved.¹⁰⁰

The same held true with respect to membership of the MTCR, as the Supreme Soviet exercised its authority to obstruct ratification of the diplomatic initiatives sponsored by the foreign ministry. In particular, the parliament independently authorized reinstatement of the deliveries of rocket engines to India. To mollify these concerns, Yeltsin equivocated in endorsing the ministry's ban, thus fostering ambiguity over the official policy. Without referring explicitly to the deliveries to India, he subsequently re-affirmed Russia's right to sell cryogenic engines and openly declared that "third party" grievances would not obstruct Russia's commercial commitments.¹⁰¹

The autonomy of the parliament also resulted in a backlash against the foreign ministry's disposition towards the conflict in Yugoslavia. By June 1992, members of the Supreme Soviet committee began to attack viciously foreign minister Kozyrev for a "breach of Russia's traditional pro-Serbian policy," and for irresponsibly "duplicating the U.S.

⁹⁹*Izvestiya*, 12 September 1992, p. 1, 5.

¹⁰⁰*Izvestiya*, 24 March 1993, p. 3. See also discussion in John W. R. Leppingwell, "START II and the Politics of Arms Control in Russia," pp. 75-82.

¹⁰¹*Komsomolskaya pravda*, 27 July 1992, p. 3.

position in all respects."¹⁰² Consistent with its *de facto* authority, the committee sent its chairman to the rump Yugoslavia to conduct negotiations on foreign policy coordination directly with the prime minister and president of Serbia, and president of the self-proclaimed Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The upshot of this visit was a December 1992 parliamentary resolution that called for economic sanctions against both Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that urged the foreign ministry to use its UN Security Council veto to block international proposals to remove the arms embargo against Bosnia and to enforce a "no fly zone" over Bosnia and Herzegovina. After dispatching committee representatives on an additional fact-finding mission to Serbia in April 1993, the Supreme Soviet followed up this ruling by imposing a moratorium on the start of additional UN economic sanctions against Serbia, and by overruling Russian participation in moves that would prefigure foreign military intervention in the crisis. In hewing to this divergent policy line, however, the chairman of the committee was careful to respect the autonomy granted to the foreign ministry, imploring his peers to leave Russian diplomats "room to maneuver."¹⁰³ Thus, at the same time that Yeltsin approved tightened economic sanctions against Serbia, as part of the ministry's re-invigorated approach to the crisis in April 1993, the president was compelled to incorporate a significant pro-Serbian component into Russian policy as a political bone to the parliament.

Finally, the implications of the informal bifurcation of decision-making authority became visible in Moscow's policy towards the near abroad. Vested with autonomy to pursue an oppositionist agenda, the parliament undertook diplomatic initiatives that directly contradicted those advanced by the foreign ministry. This was evidenced most vividly in

¹⁰²See scathing critique issued by the chairman of the Committee for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Economic Relations, in *Izvestiya*, 29 June 1993, p. 3.

¹⁰³*Interfax*, 13 February 1993, as cited in Suzanne Crow, "Ambartsumov's Influence on Russian Foreign Policy," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Weekly Report*, 2:19 (7 May 1994), p. 39.

Russian diplomacy towards resolving the legal status of the Crimea, as the parliament passed a series of resolutions in 1992 that nullified the ministry's efforts at ceding the territory to Ukraine. The ensuing impasse, in fact, drove the foreign ministry to distance itself openly from the legislature and to appeal directly to the international community out of frustration.¹⁰⁴ Similarly, the parliament exerted its autonomy to sidestep the ministry in overseeing Russia's relations with the Baltic states, unilaterally imposing sanctions against Estonia for denying Russians the right to citizenship and passing legislation calling for a halt to the withdrawal of Russian troops from the three states until agreements had been reached on issues relating to the social protection of the servicemen and their families. Largely in deference to this autonomy, Yeltsin followed suit by issuing an order in October 1992 that temporarily suspended the withdrawal of Russian troops from Estonia and Latvia pending such guarantees.¹⁰⁵

The Supreme Soviet's *de facto* autonomy had the greatest impact, however, on Russia's stance towards conflict resolution in the geostrategic space of the former Soviet Union. In contrast to the all European perspective advanced by the foreign ministry, the parliament independently pursued an agenda to re-invigorate Russia's *primus inter pares* role at the center of regional peace-keeping. For example, the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Foreign Economic Relations took umbrage at what he saw as the ministry's undo deference to "outside" powers, issuing a report to the parliament that re-affirmed Russia's vital interests and "special" responsibility for managing conflicts in its sphere. He asserted Russia's right, following the example of the U.S. Monroe Doctrine in

¹⁰⁴See especially discuss in Vladimir Savelyev and Robert Huber, "Russian Parliament and Foreign Policy," *International Affairs*, 3 (March 1993), pp. 36-37.

¹⁰⁵According to foreign ministry officials, the ministry was completely "out of the loop" in the diplomacy surrounding the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Baltic states. In fact, Yeltsin's pronouncement of a temporary suspension of the withdrawal was presented to the ministry as a fail accomplis by the president. See especially *Interfax*, 29 October 1992.

Latin America, to act as regional policeman on behalf of the international community.¹⁰⁶ This theme was appropriated by the commission, which authorized unilaterally the "peace-keeping" mission of the Russian 14th Army in the Trans-Dniester Republic of Moldova. Ignoring the ministry's efforts at brokering a delicate four power agreement between Russia, Moldova, Ukraine and Romania to settle the separatist conflict through the deployment of a multilateral peace-keeping force, the parliament conducted its own rounds of negotiations with unit commanders and local pro-Russian leaders of the breakaway republic, and ultimately sanctioned the use of the 14th Army to protect the right of self-determination of the Russian enclave in Moldova. These actions, despite their contradictions with the line pursued by the foreign ministry, were subsequently endorsed by Yeltsin, who not only deferred to the defense ministry's approval of such combat activity, but personally honored the servicemen for fulfilling their duties in the Moldova operation.¹⁰⁷

Thus, during the initial transition period, the *de facto* separation of foreign policy-making authority pulled Russian diplomacy in divergent directions. Throughout the period, Yeltsin was forced to pay lip service to competing diplomatic strains, simultaneously extending commitments to integrate Russia into Western international economic and military systems and to uphold Moscow's Eurasian interests. Yet even with these policy side-payments, the president was not able to secure his domestic political ascendancy, given the fluid constitutional setting. Ironically, it was only after the bloody

¹⁰⁶*Izvestiya*, 7 August 1992, p. 6.

¹⁰⁷See especially discussin in Vladimir Savelyev and Robert Huber, "Russian Parliament and Foreign Policy," pp. 37-38. See also discussion in Bruce D. Porter and Carol R. Saivetz, "The Once and Future Empire: Russia and the 'Near Abroad'," *The Washington Quarterly*, 17:3 (Summer 1994), pp. 83-85. According to A. Migranyan, a former advisor to the Russian president, the foreign ministry resisted direct military support for the breakaway republic out of concerns for damaging its fragile partnership with the West. See *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 20 January 1994, p. 3. The confusion regarding Russia's diplomacy resulted in mixed signals being sent to the defense ministry, that was simultaneously instructed to perform duties in the multilateral peace-keeping force and support the independent actions of the 14th Army.

dissolution of the Supreme Soviet and the imposition of a new constitution that the full strategic implications of distributional policy-making began to take hold.

Following the consolidation of national security policy-making authorities within the executive branch, Russian grand strategy assumed an under-achieving quality. On the one hand, the practical concentration of authority in the foreign ministry produced a sudden sharpening in Moscow's diplomacy. With beefed up responsibility for protecting Russia's interests in the near abroad, the ministry adopted a more assertive stance towards the protection of interests in Russia's immediate sphere of influence. On the other hand, despite these overtures, the leadership continued to pursue a predominately pro-Western diplomatic track, and remained constrained in balancing a sober "correction" in policy with the focus on military planning for large-scale, high technology conventional offensive operations and the *de facto* diversification of Russian defense industry. Thus, on balance, the grand strategy that emerged from the rubble of the October crisis remained hostage to the distributional character of Russian policy-making within the executive branch, as the president was prevented by his concerns for political survivability and the lack of transparency from reconciling foreign commitments with the *de facto* resurgence in military operational and defense industrial capabilities.

Amidst the revised institutional uncertainty, the foreign ministry, as the sole residual claimant of authority for the conduct of all facets of Russian diplomacy, overtly equivocated in its endorsement of policies aimed exclusively at close association with the West. Consistent with an expanded mandate to formulate and implement policies in both the near and far abroad, the ministry assumed a tougher stance in Russia's regional policies. The foreign minister, for example, identified the main threats to Russian national security as stemming from regional and ethnic conflicts on the territory of the former Soviet Union. In order to secure these interests and to protect the "rights" of the Russian diaspora, the ministry registered a pro-active policy towards settling conflicts in the near

abroad, including an explicit commitment to use economic and military force if necessary.¹⁰⁸ In a dramatic *volte face* from the earlier deferential predisposition, the foreign minister pronounced to the international community Russia's preeminence in its sphere of influence and in the conduct of local peace-keeping operations. In particular, he stressed that Moscow's policy towards the near abroad was tantamount to a domestic issue, stating that Russia "does not have borders other than those of the former Soviet Union."¹⁰⁹

This rhetoric was reinforced by action. Immediately following the dissolution of the Supreme Soviet, for instance, the foreign ministry spearheaded a policy towards the civil strife in Georgia that was equivalent to political blackmail. Embroiled simultaneously in heated fighting to quell pro-Russian secessionist forces in Abkhazia and to suppress the revolt of the national opposition movement headed by former President Z. Gamsakhurdia, Georgian President E. Shevardnadze appealed directly to Moscow for economic and military assistance. Poised to exploit the desperation in Tbilisi as the tide of battle turned against the government, the Russian foreign ministry made it clear that all forms of relief, including the deployment of Russian troops, were contingent upon Georgia's membership in the CIS. Wary of Russian high handiness, the Georgian government nonetheless acquiesced, consenting not only to be a party to the Russian-dominated regional mechanism, but to the transfer of naval and ground force basing rights to the Russian military that were added conditions slipped into final negotiations by Russian diplomats.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸See, for example, comments by the foreign minister in *Krasnaya zvezda*, 14 January 1994, p. 3; and *New York Times*, 25 January 1994, p. 6.

¹⁰⁹See especially foreign minister's remarks to the 48th UN General Assembly on 28 September 1993 in an interview in *RFE/RL Research Report*, 3:28 (15 July 1994), p. 38.

¹¹⁰See brief discussion by Bruce D. Porter and Carol R. Saivetz, "The Once and Future Empire: Russia and the 'Near Abroad,'" pp. 85-86. The instrumental role played by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in formulating the negotiating positions was confirmed in personal interview with a member of the Russian Security Council, in Washington, D.C., on 18 September 1995.

This pattern of equivocation was also extended to the foreign ministry's policies towards the eventual eastward expansion of NATO. On cue with the political crisis attendant to the suspension of parliament and the consolidation of executive decision-making authority, the foreign ministry began to blanch at the prospects of a NATO-centered European security system that would exclude Russia while incorporating states of both the former Warsaw Pact and the former Soviet Union. This resulted in the reversal of the ministry's earlier endorsement of the August 1993 Warsaw declaration that conceded Moscow's unconditional respect for the gravitation to NATO by sovereign states in Eastern Europe.¹¹¹ In its place, the ministry subsequently embraced the American-sponsored Partnership for Peace (PFP) proposal that served as an ambiguous weigh station to full NATO membership for East Central European and CIS states, as well as offered a potential avenue for cementing Moscow's closer bilateral cooperation with the West.

The PFP policy was a direct reflection of the foreign ministry's newfound autonomy to oversee policies in both the near and far abroad. By signing on to the framework, the ministry was able to accommodate its preferences for preempting "hasty" NATO enlargement in Russia's backyard and for securing international recognition of Moscow's status a regional great power, on the one hand; while simultaneously promoting strategic partnership with the West on the other. Throughout the six month period leading up to the Russian signature in June 1994, ministry officials consistently reiterated that by accepting the PFP mechanism, Moscow could avert "self-isolation" while pursuing rapprochement with the West on terms "corresponding to the size, significance, and potential of Russia."¹¹² This infusion of Russia's special interests into the diplomacy of

¹¹¹*Moskovskie novosti*, 39 (26 September 1993), p. A7.

¹¹²See especially Kozyrev's remarks at the NATO Council meeting in Brussels, in *Diplomaticheskii vestnik*, 13-14 (July 1994), p. 30-31; and *Interfax*, 14 April 1994, as translated in *FBIS-SOV-94-073*, 15 April 1994, p. 1.

international conciliation notwithstanding, the endorsement of the PFP was indicative of the ministry's autonomy to advance narrow concerns for securing Russian integration with the West. In its eagerness to support the final version of the PFP, the ministry committed Russia to respect the extension of NATO partnership to CIS states, as well as to all East European states, thus undermining the prospects for either a regional CIS or pan-European CSCE collective security arrangement to balance great power interests on the continent. Also, by accepting NATO's version, Moscow was deprived of a "special status" in the PFP and forfeited an explicit veto over alliance membership. In sum, by endorsing the PFP framework, the ministry was able to finesse its new responsibility for protecting Russia's regional status without precluding its overarching concerns for promoting integration with the West.¹¹³

Yeltsin's capacity to secure the appropriate military-technical capabilities to complement this shift in Russian diplomacy, however, was constrained by the *de facto* authorities wielded by the Ministry of Defense. As discussed in the previous chapter, although the High Command shared preferences for avoiding nuclear confrontation with the West and defending Russian national interests along the periphery, it uniformly opposed a re-orientation of military strategy away from large-scale, high-technology conventional scenarios. Rather, the interest within the Russian military for flexing Moscow's might and stifling emergent threats in its "sphere of vital interests" was subordinated to operational planning and force structure requirements derived directly from the defense ministry's fixation on waging a future war against NATO. As a result, the

¹¹³The foreign ministry's subsequent rejection of NATO enlargement in December 1994 also jives with its post-October 1993 informal mandate. In lashing out against the unilateral NATO push for "bloc expansion" into Eastern Europe on the eve of the CSCE summit in Budapest, foreign ministry officials emphatically left the door open for Moscow's deepening cooperation with NATO and downplayed the potential for a lasting acrimony. The ministry's objection to NATO's eastward enlargement stemmed mostly from the attempt by Western states to go beyond the PFP guidelines that Russia accepted in June 1994. This was consistent with the newfound authority to manage regional affairs. See especially *ITAR-TASS*, 12 December 1994; *Trud*, 28 December 1994, p. 4; *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 6 December 1994, p. 1.

defense establishment promulgated a set military-technical policies that was directly at odds with the basic tenor of Russian foreign policy.

The disconnect between the High Command's operational planning requirements and the political approaches to security was illustrated in the military doctrine that was approved in November 1993. Despite the identification of "local wars" as the chief danger to stability and peace, the military doctrine ignored reference to specific strategies or organizational criteria appropriate for meeting such challenges. In fact, there was an explicit premium placed on preparation for high intensity combat waged against the world's most sophisticated armed forces. Without designating a specific enemy, the armed forces were called upon to be prepared to repulse and defeat any aggressor or challenger to the vital interests of Russia or its allies on terms satisfactory to Moscow. This was stipulated to mean that Russian conventional forces must be capable first and foremost of waging and claiming victory across the full panoply of large-scale combat scenarios associated with either direct attack or the escalation of local conflicts.¹¹⁴

Consistent with this priority on waging high intensity combat, the High Command prepared Russian Armed Forces to fight in any variant of large-scale war. This translated into the rejection of a strictly "defensive" strategy and a reluctance to countenance limited "offensive" operations in response to the threat or initiation of war by an adversary. There was stubborn resistance to planning combat operations in absolute terms, with a demand that the armed forces be oriented primarily "towards ensuring that specifically those forms, methods, and means of warfare are chosen in the course of repelling aggression that would correspond to its laws and to conditions of the situation at hand."¹¹⁵ To conduct warfare in local and regional scenarios, the High Command stressed the need for undertaking

¹¹⁴*Krasnaya zvezda*, 19 November 1993, pp. 3-4.

¹¹⁵*Ibid.*

"decisive offensive measures" and for assuring fire superiority against possible extra-regional powers that strive to escalate hostilities into large-scale war. Subsequent military writings made it clear that this included a priority on conducting massive offensive activities along different axes of engagement, as well as on preparing for the execution of high intensity, counter-offensive maneuvers at various depths of the enemy's rear.¹¹⁶

In addition, Russian military strategy contradicted the main direction of Russian foreign policy by retaining options for preemptive attack . On the nuclear level, the doctrinal stipulation to "keep the make-up and status of strategic forces at a level ensuring guaranteed delivery of given damage on an aggressor under all conditions," hinted at reliance on surprise retaliatory counterblows for reinforcing mutual deterrence. Such a posture implied a commitment to acquiring precisely those strategic systems, levels of combat readiness, and target specifications that were indistinguishable from those that would be required for delivering preemptive strikes against the West. Moreover, the special attention devoted to ensuring the "destruction of installations of systems for command and control of enemy troops and weapons," suggested that, contrary to the diplomacy of partnership, the Russian High Command entertained the option of decapitating NATO forces in a first strike. Similarly on the conventional level, the doctrine called upon Russian troops to take the initiative to suppress any armed conflict or unlawful armed attack on the borders of states allied with Russia or in areas adjoining Russian territory. By implication, this included the retention of an option of preemptive conventional attack against the deployment of Western forces along Russia's frontier that would accompany NATO enlargement.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶I. N. Manzhurin, "The Specifics of Conducting Military Actions in Medium and Low Intensity Conflicts (english)," *Military Thought* , 1 (1994), p. 17.

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 3. See also discussion in Stuart J. Kaufman, "Organizational Politics and Change in Soviet Military Policy," pp. 379-380.

This preoccupation of the military with planning for large-scale war was ultimately reflected in the composition and structure of Russia's newly created mobile forces. While originally slated for deployment in low-intensity, peace-keeping and peace-enforcement missions, the two categories of the "mobile forces" were designed to bring to the battlefield tremendous firepower and flexibility that far surpassed anticipated local military threats. For instance, units assigned to the Immediate Reaction Forces (IRF), that were intended to be deployed within one to three day of a crisis, included substantial ground force, air force and naval components. The ground force contingent alone-- that included five elite airborne divisions, as well as 15 air assault, light motorized rifle, and special forces brigades-- were configured to approximate the firepower and mobility of a light motorized rifle division, each organically equipped with its own light infantry fighting vehicles, air defense and artillery assets. Similarly, the Rapid Deployment Force, intended as the IRF 's strategic reserve to be deployed within five to seven days, was comprised of substantially heavier combat units, including three Army Corps, one motorized rifle division, and one tank division. These forces, containing over 1500 tanks, 900 combat and support helicopters, and over 700 fighters and bombers, dwarfed the capabilities of potential adversaries along the Russian border and were structured specifically for carrying out offensive operations in future high technology regional combat scenarios.¹¹⁸

Ironically, the *de facto* institutional context of decision-making also saddled Russian grand strategy with defense industrial policies that were not only inconsistent with the basic contours of diplomacy, but that confounded the pursuit of the aforementioned

¹¹⁸For a breakdown of the Russian mobile forces, see especially *Krasnaya zvezda*, 18 December 1992, p. 2; N. N. Ostroumov, "Aviation and Mobile Forces, (english)" *Military Thought* (January 1994), pp. 28-31; and William O'Malley and Edward McDonald, *Russia's New Mobile Forces*, PM-250-AF/A (Santa Monica: RAND, September 1994). An indication of the relative firepower contained in the Russian mobile forces is revealed in comparison to the operational main battle tank forces of the largest former Soviet states-- Ukraine (4000), Belarus (3100), Tajikistan (200); and Georgia (50). See *The Military Balance, 1994-1995* (London: Brassey's, October 1994).

military-technical policies. By deferring to the practical division of labor that existed between and among the Ministry of Defense and *Goskomoboronprom*, Yeltsin pieced together a grand strategy that was marred by conflicting procurement and conversion policies. On the one hand, the informal segmentation of financial and administrative control over military spending and weapons acquisitions within the Ministry of Defense produced an armaments program that was well in excess of real military outlays. On the other hand, the independence ceded to *Goskomoboronprom* and the defense industry to oversee the conversion of the military sector resulted in policies that were aimed more at preserving and diversifying the defense industrial base than at scaling it back in accordance with either the non-offensive nature of Moscow's foreign policy or the streamlining needed to meet war-fighting requirements. The upshot was the retention of defense industrial capabilities that exceeded Russia's diplomatic commitments for regional peace-keeping but that were simply inappropriate for equipping the military for waging a high technology, large-scale war.

Consistent with the High Command's newfound autonomy to supervise the weapons acquisitions process and attendant preferences for boosting military R&D, Russian grand strategy included policies aimed at fielding a "lean and mean" arsenal that was well-suited for supporting high intensity combat against technologically advanced adversaries. The military doctrine, for instance, stipulated the development of a long-term (10-15 years) armaments program that targeted specifically those "new in principle" systems and sophisticated technologies directly related to battle management, communications, reconnaissance, strategic warning, electronic jamming, fire control, and precision and mobile warfare. Such an arsenal was expressly intended to meet the battlefield challenges posed by the world's most technologically advanced armies that were capable of engaging Russia's strategic installations with long-range and space-based precision munitions. Moreover, the doctrine said nothing about the hardware requirements

for waging low intensity combat against technologically inferior aggressors akin to those most likely to emerge along Russia's immediate border. In fact, the official armaments program, with its clear emphasis on acquiring sixth generation technology for meeting the challenges of the new revolution in military affairs, directed future procurement away from precisely those systems expressly tailored for conducting guerrilla warfare against small, highly flexible units in local combat scenarios.¹¹⁹

In order to fulfill these requirements for upgrading the qualitative basis of the arsenal, the defense ministry's directorate of armaments moved to rationalize procurement outlays. In an effort to maximize the return on defense ruble investments, the directorate spearheaded a drive to concentrate state military orders in approximately 220 "key" defense enterprises and scientific institutions. These firms consisted primarily of state owned R&D facilities that were engaged directly in developing advanced weaponry and critical dual-use technologies. This list also included a select number of "financial industrial groups" and federal science centers that were designated as "locomotives" of a revitalized defense industrial base. Moreover, to complement this consolidation the armaments program allowed for the remainder of the roughly 2000 defense enterprises inherited from the Soviet Union to privatize and support themselves in the civilian sector of the economy.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 7-8; and Mikhail Koloeshnikov, "On Military Reform," *Armeyskiy sbornik*, 1 (January 1995), pp. 4-9, translated in *JPRS-UMA-95-017*, 18 April 1995, 1-4. Comments on the de-emphasis on procurement for low intensity combat in the Russian armaments program were made in personal interview with G. Feshin and V. Baranov, chief specialists, Defense Industry and Conversion Department of the Russian Ministry of Defense, in Moscow, on 15 December 1994.

¹²⁰For discussion of the qualitative criteria governing the Ministry of Defense's armaments program, see especially *ibid.*; and interview with A. A. Kokoshin, First Deputy Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation, on Moscow Russian Television and Dubl Networks, 2305 GMT, 17 April 1993, as translated in *FBIS-SOV-93-073*, pp. 51-52. This was confirmed in personal interviews with G. Feshin and V. Baranov. For official statements on the creation and purpose of federal science centers, see especially *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 3 December 1994, p. 4. By the end of 1994, 57 of these centers were already in existence, with projections for the list to increase to 70 institutions by 1997. This was confirmed in personal interview with V. Vloyukov, Deputy Director, Directorate of Science and Technology Affairs, Ministry of Science and Technology of the Russian Federation, in Moscow, on 6 December 1994.

These programmatic ambitions notwithstanding, the High Command's capacity to rationalize expenditures for advanced technology weapons acquisitions fell victim to the parochial policies pursued by autonomous actors at various stages of the budgetary process. The Ministry of Finance, for example, left free to pursue its *de facto* preference for controlling the state budget deficit, dramatically slashed aggregate military expenditures throughout the 1991-1994 period. Accordingly, the defense burden dropped from 8.5 percent of the gross national product in 1989 to 5.0 percent in 1994, as measured in constant 1991 prices. Because the size of the federal budget decreased steadily over this period, with the shifting of resources to regional and local budgets and the state's failure to meet its revenue targets, real defense expenditures were, in fact, significantly lower. As a result, in 1994, the military accumulated accounts receivable from the Ministry of Finance on the order of one third of its annual budget.¹²¹

Expenditures for procurement and R&D within the defense budget were similarly ravaged by the defense ministry's own narrow concerns for allocating scarce resources to cover manpower and housing construction costs. Despite the High Command's newfound authority to control weapons accounts, the organizational weakness of the armaments directorate within the ministry was reflected by the drop in funding for military procurement and R&D from their already reduced 1991 amounts by 68 percent and 50 percent, respectively. In 1994, the amount allocated for the purchase of new weapons systems was only one-tenth of the expenditures of 1991, measured in comparable 1991 rubles. Moreover, real spending for military R&D dropped below six percent of the aggregate outlays for defense in 1993, and failed to meet the legally mandated 10 percent level in 1994.¹²² The sharp decline in procurement funding resulted not only in acute

¹²¹See *Krasnaya zvezda*, 22 April 1993, p. 5; and *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 6 July 1994, pp. 1, 4-6; and *Krasnaya zvezda*, 8 February 1995, p. 3.

¹²²*Krasnaya zvezda*, 1 October 1994, pp. 1-2; *Ibid.*, 28 September 1994, p. 2; *Komersant-daily*, 17 February 1994, p. 3; and Interview with V. Shlykov.

cutbacks in defense orders, but in an accumulated state debt to defense plants on the order of 3.8 trillion rubles by the end of 1994. According to official Russian estimates, these shortfalls were decisive in reducing the share of military-related production in the total output of Russian defense industries to 18 percent in 1994 from 70 percent in 1989.¹²³

A further indication of the organizational weakness of the procurement office within the defense ministry was the seemingly perverse allocation of scarce funding for weapons acquisitions. From 1991 to 1994, defense orders were placed with an eye towards maintaining mobilization rather than high technology defense industrial capacities. In 1993, for instance, the defense ministry spread paltry defense orders among 75 percent of the defense industry instead of concentrating them in those sectors expressly related to future war-fighting missions. Hit hardest were precisely those sectors that were integral for meeting long-term armaments and operational requirements.¹²⁴ Out of frustration with the impotence of the armaments directorate within the defense ministry, the lone civilian deputy defense minister in charge of procurement broke ranks and hopelessly appealed to the president and parliament to redress the situation.¹²⁵

¹²³Y. N. Kulichkov and V.D. Kalachapov, "Analysis of Production: Economic Activities of Enterprises of the Defense Branches of Industry Under the Conditions of the Conversion of Military Production," *Voprosy ekonomiki i konversii*, 1 (1994), pp. 3-8, as translated in *JPRS-UMA-94-038*, pp. 22-25. In order to comprehend the magnitude of decline in procurement, it is interesting to note that in 1994 the Russian military procured an estimated 17 combat aircraft, as compared to 575 in 1991. Similarly, the U.S.S.R. produced approximately 1900 infantry fighting vehicles in 1991, as compared to Russia's 300 in 1993. See discussion in Kevin O'Prey, *A Farewell to Arms? Russia's Struggle With Defense Conversion* (New York: Twentieth century Fund, 1995), pp. 42-43.

¹²⁴According to an official 1994 survey of the opinions of managers from over 150 defense enterprises from across Russia, some 66 percent of those enterprises reported being worse-off than in 1993, with 25 percent claiming to be on the verge of bankruptcy. Moreover, this survey revealed that expectations for receipts of future military orders were lowest among firms in the electronics, communications, and aerospace industries. In contrast, those enterprises in the heavy industries were more optimistic about increasing the volume of state defense orders. See A. K. Ponomarev, *Vyyavlenie osnovnykh tendentsii razvitiya promyshlennogo kompleksa (na primere vpk) na osnove rezul'tatov oprosa ukovidil'telei predpriatii* (Moskva: Mezhdveddomstvennogo analiticheskogo tsentra, June 1994; and "Konversiya: shto den' griayshchii nam gotovit?" *EKO*, 244:10 (1994), pp. 24-37.

¹²⁵*Krasnaya zvezda*, 25 may 1995, p. 2.

This shortfall in weapons expenditures notwithstanding, Russia continued to possess a robust defense industrial base that exceeded the requirements for meeting local threats specified by Russian foreign policy. At the administrative level, *Goskomoboronprom* exploited its independence to craft "diversification" programs to preserve, in one form or another, the bulk of the scientific-technological and production capacities of Russia's inherited defense industrial base. Consistent with this parochial mandate, the state committee adopted two administrative techniques designed to mute the process of re-profiling defense production during the prolonged period of military downsizing. First, there was an attempt to disperse the meager outlays received from the Ministry of Finance to over 50 percent of the 1991 defense industrial base of 2000 enterprises. The 1993-1995 Russian Conversion Program, for instance, identified at least fourteen consumer-technology "priority" sectors for the guaranteed receipt of state conversion credits. Along these lines, the state committee supervised the allocation of federal subsidies to support 920 conversion projects underway at approximately 850 Russian defense enterprises and organizations. Moreover, *Goskomoboronprom* moved to supplement the defense ministry's minimal commitment to defense industry by unilaterally increasing the number of state protected and financially supported defense organizations from 200 to 482 in 1993. As a result, federal conversion credits in 1994 were spread out among an additional 564 enterprises, thus enabling the subsistence of over 1000 defense organizations.¹²⁶

The second tact was to re-focus the "conversion" effort on "de-statization" and away from the re-profiling of production at Russian defense enterprises. At *Goskomoboronprom's* prodding, for example, Yeltsin issued a decree calling for a change

¹²⁶These figures were culled from the draft 1993-1995 Russian State Conversion Program, and from an unpublished Russian official document, "On the Course of Realization of the Conversion Program in 1994;" and A. Yakovleva, "Privitizatsiya vpk uporyadochivaetsya, *Ekonomika i zhizn'*, 37 (September 1993), p. 18.

in ownership status at over 1550 defense organizations by the end of 1994. Over 750 of these enterprises were, in fact, slated to be "corporatized," with the state holding either a majority or "golden" share of stock through at least the fall of 1996. The remainder, while cast into the private market, were eligible to receive future military orders via licensing agreements with *Goskomoboronprom*. Therefore, by the end of 1994, the state remained committed outright to supporting 60 percent of the 1991 defense industrial base, without precluding future defense economic transactions with completely privatized firms.¹²⁷

This aversion to full-scale conversion was also manifest in the chimerical success of production re-profiling that actually took place within the Russian defense industry throughout the 1991-1994 period. Although consumer goods steadily increased as a share of aggregate production in the Russian defense sector, constituting approximately 80 percent of the level in 1994, real output of both civil and military goods dropped precipitously during this period. According to official Russian sources, the volume of all types of goods produced by defense industry declined by more than 60 percent, thus linking the shift in the sector's production profile largely to disproportionate shortfalls in military orders rather than to a surge in consumer output and conversion.¹²⁸ Estimates for 1994 indicate that civil production among defense organizations represented only 53 percent of the 1991 volume, falling by 38 percent from its 1993 level. Moreover, by 1993 only 21 defense plants had closed permanently, with only several others completely

¹²⁷See *Interfax*, 28 February 1994, as cited in Keith Bush, "Conversion and Privatization of Defense Enterprises in Russia," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Weekly Report*, 3:17 (29 April 1994), p. 22. By mid-1994, privatization was underway at 474 enterprises out of the designated 800. An indication of the half-hearted commitment to full-scale privatization and conversion occurred subsequently in 1995 with the state pledge to "re-nationalize" previously established joint stock companies within the defense industry. For the 1995-1997 state economic reform program, see "Programma pravitel'stva rossiyskoy federatsii," *Voprosy ekonomiki*, 4 (March 1995), pp. 123-124.

¹²⁸*Segodnya*, 25 December 1993, p. 2; and Vitaly Y. Vitebitskiy, head of the Main Directorate of Information and Statistics of *Goskomoboronprom*, "VPK: Itogi 1994 goda," mimeo, 20 January 1995, as cited in Kevin P. O'Prey, *A Farewell to Arms?*, p. 44.

converting production capacity to meet consumer demands. This left the overwhelming majority of the 1991 defense base available for re-tooling and mobilization for military purposes by the end of 1994.¹²⁹

Complementing this half-hearted commitment to conversion, *Goskomoboronprom* granted Russian defense industrial organizations considerable leeway to conduct their own affairs to make ends meet in the transition economy. The state committee, for example, successfully lobbied for the July 1994 presidential decree that sanctioned the private business use of excess mobilization capacity while preserving dedicated defense production lines at individual defense plants.¹³⁰ Left to their own devices, Russian defense enterprises avoided wholesale changes to production mixes, as consumer output across all sectors of defense industry declined in the first quarter of 1994 between 45 percent and 53 percent as compared to the first quarter of 1995.¹³¹

Remarkably, the huge cuts in defense procurement resources, initiation of privatization, and stubborn resistance to production re-profiling did not portend immediate collapse of the Russian defense industrial sector. Even in an environment characterized by widespread insolvency, there were few bankruptcies throughout the 1991-1994 period. By and large, the vast majority of defense managers averted both bankruptcy and wholesale restructuring by lobbying the government for subsistence credits and tax exemptions, while simultaneously exploiting occasional opportunities in the nascent market setting. Ceded autonomy to manage defense organizations but protected from the specter of financial ruin, enterprise managers began to search out paths for survival that did not involve conversion

¹²⁹See especially Michael J. Barry, "Privatization, Conversion, and Restructuring in Russia's Military-Industrial Complex: Macroeconomic Implications of a Sector Set Apart," *Comparative Strategy*, 13 (1994), p. 420; and *Krasnaya zvezda*, 28 January 1995, p. 3.

¹³⁰*Rossiiskaya gazaeta*, 13 July 1994, p. 3.

¹³¹*Krasnaya zvezda*, 27 May 1995, p. 3.

or radical defense downsizing. In 1993, for instance, a Russian government survey found that two-thirds of the surveyed defense enterprises started to shorten work weeks, delay wage payments and issue extended furloughs to their workers in order to soften the blow of financial shortfalls without altering production profiles.¹³²

Many Russian defense firms, while avoiding full-scale conversion, began to undertake management reforms that were more conducive to operating in a market setting. Surveys conducted in 1994, for example, found that adaptation of corporate governance structures in St. Petersburg and Moscow, the two regions with the highest concentration of national defense industry, began to take place on a large-scale with the decentralization of firm decision-making and the creation of spin-offs and start-ups. This process unfolded at different rates, with production facilities in the electronics and aerospace sectors demonstrating the greatest propensity to re-organize. Moreover, the same studies found that while investment in 1994 dropped by 50 percent from 1993 among those defense enterprises surveyed, there were increases expected in the electronics and communications sector.¹³³ These efforts at restructuring, combined with burgeoning and sporadic success in establishing joint ventures with foreign firms reflected a growing proclivity for Russian defense plants to take the preliminary steps necessary for improving their prospects for continued survival in the emerging economic environment without altering defense production capabilities.

¹³²Center for Economic Conditions under the Russian Federation Government, "Oboronnye predpriyatiya i ikh perspektivy v 1994 godu," *Delovoy mir*, 27 August 1994, p. 5.

¹³³See for example surveys presented in Department of Commerce, *Defense Business Directory*, U.S.-Russia Defense Conversion Subcommittee, September 1993; "Konversiya: shto den' griadyshchii nam gotovit?" pp25-37; and A. K. Ponomarev, *Vyyavlenie osnovnykh tendentsii razvitiya promyshlennogo kompleksa (na primere vpk) na osnove rezul'tatov oprosa ukovidiltelei predpriatii* (Moskva: Mezhveddomstvennogo analiticheskogo tsentra, June 1994). For a full discussion of the emergent trends in Russian defense industrial adaptation, see Andrew J. Aldrin, "Defense Enterprise Adaptation in St. Petersburg," in Judith B. Sedaitis, ed., *Commercializing High Technology: East and West* (Stanford: Center for International Security and Arms Control, January 1996).

In the end, Russian defense industry, racked by serious demand, supply, and institutional shocks, demonstrated remarkable staying power. By the end of 1994, virtually all of the Soviet-era defense enterprises remained in existence in one form or another, despite declining foreign policy and defense requirements.¹³⁴ Strides towards restructuring ownership and governance arrangements notwithstanding, the available military production capacity in 1994 roughly equaled the one in place in 1991, given the huge excess mobilization reserves built into the Soviet defense industrial base. As a consequence, Russia continued to maintain a robust defense industrial capacity that was capable of generating contemporary weaponry that, while not suited for waging large-scale high technology warfare against the most advanced army in the world, nonetheless far exceeded the military-technical requirements for waging low-intensity combat that was specified by Moscow's diplomatic fixation on geostrategic acquiescence and regional retrenchment.

Conclusion

The foregoing discussion intended to demonstrate that Soviet and Russian grand strategies reflected the international constraints and *de facto* domestic institutional imperatives of their times. Despite the differences in respective international security environments and formal legal structures, each regime fell victim to informal distributional policy-making, producing disjunctures between foreign commitments and military capabilities. Under Brezhnev, the actual division of labor generated an over-zealous response to the prevailing competitive-cooperative security environment, marred by foreign

¹³⁴According to one Western analyst, there was inertia at 95 percent of the remaining Soviet-era defense enterprises. Kevin O'Prey, *A Farewell to Arms?*, p. 48.

policy opportunism and aggressive military planning that outpaced diplomatic efforts aimed at stabilizing superpower relations and reducing the defense burden. This, however, stood in contrast to Gorbachev's under-achieving grand strategy that was epitomized by overly ingratiating diplomatic commitments, as compared to the unwillingness towards re-fashioning military strategy and scaling back defense industrial capabilities. Similarly, the first post-communist leadership in Moscow promulgated a much maligned grand strategy of under-achievement that distorted the pressures for cooperation generated by the overarching security environment. After experiencing an initial period of strategic paralysis, the informal national security establishment pressed for confining Russian assertiveness to the near abroad while continuing to prepare for large-scale military confrontations. In each case, the distribution of *de facto* decision-making autonomy fostered incoherent and excessive policy responses to the prevailing winds of international cooperation or competition. Thus, for the Soviet and Russian cases alike, self-defeat in grand strategy was endemic to the processes of policy-making that arose to facilitate responses to international threats and opportunities, while mitigating the uncertainties of domestic politics.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION:

Decisional Uncertainty and International Relations

Why do states choose grand strategies that are self-defeating? The preceding chapters address this issue in terms of sustained imbalances between diplomatic commitments for competition or cooperation and available national military and defense industrial capabilities. At issue is the wide discrepancy between the realist contention that great powers efficiently maintain the equilibrium in the strategic landscape, and the historical evidence of their varied propensities to do so and to undertake excessive or inadequate foreign commitments that jeopardize their security.

The central argument of this study is that domestic institutions, arising out the efforts of politicians to cope with constitutionally mandated conditions of political uncertainty, tell why states cannot balance international commitments with national capabilities. They do so by affecting the political incentives for bargaining and the distribution of power and responsibility among those elites and functionaries charged with formulating and implementing grand strategy. Both of these factors are integral for determining the substantive policy preferences within a national security establishment, and for shaping a state's capacity to reconcile competing policy strains into a coherent strategy appropriately attuned to international circumstances.

In this chapter, I turn to the broader implications suggested by the detailed application of this institutional argument to the twin problems of over-zealousness and under-achievement in Soviet and Russian grand strategies. First, there is a summary of

the analytical and empirical findings of the study, in terms of the challenges posed to traditional propositions for the sources of grand strategy and self-defeat and the significance of selected cases. Second, in an effort to provide a more thorough empirical answer to the question of whether the examined interface between international pressures and domestic institutions matters for the effectiveness of a state's grand strategy, I explore possible extensions of the argument beyond these specific cases. This includes a cursory comparison of different episodes of balanced and unbalanced grand strategies that emerged under variable international conditions and domestic institutional settings, as well as suggestions for future research. Finally, I examine the broader implications of focusing research on issues related to decisional uncertainty for the study of international relations. Here I offer directions for recasting the theoretical debate concerning the effects of domestic politics on international relations and foreign policy change, as well as for bringing domestic institutions back into the study of state preferences and models for strategic interaction.

Implications for the Study of Grand Strategy and Self-Defeat

Structural theories of international relations presume that states react automatically and effectively to external threats and opportunities. For neo-realists and traditional realists alike, they do so under anarchy out of concerns for survival and for preventing other states from dominating them. For neo-liberals, they do so in order to maximize expected utility. Both schools view outside security pressures as decisive for disciplining the basic disposition of a state's grand strategy consistent with maintaining equilibrium in any given international system. Moreover, they each expect external imperatives to translate smoothly into a coherent strategy that balances diplomatic

commitments with national military planning and defense industrial policies free from domestic complications.

The empirical findings of this study related to the Soviet and Russian cases challenge these expectations. In brief, the mere evidence of prolonged and successive periods of strategic under- and over-extension poses problems for the realist tradition in international relations theory. That the Soviet Union and Russia were great powers during and after the Cold War suggests that from this perspective they should have responded appropriately to the pressures of the prevailing security environment. If realist arguments hold true, Soviet and Russian leaders alike should have crafted grand strategies commensurate with Moscow's national capabilities for sustaining the international balance of power. At a minimum, such arguments presume that national leadership's wield sufficient capacity to respond to international pressures via foreign commitments and internal mobilization policies that do not threaten to bring ruin to the state's relative power position. Yet contrary to these expectations, the Brezhnev leadership extended conflicting foreign policy commitments to crisis prevention and Third World interventionism that saddled the Soviet High Command with requirements for operational flexibility that over-burdened the military's large-scale conventional war-fighting strategy and that were incompatible with defense industrial policies aimed at reducing the military burden. Similarly, these arguments do not jibe with the strategic excesses in the opposite direction. Russia's initial diplomatic push for accommodation with the West and a defensive grand strategy outpaced plans for conducting limited nuclear and high technology conventional operations and the *de facto* conversion of Russian defense industry. As a result, the initial post-communist government wittingly conceded Moscow's remaining status as a regional hegemon and great power in diplomatic fora.

The examples of self-defeat are also hard to reconcile with neo-liberal arguments about utility maximization. If neo-liberals are correct, Moscow should have redressed reckless strategies that saddled respective regimes with excessive short- and long-run costs that outweighed the absolute gains to national security of incurring them. The Gorbachev regime, in particular, should have seized on the opportunities for maximizing long-term payoffs from cooperation presented by the prevailing benign security climate. Instead, the Soviet leadership chose a strategy of excessive ingratiation that not only fattered away the state's relative standing as a superpower, but made it worse off in an absolute sense, relegating the Soviet superpower to the sidelines of international affairs. In a stunning reversal of previous strategy, the Kremlin opted for a distinct "charm offensive," retreating unilaterally not only from its forward positions in the Third World, but from its core interests in East-Central Europe. Moreover, it did so in a manner that outstripped its formidable military and defense industrial potential at the time and that peacefully compromised the basic fabric of the Soviet empire.

That there are glaring shortcomings with traditional structural approaches, however, should not obfuscate the importance of international factors for the basic strategic orientations of states. The evidence from this study reveals the decisive role played by international pressures in shaping a state's general predisposition towards cooperation or competition. While indeterminate with regard to decisions over specific national security policies and their fusion into grand strategy, the overarching security environment prescribed a basic political consensus in each Soviet and Russian regime on the directions for international behavior. Under Brezhnev, for example, the competitive-cooperative impulses stemming from the prevailing strategic, economic, and technological balance with the West engendered widespread support for a mixed-motive strategy of peaceful coexistence. Alternatively, pursuant to the widening Soviet technological lag and stagnating rates of economic growth that reinforced MAD

imperatives for searching out accommodation, there was general endorsement by 1987 from across the political spectrum of the Gorbachev leadership for initiating cooperative engagement with the West. Similar external pressures set the parameters for debate during the initial post-communist transition, providing the bedrock for the political consensus that emerged on the need for injecting Russia into the community of civilized Western nations. Evidence from each case suggests that the security environment acts as a powerful constraint on grand strategy that politicians and functionaries, regardless of the intensity of their domestic concerns, can ill-afford to disregard.

In short, international systemic and power based analyses can hardly offer complete explanations for Soviet and Russian grand strategies. As great powers, the Soviet and Russian cases present hard tests for such theoretical propositions. Concerns for relative or absolute position should have been constant, as each state was locked into international anarchy, thus mitigating tendencies for over-zealousness and under-achievement. Yet such pressures are not epiphenomenal. The cases not only show the propensity of states to incur painful bouts with self-defeat, thereby challenging core assumptions of structural theories, they also indicate that the security environment is integral to the formation of the basic contours of grand strategy.

The findings from the Soviet and Russian cases also present sufficient evidence to challenge several basic domestic level propositions related to strategic under- and over-extension. The empirical evidence points to specification problems with traditional domestic structural and process models for explaining the different variants of self-defeat. Under assault, in particular, is the debate over the linkages between vertical and horizontal governing structures and self-defeating grand strategies.

One type of domestic level explanation locates the sources of self-defeat in the horizontal and divided structure of a formal governing apparatus. Accordingly, the separation of responsibility for both capabilities and commitments in a divided

government institutionally empower competing authorities and saddle the leadership with unwieldy policy-making procedures for channeling divergent political, administrative, and societal interests. This division of authority, as consequence, impairs policy coordination, thus prescribing an incoherence in grand strategy.¹ By extension, mono-institutional structures are less prone to self-defeat, unconstrained by parochial minded interest groups within or outside of the state. A unified governing elite is presumed to have both the motivation and capacity to reconcile competing internal pressures and to scale back excessive international commitments to competition or cooperation.²

On the flip side of this debate are arguments that relate strategic adjustment failures directly to the centralization of a political structure. Extremely hierarchical governing structures enable narrow ruling elites to pursue parochial interests free from countervailing national pressures. They are presumed to provide few brakes on the strategic mistakes of a leadership, allowing for gross imbalances to persist between foreign commitments and capabilities regardless of the negative effects on national security. By comparison, the purported "weakness" of a divided state is seen as a source of strength for ensuring the effectiveness in a state's grand strategy. The existence of formal checks and balances between representative branches and diffused access points for competing interest groups place real limits on the extents to which narrow interests

¹For a succinct exposition and application of this argument to cases of under- and over-extension, see especially Arthur A. Stein, "Domestic Constraints, Extended Deterrence, and the Incoherence of Grand Strategy: The United States, 1938-1950," in Richard Rosecrance and Arthur A. Stein, eds., *The Domestic Bases of Grand Strategy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 112-123. See also Alexander George, "Domestic Constraints on Regime Change in U.S. Foreign Policy: The Need for Policy Legitimacy," in Ole Holsti, Randolph Siverson, and Alexander George, eds., *Change in the International System* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1980), pp. 233-262.

²See especially discussion of the limits to state predation in Margaret Levi, *Of Rule and Revenue* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 10-40. See also discussion of the logical advantages of encompassing coalitions, in this case the unified elite, in Mancur Olson, *The Rise and Decline of Nations: Economic Growth, Stagflation, and Social Rigidities* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), pp. 47-53.

can hijack the state and the deleterious consequences of strategic incoherence can be politically tolerated.³

The evidence from this study demonstrates that this cleavage in the debate is problematic. Specifically, the Soviet and Russian cases reveal that both hierarchical and divided governmental structures are prone to self-defeat. Contrary to the expectations of the first school, the contemporary Russian government, with its increasingly concentrated authority formally vested in the office of the president, did not generate the inclination or capacity on behalf of the leadership to guarantee strategic effectiveness. Even in the aftermath of the October 1993 coup, with the constitutional codification of presidential ascendancy in national security policy-making, the top leadership was neither unified nor capable of carrying out strategic objectives free from domestic constraints. Moreover, the findings show that within this extremely hierarchical structure practical authorities to govern grand strategy were dispersed. As recounted in Chapter 5, autonomy was conferred specifically upon the foreign ministry to supervise Russian diplomacy, the defense ministry to direct military-technical policy and weapons acquisitions, and a host of other governmental agencies to manage spending and programs related to the conversion of the Russian defense industry. Thus, within the vertical structure there were acute principal-agent problems in the relationship between the presidential and governmental branches of the Russian polity that marred the coordinated consideration of policy options and implementation of directives.

Alternatively, the two Soviet episodes of self-defeat highlight weaknesses in the second line of argument that trumpets the decisive role of divided government in stemming lapses into self-defeat. As discussed in Chapter 4, Soviet constitutional proceedings and formal Party guidelines provided for the division of policy-making

³See especially discussion in Aaron L. Friedberg, "Why Didn't the United States Become a Garrison State?" *International Security* 16:4 (Spring 1992), pp. 109-142.

authorities. At both the elite and administrative levels, a plethora of parallel Party, executive, and legislative bodies were assigned formal control over the different facets of national security policy. Under Gorbachev, this "institutional pluralism," was intensified by the grafting of new presidential and legislative bodies onto already existing Party and governmental structures.⁴

Similarly, in both regimes practical control over the different dimensions of grand strategy was divided among a select group of executive and functional organs. In the Brezhnev regime, for instance, foreign minister A. Gromyko was ceded control over issues related to traditional Soviet diplomacy, M. Suslov maintained autonomy to guide Soviet relations with ruling and non-ruling communist parties, defense minister A. Grechko was charged with developing Soviet arms control positions and military strategy, and following his death D. Ustinov exercised multiple authorities to shape military policy and manage weapons acquisitions. This division was mirrored at the administrative level, as corresponding state institutions were delegated crucial authorities to collect information, frame the terms of debate, lobby designated patrons, and administer the day-to-day affairs in respective policy domains. The same held true under Gorbachev, as authorities to formulate diplomatic initiatives, military strategy, and defense industrial policy were informally compartmentalized among a select group of executives. At the administrative level, discrete policy networks were also created to reflect this division of labor via similarly institutionalized exchange relationships. In short, legal power and *de facto* authority were significantly diffused in the Soviet system, yet the polity demonstrated a systemic proclivity for producing and sustaining bouts with self-defeat in grand strategy.

⁴Jerry F. Hough, *How the Soviet Union is Governed* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1979), p. 547.

What these cases tell us, then, is that domestic politics do indeed matter for the effectiveness of grand strategy; but that they do so in a manner inconsistent with the dominant strains in the traditional debate over the role of political structure. In particular, domestic institutional settings in the Soviet and Russian cases were linked by the levels of decisional uncertainty rather than hierarchy. In each case, the basic constitutional edifice was devoid of formal procedures that clearly stipulated incumbency and political accountability. Despite the seedlings of legal order, there were no legitimate, *de jure* enforcement mechanisms for job security at any political level. Politicians in the Kremlin, with only marginal variation across the cases, were left to fend for themselves to shore up political standing in highly competitive settings, where the threat of being relegated to political oblivion loomed ominously with any political defeat. With political survival a constant consideration they had little leeway or incentive to concentrate on anything other than maintaining relative position and acting opportunistically in political exchange relationships. Similarly, overlapping and confused lines of authority isolated functionaries and undermined administrative oversight. Bureaucrats had to rely first and foremost on their own best efforts to secure tenure and organizational missions, while elites lacked formal channels for procuring credible information and monitoring bureaucratic behavior. Thus, for grand strategy to be formulated and implemented politicians and administrators not only had to establish a relevant set of rights, but they had to rely on self-enforcing commitments to abide by them that adhered to concerns for positionalism.

Against this constitutional backdrop, informal bargaining institutions emerged and took hold to govern Soviet and Russian strategic responses to prevailing international pressures for cooperation and competition. In short, the political imperatives for protecting job position and bureaucratic control compelled distributional exchange among the different tiers of policy-making. In each case, the central executive, in an effort to

broker the domestic political interaction necessary for promulgating a strategic response, used his comparative advantages to parcel out discrete policy-making authorities in return for restraint on the part of his rivals and subordinates in challenging his position of relative ascendancy. Through this informal process of delegation, Soviet and Russian leaders not only satisfied their private goals for staying in office, but motivated others to enter into and commit to policy bargains without exploiting their power and resources arbitrarily and indiscriminately to thwart the development of a grand strategy. These *de facto* institutional arrangements regulated the policy-making process by delineating and securing decision autonomy over specific policy issues as side payments to induce bargains and *ex post* compliance among key actors in the national security establishment.

These political institutions, however, came at a significant price of undermining Soviet and Russian state capacities to reconcile international commitments with national capabilities. The distribution of secure, albeit limited, property rights to specific decisions divorced power from responsibility, thus exacerbating principal-agent problems throughout the policy-making process. The assignment of partial rights to oversee varied policy areas, in effect, empowered select politicians and administrators with different substantive policy preferences, while simultaneously absolving them from shouldering the costs associated with collective bargains over grand strategy. In this context, they were free to exploit narrow authorities and information advantages with little regard for the policy pursuits of other agents or the net effect on broad national security interests. Moreover, because political exchanges were premised on logrolling, conflicting policy strains were aggregated rather than synthesized into Soviet and Russian grand strategies. As a by-product of these efforts to stabilize policy-making under conditions of uncertainty, politicians in the Kremlin surrendered oversight authority and the capacity to reconcile competing policies that comprised Moscow's grand strategies. As suggested by the cases examined here, this laid at the root of recurring bouts with self-defeat.

In addition to highlighting the deficiencies of traditional domestic structural arguments, the above findings from the Soviet and Russian cases throw into question popular process driven models. In particular, the evidence challenges those arguments that posit an exclusive link between the logrolling of coalition politics and the strategic pathologies of over-extension.⁵ Contrary to these expectations, all three regimes retained the same type of distributive policy-making process but pursued different competitive and cooperative strategies. The deductive reasoning of these process models is taken to task especially by the contrast between the two Soviet cases; both policy-making processes were dominated by the same political logrolls and were captured by the same concentrated interest groups that should have demonstrated remarkably similar proclivities for erring towards excessive competition. Instead, it was shown that they had dramatically different strategic orientations, with the earlier regime prone to making errors in a competitive-cooperative relationship with the West, while the latter was predisposed towards radically shifting direction and extending excessive unilateral concessions.

The case studies also provide weak support for cognitive and learning explanations. While they do not decisively refute the validity of propositions based on beliefs and knowledge, the evidence that self-defeating strategies were sustained over prolonged periods by actors fully cognizant of the costs of their international behavior suggests that cognitive factors were primarily instrumental. In each case, politicians went to great lengths to distance themselves from their predecessors, but nonetheless subsequently lapsed into self-defeat. That these counterproductive strategies were promulgated by the very actors with access to privileged information and expertise further belies cognitive propositions derived from presumptions of information

⁵See especially Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

deficiencies. Most important, the Soviet and Russian cases illuminate how politicians and functionaries, acting in each case as rational egoists, blunder into promulgating seemingly irrational grand strategies marked by persistent asymmetries between foreign commitments and national capabilities. It was demonstrated that these actors operated in highly uncertain decision milieus that made paramount concerns for job security and policy control. Preoccupied with staying in office and exercising delegated authority, however, Soviet and Russian policy-makers succumbed to parochial domestic political incentives that displaced broader national security interests in guiding responses to the exigencies of the international security environment.

Finally, these findings affirm the common refrain that arguments based on a single level of analysis are often insufficient for explaining important facets of international behavior. In particular, the study shows that the interplay between foreign and domestic arenas is critical to the formation of national preferences for international interaction. Preferences for grand strategy, long neglected by models of strategic interaction in international relations theory, can be accounted for by the combined effects of delegated decision authority and overarching security pressures.⁶ Within the policy-making process, real claimants of decision rights strive to maximize the value of these rights in the light of the opportunities presented by the international setting. In order to hold onto domestic political position and maintain policy control actors seek to exercise delegated authorities consistent with external incentives for competition or cooperation. Thus, policy preferences for grand strategy are deduced from both the terms of delegation derived from an underlying domestic institutional structure and the character of the security environment.

⁶This point will be developed below in more detail.

Similarly, focus on the interaction between international pressures and the terms of delegation gives us purchase on stasis and change in a state's preferences for national security policies. As demonstrated in this study, the proclivity for self-defeat is durable within a given constitutional setting, but shifts in substantive policy preferences can occur in response to exogenous changes in the distribution of authority and character of the security environment. Because the terms of delegation affect the manner in which empowered government agents interpret the interests of the state, a re-allocation of authority can alter substantive policy concerns. In the cases examined, differences in the respective distribution of partial decision authority explain the different organizational procedures and substantive concerns of the same governmental players under the different regimes.⁷ Similarly, because the prevailing security environment shapes the fundamental value of each authority, episodic changes in the international setting can alter the predilections for cooperative or competitive policies that must be accommodated within a given institutional process. As indicated by the shift from over-zealousness to under-achievement in the Soviet cases, preferences for specific policies can evolve with changes to *de facto* institutional and international settings, but a state's capacity (or lack thereof) to reconcile the different dimensions of grand strategy can often persist beyond these altered circumstances.

By establishing these claims, this study offers new insights into the nature of the interaction between international and domestic arenas, forcing some qualification to the two-level games approach to understanding state behavior. These insights specifically challenge the popular fixation on synergy between internal and external factors. The evidence not only demonstrates that international and domestic pressures present dual

⁷For a similar explanation of organizational adaptation under variable institutional settings, see especially Deborah D. Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change: Lessons From Peripheral Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), pp. 9-18.

constraints on grand strategy, but that they do so in what critics call a separate and "additive" fashion.⁸ Each game had its own logic and generated distinct incentives that set the fundamental parameters for response in the other game. This finding, though consistent with the common search for an integrative model, reminds us of the different types of pressure on policy-making that are produced as the constraints of one arena are superimposed over the other.

Extended Applications and Avenues for Further Research

As established by the Soviet and Russian case studies, domestic politics do indeed matter for the efficacy of a state's grand strategy. The argument derived herein from the neo-institutionalist literature tells us that the terms by which authority is delegated among political elites and governing agents determine a state's capacity to reconcile the key policy dimensions of its grand strategy. Based on the underlying degree of uncertainty embedded in a state's constitutional make-up there are political incentives that prompt politicians and functionaries to search out informal mechanisms for streamlining respective policy-making processes. These incentives, premised on the link between private political interests and broader concerns for national welfare, dictate the parameters for political bargaining at all levels of policy-making. They circumscribe the character of informal deals over the delegation of authority and the manner by which these arrangements are monitored and enforced. The terms of such arrangements, in turn, shape the expectations of parties to these institutions, the extent to which these actors

⁸Andrew Moravcik, "Introduction: Integrating International and Domestic Theories of International Bargaining," in Peter B. Evens, Harold K. Jacobson, and Robert D. Putnam, eds., *Double-Edged Diplomacy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 17.

control policy decisions and bear practical responsibility for policy outcomes, the procedures for channeling information and expertise, and the substantive preferences for national security policies. The upshot being that these informal institutions determine the capacity of the state to balance effectively the different dimensions of its strategic response to the prevailing international security environment.

The implications for the sources of grand strategy and self-defeat, while derived in this study only from evidence gleaned from Soviet and Russian cases, should hold true under other domestic institutional and international settings. The basic premise-- that certain levels of decisional uncertainty shape the actual capacity of states to balance foreign commitments and national capabilities in response to pressures from the security setting-- is not specific to politics in the Kremlin. Preliminary evidence from other great powers that have endured contrasting episodes of self-defeat suggest a similar correlation between institutional factors and the efficacy international strategies.

The additive approach, for example, can be applied directly to explain the recklessly over-zealous strategy adopted by Nazi Germany that confounds prominent arguments for self-defeat. That Hitler's high risk diplomacy in the mid-1930s generated requirements for rearmament and combat that outpaced the lagging capabilities of the *Wehrmacht* at the time is problematic for traditional structural models that presume efficient international balancing. Moreover, this strategy was self-defeating in its own right, irrespective of the counter-balancing that it ultimately provoked by other states. Similarly, as detailed by one critic, Germany's over-extended grand strategy prior to the global conflagration that occurred in 1940 does not jibe with popular arguments of an entrenched "strategic culture" rooted in either objective measures or atavistic perceptions

of high vulnerability.⁹ This is not to say, however, that the link between international and domestic political factors was not decisive in shaping Nazi grand strategy.

The constraints imposed by the overarching security environment did indeed play an important role in setting the basic competitive disposition of the Third Reich. The Europe of the 1930s was a fluid multipolar political system, dominated by five great powers that were locked into constant competition for relative position. Germany, in particular, confronted enemies on several fronts whose relative war potential exceeded her own.¹⁰ Lacking powerful allies and facing the threat of encirclement, the German leadership had to rely especially on its own power base and coercive diplomacy to ensure survival. The premium placed on preemptive diplomacy and war preparation was reinforced by what most military historians now acknowledge was the technological dominance and indistinguishability of offensive weapons systems, such as tanks and strike aircraft, that increased the marginal utility of seizing the initiative for each state.¹¹ Moreover, there was an incentive for international opportunism generated by the remarkable German economic recovery that, by 1938, allowed Berlin to boast growth rates higher than at anytime after 1913 and faster than the expansion of the world economy as a whole. Complemented by the broad-based nature of government spending

⁹For a critique leveled against Kupchan's thesis rooted in strategic decline and high vulnerability, see especially Richard Rosecrance, "Overextension, Vulnerability, and Conflict: The 'Goldilocks Problem' in International Strategy (A Review Essay)," *International Security* 19:4 (Spring 1995), pp. 153-160. Similarly, as will be shown below, Snyder's dismissal of the role played by elite logrolling in specifying the dimensions of Nazi grand strategy during the mid-1930s is premature. See Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire*, p. 105.

¹⁰Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict From 1500 To 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987), p. 332. This threat of encirclement materialized in the form of the mutual assistance pact signed between France and the Soviet Union in 1935, its corollary concluded between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia in 1935, and Britain's failure to commit to an alliance with Germany.

¹¹See especially discussion in Jack Levy, "The Offense/Defense Balance of Military Technology: A Theoretical and Historical Analysis," *International Studies Quarterly* 28 (1984), p. 233; and John J. Mearshimer, *Conventional Deterrence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 25.

and overall slack in the economy that existed prior to 1936, this economic recovery attenuated the opportunity costs incurred by building up military power and devoting resources to an aggressive foreign policy.¹²

Though the circumstances of the prevailing security environment induced a competitive strategic orientation, they in no way explain Hitler's strategy of expansionism or its pathological design. Alternatives to aggression existed and were considered by the German leadership as appropriate for meeting Berlin's prevailing security requirements. In the end, however, domestic politics, as opposed to economics or the strategic environment, dictated the Nazi regime's unwavering commitments to despotic territorial conquest and autarky.¹³ Moreover, the primacy of politics prescribed the state's capacity to reconcile Hitler's idiosyncratic strategic objectives with Germany's available war-making capabilities.

According to prominent structuralist or neo-functionalist interpretations of the Third Reich, it was precisely the pronounced uncertainty built into the Nazi governmental

¹²For discussion of the dynamics of the German recovery in the 1930s, see especially R. J. Overy, *The Nazi Economic Recovery, 1932-1938* (London: The MacMillan Press Ltd., 1982), pp. 28-38; William Carr, *Arms Autarky and Aggression: A Study of German Foreign Policy 1933-1939* (New York: W. W. Norton Company, 1972), pp. 45-65; and Harold James, *The German Slump: Politics and Economics, 1924-1936* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1986), pp. 371-386. Moreover, the trend line of upward growth was reflected by the increase in Germany's relative industrial potential throughout the interwar period, excluding the U.S. from the European balance. See Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, p. 201.

¹³Division within the German leadership over grand strategy was reflected vividly in the struggle that lasted until 1937 between Hjalmar Schacht, the Minister of Economics, who advocated continuation of a strategic trade policy; and Hermann Goering, commander-in-chief of the airforce and plenipotentiary of the Nazi Four Year Plan, who was an ardent advocate of autarky. As mentioned below, there were also debates over appropriate military strategies and tactics for waging offensive combat. For elaboration of the internal divisions over the specific dimensions of Nazi grand strategy, see especially T. W. Mason, "The Primacy of Politics- Politics and Economics in National Socialists Germany," in Henry A. Turner, *Nazism and the Third Reich* (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1972), pp. 175-200; William Carr, *Arms Autarky and Aggression*, pp. 45-72; Karl Dietrich Bracher, *The German Dictatorship* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), pp. 287-329; and Wolfgang Michalka, "Conflicts within the German Leadership on the Objectives and Tactics of German Foreign Policy, 1933-39," in Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Lothar Kettenacker, eds., *The Fascist Challenge and the Policy of Appeasement* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), pp. 48-60; and Alan S. Milward, "Fascism and the Economy," in Walter Laqueur, ed., *Fascism: A Reader's Guide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), pp. 379-412.

system that shaped how the regime operated in practice. Without ignoring the pivotal role of Hitler's charisma and perverse ideological obsessions, these approaches stress the complexity and confusion of the Nazi decision-making apparatus and its impact on "normal politics" and Germany's strategic behavior. As summed up by one scholar, the uncertainty intrinsic to the formal political machinery existed "to such an extreme degree that the overlapping, conflicting, and sometimes outrightly contradictory spheres of authority can be depicted as 'chaotic'."¹⁴ The growing resort to emergency decrees, fusion of party and state mandates, and rampant duplication of administrative authority sanctioned by the lingering Weimar constitution, compelled official elites and functionaries to guard jealously their formal prerogatives in the formulation and implementation of national security policies.

Against this backdrop of uncertainty, actual policy-making came to be governed by an "unwritten pact (or 'alliance') between different but interdependent blocs in a power 'cartel'."¹⁵ Within the national security sphere, Hitler as the ascendant political figure, molded a ruling logroll composed of the Nazi political leadership, big business, the military, and the SS-Police bloc. Prior to the outbreak of war in 1940, the elements of this informal coalition wielded near complete autonomy in respective policy domains, making decisions through a process of aggregation rather than compromise. What ensued was that policy-making was lowered to a distributive level where "communication between divergent leadership factions, and from them to their subordinates, was lost; and

¹⁴Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*, 2nd edition (London: Edward Arnold, 1989), p. 71. For similar characterizations of the structural uncertainty embedded in the Nazi regime, see especially Martin Broszat, *The Hitler State: Foundations and Development of the Internal Structure of the Third Reich* (London: Longman, 1981), pp. 1-17, and 193-240; and Hans Mommsen, "National Socialism: Continuity and Change," in Walter Laqueur, ed., *Fascism: A Reader's Guide*, pp. 179-210; and Williamson Murray, *The Change in the European Balance of Power, 1938-1939: The Path to Ruin* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 21-23.

¹⁵Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship*, p. 52.

a feedback mechanism, which might have allowed effective supervision of the increasingly independent power groups, was non-existent."¹⁶ In short, Hitler's scope of action in military and economic affairs even during the 1936-40 period was seriously restricted by the exploitation of narrow decision authorities among *de facto* governing organs.

As a result, one can speak of an informal institutional impediment to policy-making that was geared toward producing an over-zealous grand strategy. On the one hand, Hitler and his cadre were ceded a free hand to exploit opportunities provided by the competitive security environment in advancing German diplomacy. Unfettered by military-technical and mobilization considerations, the Nazi rulers could fixate exclusively on the diplomatic game of brinkmanship. This opened the door for an adventurist foreign policy, as laid out in the 1937 Hossbach Memorandum, and evidenced by the increasingly aggressive commitments to territorial annexation in the East. As suggested by the timing of the move against Czechoslovakia in 1938, this narrow autonomy to dictate foreign policy goals encouraged Hitler and the diplomatic corps to push this agenda to the hilt even at great risk of precipitating a large-scale war.

On the other hand, the independence accorded to the military and defense industrial establishments generated policies that were at odds with the highly aggressive diplomacy at the time. In contrast to Hitler's demands for launching preemptive lightning strikes, the German military as late as 1940 remained wedded to strategic planning that was essentially defensive in character. Moreover, the consideration increasingly devoted to offensive operations concentrated primarily on improving traditional methods of infantry combat, rather than on developing and perfecting deep-strike motorized and mechanized warfare necessary for conducting a *blitzkrieg*. As late

¹⁶Hans Mommsen, "National Socialism: Continuity and Change," p. 203.

as 1938, the High Command was resistant to undertaking limited offensive campaigns and woefully ill-prepared to conduct large-scale offensive operations that were demanded by the presumed automatic escalation of these limited engagements into global war against the West.¹⁷ This inconsistency was compounded by the limited scale, productivity, and direction of the rearmament program *vis-a-vis* rising diplomatic commitments for expansion that persisted up through 1940. The narrow political mandate accorded the defense industry prior to 1936 precluded rearmament in depth, thus leaving Germany unprepared for waging a major war until the beginning of the ensuing decade. Furthermore, the subsequent *carte blanche* extended to economic planning increased the payoffs to heavy industry for remilitarization in breadth. This, however, contrasted with the military's immediate needs for concentrating the expansion of production and industrial capacity on those armaments and munitions technologies that were expressly tailored to waging an effective *blitzkrieg* during the later part of the 1930s.¹⁸ The upshot was a remarkably over-zealous Nazi international strategy that, in contrast to the famed images of the invincibility of German military capabilities at the time, was rife with inconsistencies and precariously vulnerable to implosion, yet alone to the pressures of a resolute balancing front presented by the other great powers. Thus, the irony of the period, as noted by one historian, was that Western pusillanimity up through

¹⁷See especially discussion in John J. Mearshimer, *Conventional Deterrence*, pp. 99-117; Barry Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), pp. 179-219; Williamson Murray, *Change in the European Balance of Power*, pp. 27-49; and Michael Geyer, "German Strategy in the Age of Machine Warfare, 1914-1945," in Peter Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 554-597.

¹⁸See especially Williamson Murray, *Change in the European Balance of Power*, pp. 27-49; Wilhelm Deist, *The Wehrmacht and German Rearmament* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1981), pp. 65-69; 86-101; Alfred C. Mierzejewski, *The Collapse of the German War Economy, 1944-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), pp. 1-8; William Carr, *Arms, Autarky, and Aggression*, pp. 97-99; and Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship*, pp. 52-60. For discussion of the lack of productivity of German industry as a whole, see especially Robert Overy, *The Nazi Economic Recovery, 1932-1938*, pp. 54-64.

1939 saved the Nazis from themselves and bought time for a German strategy that was already close to a breaking point.¹⁹

The institutional thesis advanced in this study also addresses the debate over the curious postwar episodes of American self-defeat. Others have shown that American policy-makers experienced recurrent bouts with over-extension during the Cold War. While there are disagreements over the timing and measures of this "imperial over-stretch," it is generally accepted that in the immediate aftermath of World War II the American government was politically prepared to extend overseas commitments to contain the Soviet Union that outstripped its capacity to procure requisite military capabilities. Moreover, several prominent accounts implicate the very institutional features of the American political system, such as separation of powers, as the primary sources for this over-reaction to the bipolar competition. Accordingly, these interpretations stress that incoherence in strategy was endemic to America's divided government and domestic politics, and could be softened only by the imminent threat of war.²⁰

Yet it is striking that in comparison with the Soviet and Russian cases, America's lapses into self-defeat were moderate and fleeting during the Cold War. America's grand strategy of containment, although marred by cyclical imbalances between ends and

¹⁹Williamson Murray, *The Change in the European Balance of Power, 1938-39*, p. 362.

²⁰See especially accounts in Arthur A. Stein, "Domestic Constraints, Extended Deterrence, and the Incoherence of Grand Strategy: The United States, 1938-1950," pp. 112-123; and Charles A. Kupchan, *The Vulnerability of Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 418-485; and Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire*, pp. 255-304. It is interesting to note that each author interprets the immediate post-war period differently, pointing to contrasting periods during the Truman administration for evidence. Stein, for example, stresses the inconsistencies during the 1946-1950 period between expanding commitments to European and Asian security and sluggish growth in American military spending and defense procurement. In contrast, Kupchan praises the coherence in grand strategy during the same period, marked by selective diplomatic commitments and tempered remilitarization; and along with Snyder, harps on the indiscriminate fashion by which the leadership began to extend foreign commitments in 1949-1950.

means, was at base consistent and remarkably prone to self-correction.²¹ Despite suffering significant pain and humiliation, the U.S. did not incur enduring setbacks to either its absolute standing as a superpower or geopolitical position relative to its polar rival as a consequence of its incredible commitments to extended deterrence and unsustainable adventurism in the Third World. This contrast in frequency and intensity with the Soviet and Russian cases jibes with the institutionalist approach presented in this study.

My analysis suggests that tendencies toward self-defeat have been mitigated by the certainty in the American policy-making process. That power is separated and shared between the different branches of the government does not itself contradict this point. Rather, it could be that the context within which authorities have been fragmented and specified have strengthened the effectiveness of oversight and have assigned blame to governing bodies, so as to ensure that lapses into self-defeat were temporary.

In the case of the postwar U.S., grand strategy decision-making took place against the backdrop of an identifiable formal legal superstructure. As described by one scholar, there existed a "National Security Constitution,"-- composed of constitutional dicta, legislative enactments, judicial decisions, and executive orders-- that created the "basic governmental institutions to deal with national security matters, define(d) the fundamental power relationships between those institutions, and place(d) limitations upon the powers of each branch."²² At the highest level, this formal legal skeleton established tenure procedures and basic lines of accountability, holding the branches of government

²¹For a definitive post-revisionist account of both the iterations of balanced or imbalanced strategies pursued by successive administrations and the fundamental, long-term coherence in America's strategy of limited containment, see especially John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

²²Harold Hongju Koh, *The National Security Constitution: Sharing Power After the Iran-Contra Affair* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), pp. 67-72. Parentheses added.

ultimately responsible for the performance of respective tasks. While relationships between assigned powers were conspicuously obscure and subject to constant political battles for ascendancy, the core principles of "balanced institutional" participation and responsibility were preserved.²³ The same held true at the administrative level. Beginning with the enactment of the National Security Act of 1947, a formalized system was established of accountable, centralized, and coordinated presidential management regarding diplomacy, war making, intelligence gathering, covert operations, military sales, and foreign aid. This and subsequent legislative enactments not only created clear, albeit shared, delegations of administrative authorities, but imposed responsibilities among residual claimants, both vertically to superiors within the executive branch and horizontally to oversight mechanisms assigned to the Congress, via a range of notification, reporting, and certification requirements. In short, despite the presence of legal loopholes that invited repeated shifts in the practical balance of powers between governing bodies, the constitutional framework provided for political legitimacy and accountability with noticeable certainty in the sphere of national security.

This certainty notwithstanding, the practice of American policy-making was replete with informal bargaining over procedural amendments and the substance of national security policies. Deals, however, were reached through reciprocal exchange. Assured of legal standing and accountable to the American public, executives and legislators had incentives to compromise on competing approaches to containment, as well as to redress glaringly ineffective policies. As a consequence, what emerged at the highest level was an informal institutional arrangement whereby Capitol Hill acquiesced to executive initiative, while retaining veto rights and control over procedural reform, in return for presidential commitments to modify policy proposals to forestall congressional

²³*Ibid.*, pp. 93-100. See also John Hart Ely, *War and Responsibility* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

opposition, without explicitly acknowledging deference.²⁴ While not immune from lapses into executive unilateral action, political gridlock, or congressional bandwagoning, both the President and the Congress ultimately maintained incentives to redress the attendant strategies of self-defeat out of concerns for avoiding accountability and public blame. Similarly, at the administrative level, the chief executive was vested with sufficient formal authority to craft informal management systems for penetrating the national security bureaucracy. Each president established his own mechanism, consistent with his personality and managerial style, to improve the flow of information and responsibility within the national security administration so as to rectify the most egregious inconsistencies in grand strategy.²⁵ Accordingly, as evidenced under the Eisenhower administration and in reaction to the Vietnam War quagmire, competing elements within the American government acted out of concerns for accountability to reach implicit bargains that allowed the state to rebound from periods of over-extension with comparatively balanced grand strategies.²⁶ Thus, in the American system, accountability served as an institutional source of discipline, and a constraint on the depths to which a wayward grand strategy could sink.

²⁴See especially James M. Lindsay, "Congress, Foreign Policy, and New Institutionalism," *International Studies Quarterly* 38 (1994), pp. 281-304; and John Hart Ely, *War and Responsibility*. See also Thomas E. Mann, "Making Foreign Policy: President and Congress," in Thomas E. Mann, ed., *A Question of Balance: The President, the Congress, and Foreign Policy* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1990), p. 34; and Louis Fisher, *Presidential Power* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995); and Thomas M. Franck and Edward Weisband, *Foreign Policy By Congress* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979).

²⁵For a review of the structure and effectiveness of alternative presidential management mechanisms, see especially Alexander George, *Presidential Decisionmaking in Foreign Policy: The Effective Use of Information and Advice* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1980), pp. 145-216. It has been argued by some that the judicial branch was also party to this *de facto* bargain, deferring judgements on the constitutionality of grand strategy decision-making to the realm of politics between the executive and legislative branches.

²⁶This assessment is drawn largely from the historical accounts rendered in Robert A. Divine, *Eisenhower and the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); and John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*.

This cursory application of the argument to the German and American cases represents only the first step toward a systematic assessment of a neo-institutional explanation for grand strategy and self-defeat. In particular, further research is necessary to see if the argument holds up for synchronized strategies pursued under hierarchical political structures. A review with an eye towards the issues of decisional uncertainty and oversight, for instance, is in order of Bismarckian Germany and Meiji Japan; regimes that were notably effective in containing expansionist impulses and pursuing coherent strategic responses to prevailing international circumstances. How was it that in the former case, German Chancellors Bismarck and Caprivi were able to circumvent powerful informal bargains to craft strategies that balanced flexible diplomacy with a defensive military strategy? With respect to the latter, how did the last *genro* manage to resist pressures for adding a strong preventive war component to an otherwise defensive diplomacy in the 1920s? While further inquiry is needed, there is preliminary historical evidence to suggest that in each case there was a relative degree of decisional certainty, especially with respect to the constitutional standing of the Japanese Diet, that conditioned policy compromises and limited the negative strategic externalities of informal logrolling.²⁷

Implications for International Relations Theory

This study applied neo-institutional insights to demonstrate that domestic politics do indeed matter for shaping responsiveness in the international system. The level of uncertainty embedded in a state's formal structure and its attendant impact on informal

²⁷See evidence provided in Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire*, pp. 99-102, 145-148; and Charles Kupchan, *Vulnerability of Empire*, pp. 315-324; 373-385.

terms of delegation determine the operational significance of a security environment and a leadership's capacity to reconcile ensuing foreign commitments with national capabilities. By implication, differences in domestic structures that affect differences in modes of political exchange, allocations of decision authority, effectiveness of oversight, and substance of policy preferences lead to different capacities to reconcile ends and means of strategies for international interaction. These variations explain deviations from realist expectations of automatic and appropriate state balancing in reaction to the dictates of the international system. This finding, in addition to bearing directly on the debates over grand strategy and self defeat, carries general implications for international relations theory.

First, this study suggests that clarification is warranted in the extant debate in international relations theory concerning the impact of domestic dynamics on foreign behavior. For the most part, the literature has been consumed by the contentious dispute over validity of the causal logic, empirical basis, and normative prescriptions of the "democratic peace" theory. Such analyses not only have produced inconclusive explanations for why democratic states are less prone to fight or threaten each other than non-democracies, but have reached contradictory findings on the implications of democratic and authoritarian governance for the effectiveness of international strategies. With respect to the latter, in particular, accounts range from those that credit democracies with the distinct capacity to extend credible international commitments, to those that view democratic states as burdened by cumbersome political machinery that undermines both continuity and coherence in grand strategy.²⁸ The poverty of systematic explanations is

²⁸For a sample of the arguments undergirding the democratic peace theory, see especially Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); R. J. Rummel, "Libertarianism and International Violence," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 27:1 (March 1983), pp. 27-51; and Michael Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs," Parts I and II, *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 12:3 (Summer 1983), pp. 205-235; and *Ibid.*, 4 (Fall 1983), pp. 323-353. For the case against it, see especially Henry S. Farber and Joanne Gowa, "Politics and Peace," *International Security* 20:2 (Fall 1995), pp. 123-146; Christopher Layne, "Kant or Cant: The Myth of the

largely the product of the stylized classification of regimes in terms of dichotomous measures of inclusiveness in state-society relations, institutional separation of powers, or norms of equality and justice.²⁹ As demonstrated by the literature on state strength and leadership and regime stability, variations in these criteria are not specific to regime types and are continuous. With respect to institutional constraints, for example, democratic and authoritarian states alike differ in the specific procedures for executive selection, political competition, and pluralism of decision-making processes. Similarly, these regime types share to a certain extent common features, such as fragmented decision-making and hierarchical administration.³⁰ These observations notwithstanding, the deductive reasoning that links these cross-cutting institutional factors to specific international behaviors remains imprecise and under-developed.

The neo-institutional approach advanced in this study adds further specification to this debate. In particular, my argument points to a logical connection between a certain

Democratic Peace," *International Security* 19:2 (Fall 1994), pp. 5-49; and David E. Spiro, "The Insignificance of the Liberal Peace," *Ibid.*, 19:2 (Fall 1994), pp. 50-86. For a review of the literature that is critical of the effectiveness of democratic grand strategy, see especially Michael J. Crozier, Samuel P. Huntington, and Joji Watanuki, *The Crisis of Democracy* (New York: New York University Press, 1975); Clifton Morgan and Sally Howard Campbell, "Domestic Structure, Decisional Constraints, and War: So Why Kant Democracies Fight?" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 35:2 (June 1991), pp. 187-211; and Carol Ember, Melvin Ember, and Bruce Russett, "Peace Between Participatory Polities," *World Politics* 44:4 (July 1992), pp. 573-599. For contrasting views on the capacity of democracies to extend credible commitments, see especially Peter F. Cowhey, "Domestic Institutions and the Credibility of International Commitments: Japan and the United States," *International Organization* 47:2 (Spring 1993), pp. 299-326; and Kurt Taylor Gaubatz, "Democratic States and Commitment in International Relations," *International Organization* 50:1 (Winter 1996), pp. 109-139.

²⁹A notable exception is David A. Lake, "Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War," *American Political Science Review* 86:1 (March 1992), pp. 24-37.

³⁰For a sample of the literature on state strength, leadership and regime stability, see especially Arno Mayer, "Internal Causes and Purposes of War in Europe, 1870, 1956: A Research Assignment," *Journal of Modern History* 41 (September 1969), pp. 291-303; Stanislaw Andreski, "On the Peaceful Disposition of Military Dictatorships," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 3 (December 1980), pp. 3-10; Stephen Krasner, *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investment and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); and review in Jack S. Levy, "Domestic Politics and War," in Robert I. Rothberg and Theodore K. Rabb, eds., *The Origins and Prevention of Major Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 92-99. For an extreme view that links all types of collective decision-making, occurring in democratic and authoritarian regimes alike, to incoherent grand strategies, see especially Erich Weede, *Economic Development, Social Order, and World Politics* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1996).

feature of a domestic political structure, i.e. decisional uncertainty, and a specific international behavior characteristic, i.e. self-defeat. Focus on this structural feature, and its bearing on distributive politics and accountability that transcend the traditional democratic-authoritarian divide in determining state capacity, helps to provide a systematic explanation for the widespread variation in the strategic effectiveness of different types of regimes. While I do not contend that these are the only decisive variables or that they are necessarily divorced from extreme versions of democratic or authoritarian regime types, the argument does underscore the need for more nuanced approaches to distinguishing between state traits that are relevant for explaining specific international behavioral norms. Accountability is just one of these factors, but one with a sobering effect on international strategies pursued by a host of different regime types.

A second, but related, implication of my institutional argument bears on inquiries into the strategic consequences of domestic political transition. In reaction to a purported "naive enthusiasm" for the outbreak of peace associated with the global fall of communism, several scholars have demonstrated a link between the process of democratization and a disproportionate propensity for policy incoherence and belligerence in international strategies. Though challenged on empirical, methodological, and conceptual grounds, this correlation has provoked re-assessment of the meaning of political transition for the stability of international behavior.³¹ Certainly, where states have come from and how they manage the transition affect the quality of their strategic choices. But not all former authoritarian states have necessarily started from the same institutional position, nor have they experienced the same rocky road in their fledgling

³¹ See especially Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder, "Democratization and the Danger of War," *International Security* 20:1 (Summer 1995), pp. 5-38; and Reinhard Wolf, Erich Weede, Andrew J. Enterline, Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder, "Correspondence: Democratization and the Danger of War," *International Security* 20:4 (Spring 1996), pp. 176-207.

forms. The same is also true for those regimes that have undergone change in an authoritarian direction.³²

As suggested by the argument developed herein, one way to get a better handle on the strategic implications of regime transition is to differentiate governing structures on the basis of decisional uncertainty. This view would maintain that within similar processes of democratization different combinations of formal and *de facto* institutional arrangements can take hold that can lead to divergent preferences for external behavior and radically different capacities to balance the dimensions of grand strategy in responding to similar international pressures. Moreover, introducing more specification into regime types-- past and present-- would help to clarify the extent to which we can speak of transition in a particular case and its implications for international relations. Exploring the continuity or change in domestic political incentive structures and attendant policy-making processes also might facilitate a more rigorous explanation for similarities and differences in the effectiveness of international strategies between regimes transitioning in opposite directions.

Finally, my neo-institutional argument carries implications for better understanding the formation of preferences for grand strategy within the traditional rational choice paradigm. As lamented by others, dominant schools in the field typically posit state preferences in models for international behavior, but cannot account for their changes under static strategic settings or when a state's identity remains constant. Yet this critique often leads rational choice models astray, encouraging the infusion of cultural or perceptual variables that tend to derive from cognitive or emotional sources

³²See especially discussion of the variation in formal and *de facto* institutional arrangements of emerging democracies in Eastern Europe in Thomas A. Baylis, "Presidents Versus Prime Ministers: Shaping Executive Authority in Eastern Europe," *World Politics* 48 (April 1996), pp. 297-323.

rather than from functional or structural circumstances.³³ As suggested by the present study, however, this need not be the case. *De facto* decision rights play an important role in shaping the way that national security policy-makers interpret a state's prevailing security environment and how they assess the costs of different policy responses across the dimensions of grand strategy. The substantive choices that Soviet and Russian politicians and functionaries made regarding diplomacy and military-technical policy, for example, were molded by their fragmented authorities to meet specific requirements of the strategic setting. Furthermore, the terms by which these rights are allocated disrupt the smooth translation of external constraints into preferred strategies of action. In the cases reviewed, *de facto* institutional barriers to oversight and accountability among policy-makers produced foreign commitments that did not match available military strategy or defense industrial capabilities to uphold the state's international position. National actors preferred to adopt policies that accorded with their narrow private concerns rather than those that jibed with broader considerations of national security.

By extension, the neo-institutional approach also contributes to the burgeoning appreciation for factoring issues of domestic uncertainty into models of strategic interaction. As demonstrated by others, uncertainty over a state's capacity lies at the root of understanding the effectiveness and credibility of commitments in strategic bargaining contexts at the international level. It influences not only how one state interprets and copes with its strategic setting, but how others view it as well.³⁴ The argument presented

³³For a recent critique of rational choice models of strategic interaction and the ideational literature, but a different account of preference formation, see especially Jeffrey W. Legro, "Culture and Preferences in the International Cooperation Two-Step," *American Political Science Review* 90:1 (March 1996), pp. 118-135.

³⁴For recent research on the impact of domestic uncertainty on international bargaining, see especially Robert Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," *International Organization* 42 (1988), pp. 427-460; George W. Downs and David M. Rocke, *Optimal Imperfection? Domestic Uncertainty and Institutions in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); Keisuke Iida, "When and How Do Domestic Constraints Matter? Two-Level Games With Uncertainty," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 37:3 (September 1993), pp. 403-426.

here suggests that variations in the distribution of *de facto* decision rights in one state affect how other states assess the benefits of international engagement by specifying key foreign players in the former and their preferences *ex ante* and *ex post* for living up to their international commitments. With respect to the prospects for international cooperation, for instance, this could influence how an outside state views issues of monitoring and enforcement; the extent to which it feels comfortable relying on the other national leadership to reconcile its own policy violations and the types of mechanisms required to be built into international institutions. Given the distributive nature of politics under uncertainty, hopes on the part of the international community for luring an incapacitated state remain modest and dependent on a delicate balance of carrots and sticks directed at *de facto*, self-interested governing agents. Thus, the absence of accountability in one state is potentially a scary thing not only for the effectiveness of its own grand strategy, but for all of those states that must interact with it as well.

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