

GORBACHEV, *GLASNOST* AND EASTERN EUROPE

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SUCCESSION AND POLITICAL STABILITY IN EASTERN EUROPE

By now it is widely understood that Soviet succession politics tend to have a destabilizing effect on Eastern Europe. The fact that the November 1956 Soviet invasion of Hungary occurred three years and eight months after Stalin's death, and the August 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia three years and ten months after Khrushchev's removal, may represent nothing more than odd coincidence. The evidence suggests, however, that the political uncertainties that characterize a change of leadership in the Kremlin increase the probabilities of miscalculation by East European parties as to how much autonomy or systematic diversity Moscow will tolerate.

It is not simply a question of a new Soviet leadership being preoccupied with domestic affairs, but of the dynamics of the succession process itself. In the absence of an institutionalized mechanism for the transfer of power, competing factions inevitably jockey for position. As factional alignments change, policy shifts are equally inevitable, and the pervasive opaqueness of Soviet political discourse temporarily masks or distorts those shifts. In these circumstances, the mechanisms of consistent policy guidance between Moscow and the regional parties tend to break down. While only those countries already experiencing domestic turmoil and dislocations are likely to be severely destabilized, neither the record of past succession periods nor the present situation in Eastern Europe can provide much comfort either to Gorbachev or other Warsaw Pact leaders.

Soviet policy underwent rapid-fire shifts in the three years following Stalin's death in 1953. Among these were the Moscow-initiated "New Course," Malenkov's defeat in the "second industrialization debate" and the simultaneous retreat from the "New Course." Subsequently, the beginnings of de-Stalinization with Khrushchev's secret speech and the reconciliation with Tito seemingly legitimized the idea of "separate roads to socialism" and the autonomy of socialist states. These events had a whipsaw effect on the more vulnerable East European socialist regimes.

Malenkov's removal as Soviet premier in February 1955 combined with Khrushchev's temporary alliance with the Kremlin hardliners created severe disruptions in Hungary. Nagy, the reform-minded premier installed less than

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two years earlier at Moscow's insistence, was left at the none-too-tender mercies of Rakosi, the ultra-Stalinist party leader who had himself barely escaped forced removal in June 1953. By the time the Kremlin leadership recognized its mistake, removing Rakosi in July 1956, the frustrated aspirations of Nagy's countrymen for a more humane form of socialism had boiled over into unacceptable demands for democracy and independence. In the end, the combination of the immediate threat to the Soviet position in Eastern Europe and the potential repercussions of the Hungarian events on Khrushchev's personal position in the Kremlin made a military solution inevitable.

In the other major crisis of 1956, Polish party leaders were more successful in avoiding the kind of direct Soviet meddling that led to the roller-coaster of hope and despair in Hungary. Nonetheless, encouraged by de-Stalinization in Moscow and under growing domestic pressures, they too pushed for a greater degree of autonomy and liberalization than the Kremlin was willing to countenance. That confrontation ended without the use of military force, but only barely. And it was probably the stark object lesson administered two weeks later by the brutal suppression of the Hungarian revolt that kept the Poles and perhaps others from pressing their demands further.

Although the specifics differ, and analysis of events leading to the invasion of Czechoslovakia twelve years later reveals broad similarities in the impact which the post-Khrushchev succession had on that country. The quasi-populist mood of the last years under Khrushchev was followed by the reformist signals emanating from Moscow in the first years of what was then called the Brezhnev-Kosygin era — in particular, the 1965 economic reform usually associated with the name of Premier Aleksei Kosygin. These events gave rise to exaggerated expectations among Czech reformers concerning Moscow's tolerance for change in Eastern Europe, as well as the directions of developments in the Soviet Union itself. Undoubtedly, the power struggle in the wake of Khrushchev's removal was more muted than the one following Stalin's death. There followed sharp reversals of policy, such as had occurred with the "New Course" and with such devastating effect on Hungary. Still, the initial quiescence of the conservative faction around Brezhnev only served to magnify the illusion that a moderate "reform" faction had emerged, or was about to emerge, victorious.

It is important to keep in mind the reverse impact that developments in Eastern Europe can have on an internal power struggle in the Soviet Union. The Hungarian crisis, as "Exhibit A" in the hardliners' case against de-Stalinization, became a potential obstacle to the consolidation of Khrushchev's power in 1956. Similarly, in 1968 the generally perceived threat to Soviet-style socialism posed by the Prague Spring reforms became a potent weapon in the conservative faction's resistance to less radical reforms in the Soviet Union. As Czech reformer Zdenek Mlynar wrote later: "The Kremlin 'hawks' were able to use the problem of democratization in Czechoslovakia as a key issue in resolving the power conflicts inside Moscow at that time. They were consciously exploiting what they felt was an extremely opportune issue for

them." In this way, the Czechoslovak reformers, initially encouraged by similar if more limited tendencies in the USSR, ultimately influenced the Soviet power struggle to their own disadvantage.

Mikhail Gorbachev is undoubtedly aware of this past pattern of misperception and miscalculation, as was Brezhnev before him. Indeed, Brezhnev's policy toward Eastern Europe throughout the 1970s was aimed at averting a repetition of the miscalculations that led to the Czechoslovak crisis. With Poland as a continuing reminder of the potential for regional instability, the new leadership has already shown itself to be highly sensitive to the problem. At the same time, and despite whatever precautions the Kremlin may take, the probability that the "succession factor" will again play an unsettling role in Eastern Europe remains high. Any resulting instability there will reverberate on the outcome of the leadership and policy struggle in Moscow.

The most obvious reason for these developments is that the prospects for Gorbachev's policies within the bloc are closely linked to the success or failure of the political and economic changes that he is trying to bring about at home. A second factor is the depth and complexity of the social and economic problems confronting most of the East European countries. Stagnation and a progressive deterioration in the overall quality of life are sapping the already fragile legitimacy of these regimes. Gorbachev's initiatives are not always compatible with the solution of these underlying domestic problems.

Still a third complication is the prospect of multiple and more or less simultaneous successions in Eastern Europe. Four of six party leaders are in their mid-70s (Honecker in the GDR, Husak in Czechoslovakia, Kadar in Hungary, and Zhivkov in Bulgaria), and a fifth (Ceausescu in Romania) is reportedly in declining health. The last two factors in particular will put great pressure on these regimes, especially on the emerging leaderships, to test the limits of Soviet tolerance in their search for more effective ways to meet the needs and aspirations of their own populations.

GLASNOST AND EASTERN EUROPE UNDER GORBACHEV'S RULE

As CPSU Secretary General, Gorbachev does not yet have a coherent, internally-consistent policy toward Eastern Europe. What he does have is a set of initiatives, a "wish list" that can be summarized in the same three themes, or slogans, which dominate his domestic policies: *glasnost*, *perestroika*, and *uskorenje*. Each has evolved nuances that give it a more complex meaning in the East European context; each has also evoked varied responses in the region, both among countries and, within individual countries, among different audiences.

Glasnost, or "openness" is by now an overworked word for Gorbachev's calculated campaign to expose the ineffective and corrupt policies of his predecessors and their bureaucratic holdovers. It is aimed not only at shaking up the entrenched establishment but also at mobilizing the energies of an alienated and apathetic population for the goal of economic revitalization. In

urging *glasnost* on his East European counterparts, Gorbachev's initial motives were essentially the same, that is, to move the bloc as a whole out of the lethargy and stagnation of the last two decades.

The Soviet leader has shown a growing awareness of the need for more candor on the topic of Soviet-East European relations. Apparently, this is a means of overcoming the intense anti-Soviet feelings prevalent among the populations in question, and a prerequisite for strengthening intra-bloc relations in the future. Thus, during his April 1987 visit to Prague, the Soviet leader referred obliquely to the "difficult lessons" of 1968. Later that month, he signed a declaration with the Polish leader General Jaruzelski on cooperation in ideology, science and culture, including a pledge to reexamine the "blank spaces" in Polish-Soviet relations. This formulation seems to open the way for a reopening of such sensitive issues as the 1939 Nazi-Soviet Pact that led to the re-partition of Poland or the 1940 Katyn forest massacre of Polish military officers.

In Eastern Europe, as in the Soviet Union, Gorbachev uses *perestroika* and *uskorenie* to suggest the need for a radical "restructuring" of the economic and political systems and an "acceleration" of the pace of economic growth and technological progress. At the same time, these slogans have an additional meaning for Moscow's junior partners, namely, a "restructuring" of the mechanisms and "acceleration" of the pace of economic integration under CMEA auspices. The overriding purpose of cooperation within this organization will be to facilitate modernization of the Soviet economy and lessen the dependence of all CMEA members on Western technology. Clearly this second meaning is of more immediate importance to Moscow than the first.

Gorbachev was expected to replace quickly several of the aging leaders with younger men who would follow his example (Zhivkov and Husak were thought to be in greatest danger). Nevertheless, he has been surprisingly flexible, if sometimes brusque, in his dealings with the Brezhnev-era holdovers. He is careful not to suggest that the revamped model of Soviet socialism he envisions will be obligatory for the others. Moreover, he freely admits that several East European parties are well ahead of the CPSU in adapting their domestic systems, and that the Soviets can learn from their experience. On the other hand, he has been aggressive in imposing his economic priorities, both in the multilateral framework of CMEA and in bilateral relations.

High on his list of demands in bilateral trade are East European deliveries of more and better quality machinery and consumer goods in exchange for stable (or even reduced) deliveries of Soviet energy and raw materials, a balancing of trade and repayment of outstanding ruble debts, in most cases by 1990. The ambitious CMEA integration plan was pushed through in December 1985 despite East European reservations, and has since been supplemented by numerous specialized agreements between the USSR and each of its smaller partners. It provides for new and large-scale joint investments in Siberian resource development, and comprehensive coordination under Soviet direction of scientific research and development. The plan also foresees

the establishment of direct links between existing Soviet and East European enterprises, as well as the creation of new joint ventures.

That the reaction to Gorbachev's initiatives has been mixed is hardly surprising. Ironically, the most enthusiastic response has been at the popular level and among some dissident groups. The spectacle of Czech intellectuals eagerly reading *Pravda*, and appealing to their government to stop censoring a Soviet leader's speeches in the local press, is not one Americans have come to expect. Nor are Americans accustomed to seeing East Berlin rock fans chanting "Gorbachev, Gorbachev" as their own police bar them from watching a rock concert on the other side of the wall. In Poland, Solidarity activists tend to be more skeptical, but some express a belief that "Gorbachev is our best hope for real reform here."

On the other hand, at the official level, reactions range from restrained endorsement, which are often indistinguishable from mere lip-service, to outright rejection. The only East European leader who has wholeheartedly embraced all three of Gorbachev's themes is Jaruzelski. The most obvious reason for these reactions is that today's Brezhnev-era holdovers are understandably reluctant to criticize the policies for which they have been responsible for up to two decades. Similarly, the "little Stalins" of the 1950s had resisted the "New Course" and de-Stalinization for fear of incriminating themselves.

The sources of the restraint go beyond a simple distaste for *samo-kritika*. One is the memory of the turmoil and failed reform attempts that accompanied past successions and thus a reluctance to become too closely identified with a Soviet leader who may not last. A second is a concern that, while change is long overdue in the Soviet Union, the pace and intensity of Gorbachev's drive for "openness" and "restructuring" is inappropriate and potentially destabilizing for Eastern Europe. It threatens to open up a Pandora's box of old wounds that the regional parties have worked long and hard to keep closed, and to revive popular pressure for more radical political and economic reforms, including a loosening of bloc ties, than either the regional parties or Gorbachev himself is prepared to tolerate.

A third source of official East European reticence, especially among economists, is the growing realization that the various items on Gorbachev's bloc agenda are at times mutually incompatible and, at best, entail painful opportunity costs. Thus, the demand for trade performance and better quality exports now may undermine prospects for meaningful reforms in the longer term. The reorientation of Eastern Europe's limited supply of so-called "hard" goods to Soviet markets will reduce hard-currency earnings that otherwise could be used to import Western technology needed to increase efficiency and product quality. Perhaps most painful of all is the prospect that the ambitious programs of joint investments, joint ventures and direct enterprise links will lock the East Europeans into another round of capital-intensive investments which have proved so ineffective in the past. At the same time, scarce resources would be diverted for goals defined largely in Moscow at the expense of long-

neglected domestic needs, leaving domestic reform hostage to the success of Gorbachev's *perestroika* in the Soviet Union. One of the things that is not yet clear is whether the Soviet leadership has thought through the conflicting implications of its various demands on Eastern Europe, or whether contending factions are working at cross purposes.

In brief, Eastern Europe's leaders, whether the incumbents or the new generation that will emerge in most of these countries within the next few years, face a much tougher and more determined taskmaster in Gorbachev than Brezhnev ever had any pretensions of being. His policies will be more subtle and intelligent, in some respects more flexible. Unlike Brezhnev, he will press for reforms and more active and effective policies of social mobilization, but the bottom line is unlikely to be "liberalization" or "pluralism" in the Western sense of those terms. To paraphrase Winston Churchill, Gorbachev is not a man who intends to preside over the dissolution of his empire. Far from allowing a loosening of ties with the WTO/CMEA alliance, either political or economic, his intention is to strengthen them through "restructuring."

POLAND: SPECIAL CASE OR GORBACHEV'S MODEL FOR EASTERN EUROPE'S FUTURE?

In the context of Gorbachev's evolving strategy toward Eastern Europe, recent developments in Polish-Soviet relations are of particular interest, not only in the sense that they highlight the dilemmas and opportunity costs facing all of the East European regimes, but because they may provide clues to the Soviet leader's long-term strategy toward the region. For the moment, it is not clear whether he is treating the troublesome Poles as an exception or a model. Should the pattern emerging in Poland be extended to other countries in the bloc, however, it will involve not only accelerated economic integration but a vastly expanded network of political and cultural ties as well.

That Poland should be a prime target of Gorbachev's attention is no surprise. From Moscow's point of view, Poland is geographically the most strategic of the USSR's East European allies, the *sine qua non* of Soviet influence and power-projection into Central Europe. It is also the largest and most populous country in the region, the richest in natural resources and heavy industry, and home to the second largest army in the Warsaw Pact. Above all, it is the least stable and most crisis-prone of Moscow's junior allies.

The opposite side of the coin is Jaruzelski's susceptibility to Soviet blandishments. There is no question that, among East European leaders, Gorbachev has shown a definite favoritism for Jaruzelski; this was evident both at the 27th CPSU Congress in February 1986 and at the Polish Party Congress in June of that year. The reasons are in part substantive, since both share policy preferences, and in part a matter of style. But the important point to remember is that Jaruzelski is uniquely vulnerable to Soviet pressure. For him there is no alternative to total support for Gorbachev's "new political think-

ing." The reasons are partly economic, partly political, and partly psychological.

Economically, Poland's massive debt, economic isolation and inability to expand its exports to the West have increasingly forced it to reorient its trade toward the East, and especially toward the Soviet Union. Politically, Jaruzelski needs Gorbachev's support against his own entrenched bureaucrats and *betony* (literally "cement-heads" or hardliners). Soviet support was essential to carrying out last year's amnesty for political prisoners, the recent rapprochement with the church, and initiating the proposed "second stage" of economic reform. Psychologically, Poland suffers from what might be called the "first ally complex." By virtue of size, strategic location and resources, it aspires to be the second-most important power in the Warsaw Pact. Since the late 1960s, that position has been progressively eroded by the GDR — first economically, then militarily and, in the early 1980s, even politically.

This psychological factor is especially important now. It is a question of national pride, and of recouping Poland's influence both within and beyond the bloc. Official Polish spokesmen constantly reiterate the "first ally" theme. The Polish press is replete with references to the convergence between Gorbachev's "restructuring" and the Polish concept of "socialist renewal," ironically a holdover from the Solidarity period. But the fact of the matter is that the Poles know they have a long way to go before they are again "first" in Moscow's eyes.

By 1986, Poland dropped to Moscow's fourth-largest trading partner within CMEA, slightly behind Bulgaria with less than one-third the population. Frequent references in the Western press, no doubt Warsaw-sponsored, to Poland's having the "best-equipped and trained army in Eastern Europe" are little more than wishful flashbacks to fading realities. What all of this does, however, is to make the Poles highly vulnerable to Soviet pressures to improve their performance. This may entail an increase in military spending, which, despite Poland's continuing economic problems, rose by 15 percent in real terms in 1984 and by an estimated 9-10 percent in 1985, or going along with Gorbachev's revitalized integration schemes.

In the area of economic cooperation, the new round of joint investments foresees Polish participation in the Yamburg gas pipeline, a new steel complex at Magnitogorsk, and other projects for a total contribution of 650 million transferable rubles (TRs), and a Western-manufactured rolling mill originally purchased for Poland's massive new steel mill at Katowice. The Soviets will participate in the completion of a number of investment projects in Poland, most of which were started in the 1970s and halted or "orphaned" during the Solidarity period. These reportedly include the Huta Katowice, several coal complexes, and shipyard modernization, for a total contribution of 675 million TRs and unspecified hard-currency credits.

The problem with these projects, especially the "orphaned" ones, is that they perpetuate a pattern of industrial development based on the same heavy, capital/energy-intensive industries that have proved unprofitable in the past.

Thus they can only impede the process of reform that both Jaruzelski and Gorbachev say they favor, and will contribute to a worsening of Poland's already tragic environmental problems. They are also inconsistent with the need to restructure Polish industry to make it more efficient and competitive on world markets, as urged by Western experts, including the IMF, and by Jaruzelski's own economic advisers. It is not too much to say that the primary rationale for these projects is that they fit very well with Soviet needs for large-scale infusions of the products of these traditional smoke-stack industries.

In addition, Poland and the Soviet Union have signed several ambitious agreements for new forms of economic cooperation. More than 100 organizations on the Polish side and almost as many on the Soviet side have reportedly declared their interest in direct links between producing enterprises research institutes. Five joint ventures were designated in 1986, with seven more under discussion. The significance of these developments should not be overstated. The initial interest in direct links on the Polish side was due to the expectation that participating enterprises would have priority in the distribution of investment funds and access to hard currency. So far, this has not been the case. It is also becoming clear that the mechanisms for direct links do not yet exist on the Soviet side, leading to apprehensions that participation would mean subordination to giant Soviet production associations or central ministries. Similarly, progress on joint ventures was slowed by the failure of a second, October 1986, agreement to clarify legal and institutional details and how costs and profits would be divided — both questions on which the Polish press has reflected some anxiety. If the Soviets push these new forms of integration, and especially if their own reforms fail or end up as half-measures, the Poles have reason to fear that important parts of their economy will effectively become regional branches of Soviet industry.

The most recent and novel dimension of Gorbachev's policy toward Poland concerns the wide-ranging declaration on "Soviet-Polish Cooperation in Ideology, Science and Culture" signed during Jaruzelski's April 1987 state visit to Moscow. There is an almost automatic temptation to dismiss such declarations as part of the obligatory rhetoric of bloc relations with little impact on day-to-day relations. In this case, however, the scope of the planned cooperation, and the speed with which some key elements have been initiated, indicates that Gorbachev means business. The declaration covers not only the usual scientific and cultural exchanges, but the whole gamut of social, educational and professional activities with heavy emphasis on youth and the role of the media.

By May 1987, there were at least four exchanges of high-level delegations related to the new cooperation program. A delegation from the Central Committee cadres department of the Polish party paid a five-day visit to Moscow to study the CPSU's experience in party and cadre work. *Pravda* editor Afanasyev visited Poland and met with Jaruzelski and the Central Committee's Academy of Social Sciences. There was a Polish-Soviet conference on media responsibility and the cooperation between the mass media of the

two countries. The Polish-Soviet friendship societies concluded still another agreement emphasizing work among youth and the need to popularize the Russian and Polish languages.

Clearly it is too early to do more than speculate on what impact this program may have on Polish life. On the one hand, it is a rather subtle blend of *glasnost* in Polish-Soviet relations. The Soviet side has seemed willing to reexamine some previously taboo events from the past and a kind of "damage-control" operation. In this respect, Gorbachev's approach is very different from Brezhnev's. After the Prague Spring, Brezhnev seems to have believed that the key to limiting ideological and political erosion in the bloc was control over the individual communist parties; that is, if he kept them more or less in line, they would maintain control over their domestic situations. The vexing experience of Solidarity proved that strategy wrong, at least in Poland. And now Gorbachev is responding with an approach that proposes to keep a finger on Poland's pulse by engaging broad sections of the population in a web of contacts and exchanges.

On the other hand, the Gorbachev approach may prove to be as risky as it is bold. Should these programs materialize as envisioned, he will be doing something every Soviet leader since Stalin has explicitly tried to avoid: exposing large numbers of the Soviet population, especially the youth and the non-Russian nationalities, to a Western-oriented, fervently Catholic, free-thinking Polish society. This could also backfire on him in Poland, possibly even undermining the tenuous political support Jaruzelski presently enjoys at home. Most threatening to the Polish leader's position in the near term is the growing disenchantment among economists and other intellectuals over his apparent eagerness to go along with a package of integration programs that they see as detrimental to Poland's future economic and political stability.

In the longer term, candid discussions about the "blank spaces" in Polish-Russian relations, such as Katyn, may be welcomed among historians, but they are more likely to rekindle than assuage popular anti-Soviet feelings. If the discussions are less than candid, if there is an attempt to whitewash the past, this will only confirm the Poles in their distrust of Soviet intentions. Polish schoolchildren and university students are already impervious to the relatively watered-down political indoctrination from their own schools and youth organizations. Thus, they resent being lectured to about joint responsibility for the "revolutionary legacy" by Soviet "student" activists who are often *apparatchiki* in their thirties.

Indeed, Pope John Paul II was unexpectedly outspoken during his visit to Poland in June 1987, presumably because he is not about to concede the next generation of Poles to Gorbachev's version of Socialism. By all pre-trip accounts, the Pope was expected to take a relatively low-key approach in line with the strategy of "small steps" leading to full legalization of the status of the church — a first in church-state relations in any communist country. He also hoped to visit both Moscow and Catholic Lithuania during the 1988 millennial celebration of Russian Orthodoxy. Instead, he embarked on an

impassioned defense of human and political rights in general, and the validity of the Solidarity movement in particular, in the end provoking bitter attacks both in Warsaw and Moscow.

THE IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY

The trends in Soviet-East European relations described above pose subtle challenges for U.S. policy. For approximately three decades now, the U.S. approach toward Eastern Europe has been one of "differentiation." I prefer to call it an approach rather than a policy since it provides the framework within which substantive policies are carried out. The explicit goal of differentiation is to expand the options available to the East European countries by rewarding those governments that move toward domestic liberalization or foreign policy autonomy from Moscow. The "carrots" or rewards for such behavior include a variety of non-economic benefits in the form of cultural, educational, and scientific exchanges. But the most coveted benefits are economic, such as Most Favored Nation (MFN) trade status, preferential credit treatment and increased access to U.S. technology.

On balance, "differentiation" has served the United States reasonably well, especially when it has kept its sights low and pursued moderate, incremental change. At the same time, it has several limitations that U.S. administrations have not always kept in mind. In the first place, although in principle "differentiation" is designed to foster change, in practice it has been primarily a reactive policy. The sources of change in Eastern Europe are overwhelmingly domestic and subject to the limits of Soviet tolerance. With rare exceptions, the West cannot initiate change in the region; at best it can support changes that have already occurred. But even there it is not always successful. In Poland, for instance, the West could not prevent a reversal of liberalization in progress.

"Differentiation" is most effective on the margins, on peripheral issues. When the United States tries to use its leverage to alter basic elements of the system, it oversteps the limits of its influence and the results are counterproductive. Thus, the sanctions imposed on Poland following the declaration of martial law in December 1981 only made that country more dependent on the Soviet Union, and did more to hinder positive change than to promote it. "Differentiation" is difficult to implement consistently in a region as diverse and complex as Eastern Europe, where U.S. policy is frequently confronted with moral ambiguities. The most glaring one in the recent past is that Ceausescu's neo-Stalinist regime in Romania continued to enjoy MFN status while Poland, which even under martial law was markedly more open than Romania, was denied it for four and one-half years.

In addition to these underlying limitations, U.S. policy is subject to both internal and external constraints that did not exist in the 1970s. The internal constraint is the American budget deficit and rising indebtedness. Externally, in the context of the overall world debt crisis, the United States has a natural and more immediate stake in some of its hemispheric neighbors, whose

combined debt dwarfs that of Eastern Europe. Both factors will severely limit the resources available to back up policy toward that region. Another external constraint is Gorbachev's vision, discussed above, of a revitalized and restructured socialist bloc in which the network of political and economic linkages will be expanded and strengthened, leaving the East Europeans with diminished scope for domestic or foreign policy autonomy. That is, a "reformed" bloc would be more dynamic, but not necessarily "looser."

The limit on available resources does not necessarily mean that American leverage must be reduced. Massive Western credits to Poland in the 1970s, for example, gave the United States little influence over events in that country. But it does suggest that Americans need to make better use of the resources they have: first, by identifying realistic goals that will contribute to positive changes in the lives of the East European populations; second, by better coordinating American efforts, not only among the various channels in bilateral relations, but also with its Western allies; and third, by eschewing frontal challenges to Soviet interests in the region that can only provoke Moscow to tighten its grip.

A primary concern is the improvement of human rights performance. I believe the United States can be more effective by emphasizing multilateral forums and initiatives than by explicitly linking human rights to other aspects of bilateral relations. No East European leader worth his "Order of Lenin" can risk being perceived in Moscow as making political concessions to gain preferential treatment from Washington. On the other hand, the East European leaderships have shown themselves increasingly sensitive to human rights issues in such forums as CSCE, where criticism comes from neutral as well as NATO countries and to which East European dissidents themselves are beginning to direct their appeals.

Indeed, one of the most positive developments in Eastern Europe is the growing cross-border contact among opposition groups. In the past, long-standing historical and territorial conflicts and cultural differences bred a kind of *Schadenfreude*, or pleasure in the misfortunes of others, leaving the region as a whole vulnerable to outside manipulation and domination. The United States should welcome and encourage these contacts which demonstrate a recognition of their common problems and aspirations and a new willingness to support each other rather than looking exclusively to the West.

Similarly in economic relations, the United States is likely to be most effective in encouraging economic reforms and industrial restructuring by urging countries such as Hungary and Poland to take maximum advantage of their membership in the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. A conditioned IMF recovery program for Poland, for instance, offers the best hope for solving that country's staggering debt problem, and thus for a gradual normalization of its economic relations with the West. Conversely, scarce resources and the aftermath of U.S. sanctions on Poland severely limit the Americans' ability to impose unilateral conditionality. With such a program in place, however, there would be a variety of avenues through which government-sponsored and private programs could participate in Poland's recovery

with some assurance that assistance would be better used than the credits of the 1970s.

Potentially one of the most fruitful areas for East-West cooperation and Western influence on the quality of life in Eastern Europe is that of environmental protection. This is an area where economic and human rights concerns (Baskets II and III of the Helsinki Agreement) merge, and where East European needs are most urgent. Such an approach suggests a broadening of the traditionally political focus of U.S. human rights policy, but it would be very much in line with the concerns of independent movements in Eastern Europe. In several of these countries, especially in the Northern Tier (Poland, the GDR, and Czechoslovakia), pollution has reached catastrophic proportions and now poses serious public health problems. Environmental issues have drawn even with political rights as the number one issue for the opposition. To varying degrees, the governments also have begun recognizing the urgency of the situation and, while the commitment of resources is still meager, are looking for solutions.

This emerging confluence of interests offers the United States, together with its allies, an opportunity to help bring about a meaningful improvement in the everyday lives of the East European populations. In doing so, however, the United States should again make clear to these regimes that, in return for technological assistance, it will expect a genuine commitment on their part, including corresponding changes in industrial policy and resource allocation.