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The Political Transformation of Europe: The Analysis of Gorbachev's Foreign Policy in the U.S. and Sweden 1985-1988

Starting in the 1980s, Europe has been going through a process of fundamental change. There are two basic causes behind this process. The first is the ongoing integration between an ever wider circle of European nations, an integration that has the European Community as its core. This is a multidimensional phenomenon that has effects across a whole range of issue-areas, including foreign and security policy. Indeed, what is happening between the European countries is beginning to change the traditional European state itself. To talk about the sovereignty of the European states in the old sense may even miss the point: these nations are gradually becoming interdependent to an extent where we may ultimately have to redefine the very concept of the European state.

The second process that has profoundly influenced the European nations during the last decade is the events in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, in particular what happened after Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in 1985. This working paper is part of a project that has as its basic aim to study how elites in five countries analyzed the development in the former Soviet Union. In particular, we are interested to see if members of the elite were able to make a correct prognosis of how the process of change in the Soviet Union would end, and if they were, who were they and when did they accomplish this task? The countries chosen for study are France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Sweden and the United States.

Our basic premise of the project, "the Political Reconstruction of Europe" is that change in international politics occurs by way of a three-step process. The first step is the analysis of change in the environment undertaken within each nation-state. The second step is the policy changes that the country in question undertakes to adapt itself to changes in its environment. The third step is the structural change on a systemic level that is the end result of the interaction between the changes in policies implemented by
different countries. The larger project that my study is a part of analyzes all these three aspects of change in the European security context, that is the analysis of external changes, the policy changes debated and undertaken in different countries and the resulting reconstruction at a systemic level.

I analyze two specific questions. First, was it possible for foreign observers of events in the then-Soviet Union to predict the fundamental changes that "new thinking" in Moscow were eventually going to cause? Was this development possible to anticipate, and, if so, when more precisely and by whom? Second, can we find different degrees of skepticism by professional observers of the Soviet Union in the different countries? If there are differences in this respect, how can they be explained?

A large group of states has been strongly affected by the demise of the Soviet Union. One such group is the sixteen members of NATO. Another is the group of neutral and nonaligned states in Europe. My intention is to study states belonging to both groups.

A second criterion when choosing states to analyze was geopolitics. It seems reasonable to assume that the physical distance from the borders of the Soviet Union influenced the degree to which analysts detected whether the changes initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev were of decisive importance. It is, however, less than clear how that influence works. It is possible to imagine that states close to the Russian bear may have reason to be extra skeptical about the importance of what looks like change, because the nearness to the superpower makes the risks of a wrong judgment seen even larger. Reversely, it is also possible to imagine that the looming shadow of the neighbor makes one hold extra high hopes for positive developments.

A third criterion when choosing states to analyze was what may perhaps be called the ideological views prevailing in the country. To illustrate the thought, it seems probable that in a country like the U.S., with a political system where a market economy and individualism are values of fundamental importance, the analysts of Moscow can be
expected to take time before they accept that the country they analyze is undergoing a transformation. This is particularly so since the state under scrutiny is regarded as posing a nideological and military threat to their own country. Under such circumstances, I assume that U.S. analysts will be cautious before they pronounce any detection of fundamental changes in the Soviet Union. In a country like Sweden, where collective solutions to political problems are much more acceptable and where socialism is a more positive term than in the U.S. one may expect a larger amount of understanding for the political processes in Moscow. It is an open question whether the security risk that analysts of the Soviet Union in Sweden have traditionally detected as emanating from Moscow will serve to increase their caution in identifying basic changes. This aspect is derived from the field that studies the role of perception for international politics.¹

A fourth criterion on which one may differentiate between states when it comes to the analysis of the Soviet Union concerns whether it is regarded as legitimate openly to discuss issues with ramifications for security policy and, if so, whether such a debate may influence practical policy. This dimension, in other words, concerns whether the political system in question is open or closed in security and foreign policy matters. France seems to be an example where security policy is determined by raison d'état behind the closed doors where a small elite makes the necessary decisions. If France can be considered closed in this respect, then the U.S. may be viewed as coming much closer to the end of the spectrum where a state is open in this respect.

A fifth criterion for differentiating between states is the sensitivity concerning the detection of the existence of, and the magnitude of, changes in the environment that are relevant for the state's security policy. One aspect of this is whether or not there are open doors between the powers that make the decisions and the analysts outside the

¹ For the classic study in this field see Robert Jervis: Perceptions and Misperceptions in International Politics, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976.
decision-making apparatus. One can assume that in states where there is a greater chance for outside analysts to enter the decision-making process, there is a wider spectrum of views on events in the outside world, than there is in a state with a more closed system in security and foreign policy matters.

Finally, there is a sixth criterion that is relevant for our project. This has to do with what we in Stockholm in previous studies have called the cognitive stabilizers of foreign policy. We think that it is plausible to regard the ideas upon which a country’s foreign policies rest as a determinant of the degree to which this policy may be influenced by changes occurring in its environment. This way of reasoning is based upon the part of research in international studies that focuses upon the importance of perceptions for foreign policy.²

Building upon this tradition, we have, in an earlier project, identified cognitive stabilizers that affect how a nation reacts to changes in its environment. There are, in our conception, three such cognitive stabilizers: consistency, centrality and testability. By consistency we mean the degree to which official policy rests upon a system of ideas that only identifies positive consequences of the policies being pursued. Centrality is degree to which a certain policy is regarded as positively linked to other policies or goals. Testability denotes the chances whether it is possible to confirm or discard the correctness of the ideas on which a policy rests by coming events. If your beliefs concern aspects of political life that may never be tested against future reality, you may easily stick to your beliefs. If however, you believe, for instance, that the Soviet Union will never withdraw from any nation over which it has gained preponderant influence, then

your beliefs are bound to be badly shaken by the events of 1988 and 1989, in particular. Two of the researchers in the project "the political reconstruction of Europe" have previously applied cognitive stabilizers to the policies of the United States and West Germany in their policies toward Moscow.\(^3\)

Based upon the preceding criteria, I have decided to analyze five countries: the U.S., France, the UK, Germany and Sweden. Four of these countries are either members of, or closely affiliated with, NATO, and one, Sweden is nonaligned. Two of the countries, Sweden and Germany, are relatively close geographically to the former Soviet Union and the three others are further removed. When it comes to ideological orientation, a first approximation would render the following order starting with the state in which there is the greatest support of capitalism and individualistic solutions to political problems and ending with the one in which the understanding for collectivist solutions to political problems and socialism is the greatest: the U.S., the UK, France, Germany and Sweden. As stated above, there are also clear differences between the countries concerning their openness to discussion of security policy issues.

The next step in the setting up of the project was to identify the actors of interest for a comparison of the foreign policy processes in different polities, in particular when it came to the analysis of external processes of fundamental political change. One of those actors was for us given from the beginning. This is the official spokesmen for the state in question. In operational terms this translates into speeches given by the President or Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister and perhaps a few other officials.

In the second category we wished to identify actors who constituted the more or less official alternative to the person or party in power, in other words we wanted to identify the legitimate opposition in each of these democratic societies. In four of the five cases,

\(^3\) See the volumes by Goldmann and Hallenberg cited in note 2.
this was a fairly simple matter. In Sweden there has in the postwar period really only existed two alternative constellations that could form the government. The most common of these has of course been a government dominated by the Social Democratic party. The alternative to this has been some type of alliance between two or more non-socialist parties. Of these parties two have been more prominent on foreign policy issues: the conservative party, now called moderaterna in Swedish, and the liberal party, now called folkpartiet liberalerna. Official statements from these parties or their leading spokesmen are thus regarded as the opposition's views on Gorbachev's foreign policy. In Germany, France, and Great Britain it is also rather easy to identify which party, or parties, that are the legitimate opposition.

But the problem comes when I try to analyze the U.S. and compare it to the European countries mentioned. It is obvious that the President and the Secretary of State are the principal official spokesmen for the U.S. on foreign policy issues, but who, or what, is the "legitimate opposition" in this country in the period between Presidential elections? Indeed, does such an opposition really exist in this country? Without making the study into an in-depth analysis of the U.S. foreign policy process, to the detriment of the analysis of the other countries, it is not possible to come any further than noting that the European countries and the U.S. differ fundamentally in this respect. The analysis of any U.S. "opposition" has thus been excluded from this paper.

The third actor that I study is the elite media. The media that are of interest to me are those that can be seen as directly participating in the qualified discussion of foreign policy in each country. It is thus the newspapers that the decision-makers and other people who may make an input in the policy debate read that is of interest, rather than the papers of mass circulation. In practical terms, this translates to studying the New York Times and the Washington Post in the United States. In other countries, I have tried to choose papers with different political inclinations. For the U.S. it is not possible to find a conservative elite paper that plays a role that is nearly as important as that played by the New York Times and the Washington Post.
My initial intention was that two additional actors would be included in this study. One of those is the intelligence organizations in the countries chosen. A study of the role of intelligence organizations raises, however, several problems. One is which intelligence organizations should be studied. Second, there is the large problem of access to the material. It is reasonable to assume that it will be difficult to get access to at least some relevant material. Intelligence organizations are thus excluded from this study.

A final group of actors important for the inquiry into how different countries analyze the Soviet Union is the specialists on these issues, the Sovietologists. This again raises at least two problems of magnitudes that are difficult to determine initially. First, who are the most important Sovietologists in each of the five countries? How many should be included for each country? Fifty from the U.S., twenty each from France, the UK and Germany and five from Sweden perhaps? Second, and even more important, how will one researcher be able to study all of the enormous wealth of material that an attempt to work along the lines sketched here would come up with? My tentative decision on this issue is to analyze the Sovietologists in each country who participates in the debate in the elite media that I examine. The underlying supposition is that the Sovietologists are likely to be important participants in this debate. To the extent that they are not, in a country or in a specific paper, then we have an interesting difference between the foreign policy debates, or at least in the way this is covered by the media.

Below, the first results from my study are reported. The official views of the U.S. are regarded as contained in the speeches, or other messages, given by the President, the Secretary of State and the Deputy Secretary, and Under Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries of State as printed in the Department of State Bulletin, the official publication of the Department of State. The official material for Sweden comes from riksdagstrycket, the official parliamentary record. For Sweden, the government position is given by the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, or the designated representative for the government party on foreign policy issues, if other than the two officials stated above. Opposition parties' positions are regarded as expressed by the party leader of the
conservative party, moderaterna, by the party leader of the liberal party, folkpartiet liberalerna, or by the spokesperson the respective party has chosen for a foreign policy debate, if other than the party leader. This material has been studied from the first statements about Gorbachev in the spring of 1985 until the end of June 1988.

In the media part of the study, two newspapers have been studied for each country. For the U.S., the two papers are the New York Times and the Washington Post. For Sweden, the two papers are Dagens Nyheter (=The Daily News), a liberal-leaning morning paper, and Svenska Dagbladet (=The Swedish Daily), a conservative-leaning paper. Due to the volume of the material in the papers on the Soviet Union, and the resulting practical difficulties in studying so large files, a selection has been made. The present paper covers the material in the four papers for March and April 1985, covering the initial reaction to Mr. Gorbachev.

Previous Research

Research on the demise of the Soviet Union is beginning to appear, but many of the first publications are more journalistic than scholarly. Even fewer studies have appeared on how other countries viewed Soviet events and reacted to them. In the latter respect there seems, however, to be much interest in new research.

On the general issue of the making of policy toward the Soviet Union, the bulk of previous research has covered the U.S. The present author has covered much of this literature in two earlier publications. The question of the role of American Sovietologists

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in the U.S. after 1970 has been thoroughly studied by this author’s colleague Bertil Nygren. The fairly short list of other relevant works includes Arnold Buchholz, ed.: Soviet and East European Studies in the International Framework and Carl-Christoph Schweizer, ed.: The Changing Western Analysis of the Soviet Threat.

The only work that this author has encountered so far whose whole approach resembles that of my study is Gilbert Rozman: Japan’s Response to the Gorbachev Era, 1985-1991. The fundamental question posed by the book is stated in the first sentence: "How did Japanese perceptions of the Soviet Union change during the first years of the Gorbachev era?" This is not to say that Rozman’s emphasis is exactly parallel to that of this study. The analysis of Japan and Gorbachev focuses on the Japanese debates and places much less emphasis on the official pronouncements that form an important part of this study. Still, the similarities are large enough to make a perusal of Rozman’s results of interest.

One main finding is that, in Japan, the response to Gorbachev, as analyzed in the debate in monographs, journals and newspapers, can be divided into three periods. They are: the awakening, which lasts from 1985 until the middle of 1987, the uncertainty, lasting

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9 Ibid., p. 3.
from mid-1987 until the middle of 1989, and, finally, confidence, from mid-1989 until the study ends in mid-1991. During the first period "[s]lowly the Japanese were aroused from their stupor in thinking about Moscow. They came to realize that times were indeed changing."\textsuperscript{10} This period ended "when Soviet-American relations abruptly improved"\textsuperscript{11} in the autumn of 1987. The second period "was characterized by rapidly changing concerns and many challenges to old ways of thinking."\textsuperscript{12} The Sino-Soviet summit in June 1989 is chosen as the starting-point of the third cycle of Japanese responses to Gorbachev. This was a period when "Japanese became more assured in their views of Moscow's commitment to change and more interested in looking ahead."\textsuperscript{13}

Rozman's book contains much additional interesting material regarding the analysis of the former Soviet Union and responses to changes in that country's policies. One of these concerns the state of Japanese Sovietology which is found to have greatly expanded throughout the 1980s to the extent that it became very developed.\textsuperscript{14} A second point of interest concerns the way in which the author divides Japanese debate on the former Soviet Union into a continuum from left to right.\textsuperscript{15} Thirdly, Japan appears to have had at least one author, Kiyoshi Nasu, characterized by Dr. Rozman as a "publicist"\textsuperscript{16} belonging to the far-right end of the Japanese spectrum of debate on developments in the Soviet Union. Mr. Nasu published two books, in 1986 and 1987, whose titles at least in retrospect look prophetic. The first one was called \textit{The Collapse of the Soviet Union} and the second was titled \textit{The Collapse of the Soviet Union Is}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{10} Ibid., p. 18.
\item \textsuperscript{11} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{14} See ibid. p. 51-54 and passim.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Ibid., pp. 44-51.
\item \textsuperscript{16} Ibid., p. 44.
\end{itemize}
In the brief characterizations provided of the two books, it is, however, impossible to make any more considered judgment about them.

But the most interesting aspect of Rozman's book is its broadest theme: how the analysis of the former Soviet Union in Japan is rooted in the Japanese foreign policy process. In particular, the singular importance that virtually all strata of Japanese society seem to put on the return of what is called the "Northern Territories," and how this in turn colors all analysis of Moscow, is striking to a non-specialist in Japanese politics. Dr. Rozman makes it abundantly clear how this issue has served to make Japanese opinion at all levels of society extremely skeptical, if not outright hostile, to the regime in Moscow during the post-1945 period. In comparison to other Western countries, this skepticism shows for instance in popular Japanese responses to developments in Moscow and in the reluctance of Japanese business to enter joint-venture agreements in the then-Soviet Union. Among the many indication of this Japanese tendency of skepticism toward the Soviet Union, a poll from the Asahi Shimbun in October 1990, compared U.S. and Japanese attitudes toward Moscow. 70 percent of American respondents believed that the Soviet Union had become a trustworthy country, whereas 56 percent of Japanese believed so, 41 percent of Americans saw the Soviet Government as not very friendly, while 58 percent Japanese held that opinion, 36 percent of Americans identified a lingering Soviet military threat, while 62 percent of Japanese continued to subscribe to this feeling.

**Analysis of the USSR in the U.S.: the Early Years of Gorbachev**

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17 Ibid., p. 106. Both books were published in Japanese and the translation of their titles are provided by Gilbert Rozman.

18 See ibid., pp. 103-104, 247-248 and passim.

19 Ibid., p. 163.
The fundamental issue at the heart of this research concerns whether it is possible to predict accurately the outcome of the process of change most often asserted as having started with the coming to power of Gorbachev in 1985. More precisely, when is it possible to make such a prediction and which type of actor in which country is first able to make it? If there are differences between countries in this respect, how can one explain the relative tardiness, or being right early, in the respective countries? What influence does differences in the foreign policy processes in the respective countries have in this respect? How do the various roles that the actors play in their respective foreign policy processes influence their tendencies to provide predictions on the matters under study? Note that a prediction along the following lines: "In the long run, Soviet society, and thereby Soviet foreign policy, are bound to change fundamentally" is not of any real interest. This is the equivalent of saying "In the long run we will all be dead" which has perfect predictive value, but teaches us nothing new. Predictions have to more precise than that to be of interest.

Making prognoses about policy processes as multi-faceted as those taking place in the Soviet Union, and its former Warsaw Pact allies, after 1985 is to be sure a very difficult matter. One should, therefore, not expect too much from the material surveyed here. Apart from this general problem there are more specific aspects that are apt to make some actors more careful than others in their analysis of foreign countries. It is, for example, reasonable to assume a more careful attitude by a politician in power, who has to think of the state of the bilateral relationship, as compared to an opposition spokesmen who can be expected to have greater chances to speak more freely. Additionally, ideological preferences can, as mentioned above, work in various ways on this ability to make prognoses. In broad terms, socialists may have been more sympathetic toward the strivings of the leadership in the former Soviet Union to change their society, and thus be able to identify the existence of such aspirations early. On the other hand they may also have a kind of bias that inclined to believe in a positive outcome, for the Soviet Union, of these processes than was perhaps warranted. Conservatives, for their part, may perhaps be expected to be more inclined to be
skeptical about the substance of changes in Moscow, but once they see such changes under way they may find it easier to offer the prognosis that they will end badly for the Soviets.

The tone of the initial official U.S. response to Mr. Gorbachev's rise to power was set by Secretary of State George Shultz at a press conference on March 15, 1985, just a few days after Mr. Gorbachev's selection, which occurred March 11, 1985. Shultz said that "continuity" was what should be expected of the new leader. Simultaneously he added that Mr. Gorbachev gave the impression of being more "businesslike" than his predecessors, but that this did not necessarily mean that the chances for "substantive" progress in relations between the two countries had increased. Furthermore he emphasized that it was the fundamental interests of countries that mattered, rather than the personalities who happened to occupy positions at the top.20

When various arms control proposals started to come from Moscow during the early months of Gorbachev's control the U.S. reaction was well summed up by Michael Armacost, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, who spoke in September 1985: "In coping with problems of arms control, propagandistic offers of moratoria are not the answer."21

The "fireside summit" in Geneva in November 1985 was characterized by the officials as a step forward mainly in the sense that it was the result of a continuing process of interchange between the parties, a process to which Moscow was accepted as having made a positive contribution. But during all of 1985, there is in the material no acknowledgment that what was happening in the Soviet Union was anything more than


21 DSB, November 1985, p.58.
possibly a subtle shift in traditional policies that otherwise mostly continued without change.

One of the first overall assessments by an official about Mr. Gorbachev's policies came from Under Secretary Armacost who spoke on the subject in April 1986. Two sentences capture the essence of his speech: "To date...these changes appear to be tactical rather than substantive. Mr. Gorbachev has injected new energy into the implementation of policies that are reasonably familiar." Mr. Armacost also stated that the expectations of the Geneva meeting in November 1985 had not been fulfilled six months later.

In June 1986, President Reagan said that the Soviets "appear to have begun to make a serious effort" in arms control. Apart from this, his speech was a repetition of his old views of the Soviet state.

In October of 1986 there followed that strange episode in what used to known as Superpower relations called Reykjavik. For months, it was very unclear what had really happened at the meeting and the newspapers published in the weeks after the event contained many articles trying to delve into this matter.

In the early assessments, the dominant theme of the official U.S. response was, in the words of the President, "the current summit process is very different from that of previous decades..." this was ultimately due to "the hard work and sacrifice of the American people during the last 5 1/2 years."

A more measured assessment from the Administration came on October 31, 1986 nearly three weeks after the Reykjavik meeting, in two speeches given by Secretary Shultz in

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22 DSB, June 1986, pp. 63-64.
23 DSB, September 1986, p. 22.
California. The emphasis in these speeches was, however, essentially the same as in the attempts made immediately after the event to draw the lessons from the meeting. In other words, the official U.S. line was that the "policies of strength" pursued by the Reagan Administration had led the Soviet Union to follow a more sensible course. There was, however, no recognition that Gorbachev may have started a process that was going to lead to a transformation of his country. On the human rights issues, Shultz stated that there had been releases of Soviet dissidents from various forms of detention, but this "does not represent a fundamental change in the Soviet system or in Soviet human rights policies."\(^{25}\) There was no attempt made in these speeches to make any projections about what may happen in the future to the Soviet Union and its policies.

In the State of the Union speech that Ronald Reagan gave in January 1987 he gave examples of how the Soviet Union used its troops and military advisers abroad and added "can anyone still doubt their single-minded determination to expand their power?"\(^{26}\) In a message, also issued in January, to the Congress entitled *A Quest for Excellence* the President stated that "in the Soviet Union today there is much talk of change. We must hope for a true break with the past, but we see both hopeful and discouraging signs, especially in the critical area of human rights."\(^{27}\) For Mr. Reagan, early 1987 was thus a time when the old certainties of "Soviet expansionism" coexisted with an awareness that the "evil empire" was indeed changing. But U.S. officials seemed genuinely uncertain about where all these changes may eventually lead, and whether they were mostly tactical or really substantive.

During the early spring of 1987 the movement toward an agreement on intermediate-range nuclear weapons (INF) increased speed, with several Soviet concessions. Deputy Secretary of State John Whitehead acknowledged some of these in March 1987, as well

\(^{25}\) [DSB, December 1986, p. 27.]

\(^{26}\) [DSB, March 1987, p. 5.]

\(^{27}\) [DSB, April 1987, p.1.]
as some liberalization of Soviet cultural policies, but again without linking this to any broader processes of Soviet change. During the remainder of the spring and early summer there were additional speeches on the details of the emerging INF agreement, all acknowledging new concessions from Mr. Gorbachev, all without attempting to put these actions into a broader context.

The first assessment of change in the USSR that indicated awareness that the alterations led by Gorbachev were clearly more than mere tactics or atmospherics were made by U.S. officials in early 1988, after the conclusion of the INF Treaty. There are interesting speeches by Secretary Shultz, by Deputy Secretary of State John Whitehead and by the President himself. The most wide-ranging of these was given by Secretary Shultz in Seattle on February 5, 1988. The ever-present emphasis on the correctness of U.S. foreign policy that was seen as one basic cause of the Soviet changes was again in evidence. But there were other elements as well. The essence of the Secretary's analysis is caught by the following quotes: "By the end of the President's first term, the United States and the West had begun to shape new conditions. Even before Mikhail Gorbachev became General Secretary, the Soviet Union had begun to respond." And later he stated: "Increasingly, Soviet citizens - and ultimately, their leaders - came to realize that the Soviet system was no longer working and that the Soviet Union risked falling further behind. The process of coming to terms with present-day realities accelerated once General Secretary Gorbachev came to power." On the agreements that had been reached between the superpowers, the Secretary said: "...the truth is that the agreements that have been reached recently and the prospects for future progress are founded in American 'new thinking' and innovation, both in our broad strategy and in our solutions

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29 DSB, April 1988, p. 40.
30 Ibid.
to specific problems." On the prospects for the future development of the bilateral relationship with Moscow, the Secretary had this to say: "I find it difficult to believe that our relations with the Soviet Union will ever be 'normal' in the sense that we have normal relations with most other countries...It seems unlikely that the U.S.-Soviet relationship will ever lose what has always been and is today a strongly wary and at times adversarial element." He continued, "On the Soviet side there may be - for the first time ever and as a result of necessity - a willingness to reexamine Soviet security and other interests in ways that are closer to international norms." His overall assessment of the process of Soviet change as it stood in early 1988 was as follows: "The Soviet system is just beginning an attempt at economic reform. It has barely scratched the surface of structural political reform. We have not seen changes that suggest the Soviet Union has altered its historical objective of altering the international system to its advantage."

In a speech in January 1988, Deputy Secretary Whitehead covered developments in Eastern Europe: "The Eastern Europe we have known since World War II is on the verge of dramatic change." Later in his speech, he identified the driving forces behind this change: "The impulse to change is a constant generated from within and is reinforced from outside. Improved U.S.-Soviet relations and the INF Treaty that is one tangible result of that improvement, have eased tensions in Europe, East and West. The Soviet Union itself, under General Secretary Gorbachev, has altered the rules of the game. No longer the ham-handed enforcer of Stalinist doctrines of central planing, Gorbachev's Soviet Union is promoting economic and political reforms in the countries

31 Ibid., p. 41.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid.
34 DSB, April 1988, p. 66.
Ronald Reagan himself summed up official U.S. views on the three first years of Gorbachev in a speech in Springfield, Massachusetts, on April 21, 1988. On the Soviet agreement to withdraw their forces from Afghanistan, Reagan stated: "The Soviets have rarely before, and not at all in more than three decades, left a country they once occupied...We believe that they still hope to prop up their discredited, doomed puppet regime, and they still seek to pose a threat to neighboring Pakistan...So we ask, have the Soviets really given up these ambitions? We do not know. We cannot know until the drama is fully played." On changes in Soviet foreign policy more generally, Reagan continued: "Some say the Soviet Union is reappraising its foreign policy these days to concentrate on political reforms. Clearly, there are signs of change. But if there is change, it is because the costs of change and the real moral difference between our systems were brought home to it. If we hope to see a more fundamental change, we must remain strong and firm. If we fulfill our responsibility to set the limits, as well as offering constructive cooperation, this could, indeed, turn out to be a turning point in the history of East-West relations."

On the eve of the summit in Moscow in late spring of 1988, the official American spokesmen thus acknowledged important changes in Soviet behavior. How extensive these changes might eventually turn out to be was not clearly assessed publicly by them. What was clear to them, if judged on the basis of their speeches, was that Western, and particularly U.S., policies were crucial for causing the changes that had already taken place by that time. And a continuation of these policies was regarded as equally crucial if future changes in Soviet policies were to continue in a positive direction.

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35 Ibid.

36 DSB, July 1988, p.2.

37 Ibid., p.3.
The Political Analysis in Sweden 1985-1988

For Swedish political reactions to the events in Moscow my main source is the parliamentary record. There are three main events on the parliamentary calendar that may lead the government, or the opposition parties, to make statements with relevance to my research. They are, first, the government's declaration about its policies that is given at the start of each parliamentary year in October. Second, it is the general political debate, in which the party leaders participate, which is held twice a year, in October and February or March. Third, it is the foreign policy debate that is held every spring. In addition, there may of course be other occasions on which foreign policy is debated, but the three events mentioned are clearly the most important.

Previous research shows that the debate on foreign and security policy in Sweden is mainly kept within a fairly small circle of decision-makers. There has traditionally been pressure on most participants in this debate to adhere fairly closely to what has been the basic guideline for Swedish foreign policy after 1945 that is summed up in the doctrine: "Non-alignment in peace, aiming toward neutrality in war." To some extent the government of the day was able to apply pressure on other participants in the debate on these issues to adhere fairly closely to the government line by pointing to the risks involved in appearing to lean too closely to one side or the other in the cold war between the then two Superpowers.

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38 It should be noted here that the Swedish political material needs to be complemented by official statements published in the Foreign Ministry publications series Utrikesfrågor (=Foreign Policy Questions) and by official policy statements issued by the two opposition parties. These publications are not available to the author here in Berkeley.

During the fall of 1985, the pertinent debate in the Swedish parliament concerned the intrusions by foreign submarines, which were widely believed to be Soviet submarines. In addition, the Soviet invasion of, and continuing warfare in, Afghanistan was taken up, particularly by the opposition parties. The first really positive note about the policies of Gorbachev was struck by Prime Minister Olof Palme in the general parliamentary debate in February 1986. Palme said that "The government has with interest taken part in the suggestion by General Secretary Gorbachev for a program regarding the abolition of nuclear arms by the year 2000." The Soviet decision to continue the temporary ban on nuclear testing was similarly welcomed. There was, however, no attempt made to analyze Soviet policies more broadly. In a speech in the debate on foreign policy in March of 1986 the foreign minister, Sten Andersson, continued the denouncements of Soviet policies in Afghanistan.

The first broader assessment of the evolution of Soviet foreign policy made in a speech in the Swedish parliament was made by the politician who has been the most important Swedish voice on international affairs after the death of Olof Palme, the present (December 1992) Prime Minister, Carl Bildt, the Chairman of the Conservative Party. In his speech in the foreign policy debate on March 19, 1986, Mr. Bildt made three main points in the section that dealt with the USSR. The first was that the relationship between the superpowers had improved during the past year, largely because of Soviet concessions. These new moves, however, coexisted with many old aspects of aggressive Soviet behavior, such as Afghanistan. The second point he made was that the basic cause of these Russian foreign policy concessions was to be found in "threat from the SDI."

40 Protokoll 1985/86:70, February 5, 1986, p. 37 (Swedish Parliamentary Proceedings, hereafter: Prot., year, and date). All translations from Swedish are made by this author.


as he put it. The third point was that, in his domestic policies as evidenced by the 27th Party Congress, General Secretary Gorbachev pursued, "highly disciplined reformism."\textsuperscript{43} Overall, Mr. Bildt thus identified a process of change in both Soviet foreign and domestic policies, but that these were very limited and that Mr. Gorbachev kept total control over the process. There was no sense whatever in this early speech that the speaker analyzed a process that would eventually have vital consequences, for the Soviet Union itself and for its environment.

In the same foreign policy debate, one spokesperson for the government, Ambassador Maj-Britt Theorin said that in the debate on a permanent ban on the testing of nuclear weapons, the Soviet side "has expressed a greater willingness to accept far-reaching control mechanisms."\textsuperscript{44}

The general policy debate of October 22, 1986, contained a few careful references to the Reykjavik summit. The tone was generally positive regarding the hopes for future nuclear arms control conveyed by the meeting, but the details were few.

Foreign Minister Sten Andersson's assessment of superpower relations in the foreign policy debate on March 18, 1987, clearly showed one trait that is common to Swedish analysis of superpower relations, whether this is carried out by politicians or analysts in the media. This is a tendency, shown by many politicians and other analysts from the center to the left of the political spectrum, to view the two powers in similar terms, to equate them in many respects as international actors, as the Superpowers. This follows the tradition in Swedish foreign policy established by Olof Palme. The tradition was first

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., p. 13.

established in Palme's first foreign policy speech as a member of Government in July 1965. Palme continued this tradition even during the years of détente, when he pointed out that a relaxation of tensions between Moscow and Washington could lead to a condominium where they decided over the small states.

In addition to this aspect Sten Andersson's speech of March 18, 1987, contained several points that identified new policies by Moscow: "From the Soviet Union there are ever clearer signals about the need for change in Soviet society. A greater openness and a freer debate, as well as increased popular participation in a country like the Soviet Union, is good for all the peoples of Europe." Concerning the bilateral relationship he stated: "We can note today that we have come closer to the solution of some of the problems in the relationship between Sweden and the Soviet Among these problems was the exchange of information regarding nuclear accidents, the final drawing of the economic boundary between the two countries in the Baltic Sea, and the incursions of submarines into Swedish territorial waters. On the latter question, official Swedish statements during the period continually noted the problem but never mention the Soviet Union by name. Overall the Foreign Minister's speech in March 1987 noted several changes in Soviet policies, but did not attempt to put them in perspective or to suggest where he thought they might eventually lead.

In the same foreign policy debate referred to above, Mr. Bildt also discussed Soviet foreign policies. He chose to do so nearly exclusively in a superpower context, without

45 See Nils Andrén and Yngve Möller: Från Undén till Palme: Svensk utrikespolitik efter andra världskriget (=From Undén to Palme: Swedish Foreign Policy after the Second World War), Stockholm: Norstedts, 1990, pp.80-85

46 Ibid., pp.84-85.


48 Ibid.
really analyzing the further evolution of Soviet policies. The general tone of his assessment of Soviet behavior was similar to the one he made a year earlier.49

The spokesman for the Liberal Party, Ingemar Eliasson, also identified changes in Soviet policies and said that: "It would be unwise to dismiss all signs of a greater openness and liberation of critics of the regime as merely propaganda efforts."50 In addition, Mr. Eliasson noted with satisfaction a proposal by Moscow to reduce drastically INF missiles in Europe.

Eliasson thus continued the main trend of the Swedish political debate during the first two years of Gorbachev's reign. On the one hand, from early 1986 on spokespersons for both the Government and the two opposition parties identified changes in Soviet foreign and domestic policies, changes that were characterized as going further than being mere cosmetic or propaganda moves. Only one occasion, in the speech by Carl Bildt in March 1986, was any attempt made to explain these changes. Mr. Bildt identified the threat the Soviets saw from SDI as their cause. But no prediction was ever made during this time of where the whole process of change might lead.

On the other hand, the Swedish politicians invariably identified several aspects of continuity in Soviet foreign and domestic policies: Afghanistan, the immense base complexes on the Kola peninsula which is close to Sweden, the tension in the Northern Waters, which partly resulted from the Soviet bases on the peninsula, and continued aspects of domestic repression.

During the parliamentary year 1987/88 events led the Swedish politicians to be more wide-ranging in their assessments. Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson noted with satisfaction the deal between the superpowers to abolish land-based medium-range

50 Ibid., p. 17.
nuclear missiles in his "Government Declaration" given on October 6, 1987.\textsuperscript{51} This is a statement given by each Swedish government on the very first day of each parliamentary year that outlines policies and issues facing the government.

In a general political debate two weeks later, on October 21, 1987, Carl Bildt, the Conservative leader, went further. He noted an essay by the German historian Michael Stürmer that said that the architecture of European security was going to change. Bildt's assessment was: "In the short run, I believe that he is wrong. But in the long run there is no doubt that he is actually right."\textsuperscript{52} In addition, Mr. Bildt returned to the assessment of Soviet affairs that he made eighteen months earlier. "Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika is a necessary attempt to modernize a society that has grown stale to the degree that the Soviet Union's very status as a superpower may be threatened. If he succeeds, the Soviet Union may remain or perhaps even develop as a strong and powerful superpower with all the demands that this carries with it. If he doesn't succeed the gap in relation to the West will continue to increase and the Soviet Union will progressively deteriorate into an overmilitarized society in an ever clearer decline."\textsuperscript{53} In addition he said that "Glasnost and perestroika do not mean that the fundamental security interests of the Soviet state changes or that the eternal Russian security strivings in various directions has suddenly ceased."\textsuperscript{54} Finally, Mr. Bildt turned to the European part of the Soviet empire: ".we are entering a stage where fundamental questions about the future in Central and Eastern Europe in all likelihood must be posed once again. Because the shells of states that Soviet power has constructed are beginning to look ever more brittle - the German

\textsuperscript{51} Prot. 1987/88:2, October 6, 1987, p. 47.
\textsuperscript{52} Prot. 1987/88:11, October 21, 1987, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., pp. 7-8.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., p. 8.
Democratic Republic with a new awareness of aspects of common Germanity, the Poland of ever deeper societal crisis, the ossified party system in Czechoslovakia.\textsuperscript{55}

This remarkable speech marks the first time in this material in which a politician in either Sweden or the U.S. in a public speech clearly identifies all of the ramifications of the political process that Mikhail Gorbachev started in March of 1985. Both domestic and foreign policy aspects of Soviet behavior were covered, as well as the likely consequences for Central and Eastern Europe. Still, while Gorbachev's political experiment is clearly identified as epoch-making, Mr. Bildt's prognosis is hedged: the process of change is unmistakable, its ramifications enormous, but its outcome is unclear, as is the timing of the changes that are likely to follow.

\textit{The First Months of Gorbachev in Four Newspapers}

The final section of preliminary results from the research I have carried out in Berkeley covers my study of four newspapers, two Swedish and two U.S. The objective is to analyze two of the elite newspapers in Sweden as well as in the U.S. In other words, I am interested in the newspapers that the political elite in each country reads. For the U.S. I have chosen the \textit{New York Times} and the \textit{Washington Post}. For Sweden I have chosen \textit{Dagens Nyheter} (=the Daily News) and \textit{Svenska Dagbladet} (=the Swedish Daily). In the Swedish case these two papers represent two distinct political viewpoints, with \textit{Dagens Nyheter} being "independently liberal" and \textit{Svenska Dagbladet} being "independently conservative." In practical political terms, this translates to a support for the liberal party on the editorial page of \textit{Dagens Nyheter} whereas the same page in \textit{Svenska Dagbladet} supports the conservative party.

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., pp. 7-8.
The period that I have covered is two months in 1985, March and April, for all four newspapers. In addition, in this exploratory study I have included May 1985 for both Swedish newspapers. For these months, I have studied all articles that deal with Soviet politics. The reason that has guided the selection of periods is that the months covered should correspond to phases when important events were taking place in the Soviet Union, or in what used to be known as Superpower relations. The initial period thus covers the installation of Mr. Gorbachev as the General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party on March 11, 1985. The second period will cover the months around the summit between Mr. Gorbachev and President Reagan in Reykjavik, Iceland, on October 11-12, 1986 and the third will be December 1987 and January 1988, with the INF Treaty being signed in December 1987.

The American newspapers cannot be so clearly labeled as supporting a distinct political view as the Swedish papers can, but both papers chosen lean toward the liberal end of the American political spectrum. In party political terms this generally means that the two papers editorial positions are closer to the views of Democrats than of Republicans.

The level of coverage of this story, or rather stories, is very high indeed. On March 12, 1985, the day after Konstantin Chernenko died, the New York Times contained twenty-one articles that mentioned Mikhail Gorbachev's name and the Washington Post contained eighteen. In the U.S. case, I have used a computer search. For Swedish newspapers such a search is not possible since newspapers, to my knowledge, may not be stored in their totality on computer data banks and then by searched by the public. In the Swedish case I have thus had to rely on looking at the microfilm of each individual issue which is of course a very tedious process.

56 All results are based on computer searches of the full-text files for both newspapers on the Lexis/Nexis system, searching on the term "Gorbachev."
Much of the coverage in the newspapers from both countries of course contains the usual news stories of no particular interest for my project. But, beyond these regular stories about the comings and goings of officials and about their various pronouncements, there are stories that delve deeper and which, sometimes, try to make the types of prognoses that is of special interest for me. Perhaps the earliest such article is a long piece by Serge Schmemann, the *New York Times* correspondent in Moscow, which ran on Sunday, March 3, 1985, in the magazine section, one week before Gorbachev's accession to power.\(^57\) The article identified a man from a new generation of Soviets who both generationally and personally seemed to hold out the promise for change in the country's policies. But the prediction for change was very vague and the strong elements of inertia in the system were clearly pointed out. Particularly in the field of foreign policy, the author points out the obstacles to change in Soviet policy. The first editorial in the paper after the Soviet succession was similarly cautious.\(^58\)

The pages of the *New York Times* also give a glimpse of the role that Sovietologists played in the policy debate in this country on relations with Moscow. On the day after Chernenko's death, the op-ed page of the paper contained an article by Marshall I. Goldman, a professor who was associate director of the Russian Research Center at Harvard. Professor Goldman finished his article with the following sentences: "The rapidity of Mr. Gorbachev's appointment indicates he may be able to consolidate power sooner than expected. If he masters the system - rather than its mastering him - this may augur bold moves in domestic and foreign policy. Don't bet on it."\(^59\)

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On March 12, 1985, the New York Times also contained a fairly long article with brief quotes from several important Sovietologists, such as George Kennan, Arnold Horelick of RAND and UCLA, Robert C. Tucker of Princeton, Adam Ulam of Harvard, Marshall Shulman of Columbia and Jerry Hough of Duke University and Brookings. It is obvious that the paper's pages are very open to the views of those who are considered experts on the matter.

The following weeks contain many, many new articles on Gorbachev and the Soviet Union, prominently including analyses of the Soviet economy and its problems. In its second editorial on the Soviet Union after Chernenko's death the New York Times on March 17 went further than in its first editorial in realizing that this new leader was truly, as it stated, "the boldest new Soviet man [the Bolsheviks] could find." Still, the enormous obstacles to change were again highlighted. Marshall Shulman, in a book review of an "instant" book on Gorbachev, also wrote about the pressures on the Sovietologists to come up with instant predictions of what succession might mean: "There really is more to the study of the Soviet Union than predictions served up like fast-food hamburgers, but the media descend and demand to know what is going to happen (preferably in 30 seconds or less) we try to please, because it may be a long time now before the spotlight comes our way again."

These worries about premature speculation were not heeded by Professor Shulman's colleagues. Instead, on March 21, 1985, there appeared two articles on the op-ed page entitled: "How Soon Will Gorbachev Have Real Clout?" One of them was written by Professor Jerry Hough and the other by Arkady Shevchenko, a former Soviet diplomat.

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61 NYT, March 17, 1985, p. 4:22.
who had recently emigrated to America. Professor Hough's subtitle was "Give Him Six Months," whereas Mr. Shevchenko predicted that "He'll Move Slowly."

A month into the Gorbachev era the NYT reported that the Sovietologists had identified a new decisiveness in the Kremlin, whereas the Administration tended to downplay any appearance of change in Soviet policy.⁶⁴

The early coverage of the story in the Washington Post is fairly similar to that in the New York Times. The Post's first judgments were cautious, a similar group of Sovietologists as in the other paper was interviewed and caution was reported to reign among responsible U.S. officials. One difference between the two newspapers in covering this story, at least if judged by the first few months, is that the Times seems to invite and accept more articles from Sovietologists outside the newspaper, whereas the Post to a greater degree relies on analysts on its own staff and on its regular columnists. Among the latter George Will, who must be regarded as the most conservative of the columnists who comment upon foreign policy issues in the paper, is very skeptical about any chances for real change in Soviet policies that may emanate from a Kremlin led by Gorbachev, or indeed from that seat of government under any Communist Party leader.⁶⁵

The most interesting of these early articles in the Washington Post was written by Robert G. Kaiser, then an associate editor, on March 17, 1985:⁶⁶ "Because of ossification, it's easy to predict that the Soviet Union under Gorbachev won't change -- easy, but wrong.


There will be change, both in domestic and foreign policies. There will be a dramatic change in the international image of the Soviet Union...The changes could be substantial, and they could start to come very quickly." Kaiser even attempted more precise prognosis: "A new era does not mean a transformed Soviet Union. It will remain a relatively poor, technologically backward, insecure, overarmed, politically ambitious and troublesome world power." Near the end of the long article, Kaiser wrote: "There is no prospect that the Soviet economy can be remade into a technological powerhouse competitive with Japan or the United States. It is entirely possible that Mikhail Gorbachev has inherited power in the Kremlin at a time when the Soviet Union has begun an inexorable decline."

In the Swedish papers there were a couple of bilateral Swedish-Soviet issues covered besides general assessment of Soviet society and politics and of superpower relations. One of these bilateral issues was the question of incursion of submarines into Swedish territorial waters. Of these incursions, at least two were officially regarded by Swedish authorities as having been undertaken by the Soviet Union. A second bilateral issue was the situation in the Baltic Sea, where the boundaries between the two countries economic zones were unclear. A third residual category was issues about alleged spying by the Soviet Union, or other East Bloc countries, against Sweden.

The conservative morning paper that I have studied, Svenska Dagbladet, gave much emphasis to Soviet affairs during March, April and May 1985, with many front page articles, editorials and other articles on the editorial page being devoted to the subject. The early reaction of the paper and its correspondents can only be described as a strong skepticism toward the hopes for change in Soviet policy that were expressed in many quarters in the West. A few comments by the papers Moscow correspondent, Bobo Scheutz, in an article on March 17, 1985, suggests the paper's views: "The generational change of power that one may possibly be tempted to believe has taken place as a result of the coming to power of the 54 year old Mikhail Gorbachev, will take time to be carried out." And further, "A possible change in the forms will, however, not change the
substance of Soviet foreign policy." The coverage in Svenska Dagbladet is a case where bilateral issues in Stockholm-Moscow relations are strongly linked to the broader question of developments in Soviet policies and in Superpower relations.

The two Swedish Sovietologists who published relevant articles during these three spring months, Kristian Gerner and Stefan Hedlund, were similarly skeptical about the possibilities for Gorbachev really to change the system and its policies, even if he wanted to. An article in early May by the Moscow correspondent, Mr. Scheutz, acknowledged that many articles in the Soviet press had pointed to societal shortcomings of various kinds ever since Gorbachev's ascent to power. The sole result of this, thus far, was, according to the correspondent, "...the unleashing of a wave of more or less well-founded hopes - both in the East and in the West - that the enormous Soviet Union is on the threshold of a fundamental change of course."  

The conservative leader, Mr. Bildt, also wrote two relevant articles during the period, both concerning Swedish defense planning. In the articles, the threat from Soviet military might played a prominent role.

The liberal elite paper, Dagens Nyheter, covered the same ground as Svenska Dagbladet during March, April and May 1985. The only difference in emphasis is that bilateral issues in category espionage etc., was less covered by the liberal paper than by the conservative one. Dagens Nyheter was also very skeptical during these months regarding what change Gorbachev may really bring, but it was a nuance more positive than Svenska Dagbladet. In an editorial on April 27, 1985, the paper wrote: "Mikhail Gorbachev has given the highest leadership of the Soviet Union a new style. The

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68 SvD, May 4, 1985, p. 5.

Brezhnev era's image of a sterile rule by party bosses is gone."™ The paper continued, "Mikhail Gorbachev has, to an even greater degree than Jurij Andropov, 'charmed' Western media. This is not without foundation." And yet, the paper concluded: "But he is the leader of a thoroughly bureaucratized and centrally planned society. How far he really wants to - and is able to - soften it up remains to be seen. He is also at the helm of a frightening totalitarian system. This will not change - even marginally."™

Conclusion

One early result that is evident from this preliminary look at the material is that the actors conform largely to the roles that one can expect them to play. The American Sovietologists, when given the chance, gladly take up the challenge to provide more or less instant prognosis of the exciting new actor they see in the Kremlin. But their identification of the vitality of the new leader is hedged by strong emphasis upon the obstacles that stand in the way of any attempts he might undertake to change the vital aspects of Soviet foreign or domestic policy. The U.S. media are fairly close to the Sovietologists in their assessments, with an emphasis on the activities of the new leader, coupled with a professed awareness of the problems that he faces in trying to accomplish something new. The official U.S. representatives also conform to what one may expect. At first they were very wary of identifying anything that is really new, characterizing the early months as a change in only "atmospherics." Once this line of presentation became untenable, their mode of presentation changed. There was, from the second half of 1987 on, acknowledgment that Gorbachev indeed meant something new to Soviet foreign policies, but that the alterations that he had undertaken were clearly a response to the correct policies pursued by the Reagan Administration. The emphasis is on the


™ Ibid.
interaction between actors as the U.S. politicians see it, rather than on deeper structural causes of Soviet foreign policy change. On those few occasions when U.S. policymakers analyzed domestic affairs in the USSR, other than the frequently mentioned human rights issues, they tended to emphasize a broader more long-term process of societal decay, rather than a process initiated afresh by Mr. Gorbachev.

The caution shown in the statements of the U.S. politicians would appear to give credence to my initial supposition that it would be reasonable to expect a careful attitude from this quarter in their analysis of Gorbachev's first years. Three factors seem to account for this circumspection. First, the ideological predisposition on the part of the representatives of a country that stood for values almost totally opposite those still espoused by the Soviet leader. Second, the tendency rather to err on the side of caution when it comes to publicly describing the only state that in modern times has had the ability to obliterate the U.S. as a functioning society. Third, the tendency of officials generally, wherever they come from, to speak with caution when they discuss fundamental questions of foreign policy.

Swedish politicians were also rather careful in their early assessments of the changes that emanated from Moscow. They noted with satisfaction the new flexibility in superpower affairs they saw from Gorbachev, but largely refrained from putting this into any larger context, at least if one is to judge only from their interventions in the Swedish Parliament. The one exception was the Conservative Party leader, Carl Bildt, who, particularly in a speech in October 1987, clearly identified also potential dimensions for change opened up by Gorbachev and events in the Soviet Union. Bildt's assessment identified both actors, in this case the U.S., and structures, the immense problems of the Soviet system, as causes behind the changes. He was clear that the scope of where this process might eventually lead was enormous, but simultaneously he did not really make any clear prognosis in his October 1987 speech.
The Swedish media showed more differences between them in their coverage of Soviet affairs in the spring of 1985 than did the two U.S. newspapers. The pessimism about the changes for Soviet change was clearly greater in the conservative paper *Svenska Dagbladet* than it was in the liberal *Dagens Nyheter*, even if the latter also put a clear limit on how far it thought the changes undertaken by Gorbachev might lead. The image projected by the conservative paper was buttressed by the assessments of two Sovietologists who published articles during these months. One possible explanation for the difference between the coverage in the two pages is the strong connection made in the conservative paper between bilateral issues in Swedish-Soviet relations and the broader issues involved.

The ground that I have covered in my study so far has been statements by politicians through the spring of 1988 and coverage by the newspapers only through the spring of 1985. In this material it is, not surprisingly, difficult to find any prognosis that accurately reflects all of the end results that the reign of Gorbachev will have. Perhaps Carl Bildt came closest in his speech of October 1987. But to the extent that his pronouncements could be regarded as any prognosis, it was fairly imprecise. A speech by Deputy Secretary of State John Whitehead in early 1988 contained phrases similar to those of Carl Bildt when it came to looking at possible changes in Central and Eastern Europe. George Shultz also made interesting speeches in early 1988, but his emphasis was more on the correctness of U.S. policies in bringing about changes in the Soviet Union than in any analysis of the real scope of what was happening in Moscow.

It is clear that differences in the perceived world roles of the two countries, as well as differences in their foreign policy styles, accounted for some of the contrasts in their respective analysis of what was going on in the Soviet Union. For the American policymakers, and to some extent for the U.S. media as well, the role that Washington played in the developments was always very prominent in the public analysis. While internal developments were not completely neglected, they played a decidedly peripheral role in the American description of the events unfolding in Superpower relations. But when
the American representatives occasionally took a step back and gave more wide-ranging assessments of Soviet development, the role of domestic developments within the "other superpower" were highlighted alongside the self-congratulatory statements about the importance of the "correctness" of U.S. policies.

For the Swedes, there were few attempts made in the material that I have surveyed for this study to do more than make a tour d'horizon of unfolding events without any attempt being made to analyze this in depth. This appears to be a continuation of the previously mentioned Swedish tendency to be careful and closely follow the consensus line on security policy in the vast majority of cases. The one clear exception to this was the Swedish politician with probably the greatest political sympathies of any leading Swedish political actor for the Reagan Administration, the Conservative leader Carl Bildt. He did not exhibit any tendency to have to stick to traditional caution in his analysis. One explanation is that the Swedish Conservative party has never fully accepted the constraints on the Swedish debate about security policy that other parties, underpinned by the always strong Social Democratic Party, have tended to follow. Mr. Bildt, who has consistently had a very strong personal interest in matters of security policy, can be surmised to have been especially prone to speak out on his own on these matters. Second, for this Swedish politician, not a Socialist, the ideological constraints that are assumed to have worked to restrain both an American conservative and a Swedish Social Democrat in identifying how far the processes of change in Moscow might lead, were not in existence. Third, Mr. Bildt was at the time of his speeches in opposition, and thus not hindered by the special rules that are often assumed to work on official spokesmen to be careful about what they say on matters that can be perceived to have fundamental security importance.