Interviews by Soviet Officials in the Western Media

Two Case Studies

John Van Oudenaren
The research described in this report was supported in part by
The Ford Foundation under Grant No. 840-0289 and in part by
The Rand Corporation in accordance with its program of
public service.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Van Oudenaren, John.
   Interviews by Soviet officials in the western
media.
   “October 1985.”
   “R-3328-FF/RC.”
   Bibliography: p.
   1. Soviet Union—Foreign relations—1975-.
   Addresses, essays, lectures. 2. World politics—
1985-1995—Addresses, essays, lectures. 3. Arms
control—Addresses, essays, lectures. 4. Title.
DK289.V6 1985 327.08'047 85-25646

The Rand Publication Series. The Report is the principal
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Published by The Rand Corporation
Interviews by Soviet Officials in the Western Media

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October 1985

Supported by a grant from The Ford Foundation
PREFACE

This report examines some 190 interviews by two Soviet officials, Vadim Zagladin and Georgi Arbatov, which appeared in the American, Japanese, and West European press after 1976. The purpose of the examination is to gain insights into Soviet thinking by analyzing a new source of data and to shed light on a new aspect of Soviet international behavior with implications for Western policy. The study should be of interest to specialists on Soviet foreign policy as well as to news organizations and government officials.

The report was written with support from The Ford Foundation and from The Rand Corporation, using its own funds. In Rand's National Security Research Division, Ford-sponsored projects are designed to extend beyond the immediate needs of government research sponsors by investigating long-term or emerging problems and by developing and assessing new research methodologies. Ford support is also being used to further the publication of relevant sponsored research that would otherwise not be disseminated to the general public.
SUMMARY

This report analyzes interviews by Soviet officials that have appeared in the American, West European, and Japanese media. Although Soviet leaders have given interviews to foreign correspondents since the 1930s, officials below the rank of General Secretary and Premier became available to the Western press only in the 1970s.

The report concentrates on the interviews of two officials, Vadim Zagladin of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, and Georgi Arbatov of the Institute for the Study of the United States and Canada, who are believed to be influential foreign-policy advisers. It analyzes pronouncements by these two officials on seven general topics: missiles in Europe, Afghanistan, the crisis in Poland, the likelihood of war, attitudes toward the United States, the global balance, and the international role of Western Europe and Japan. It also draws tentative conclusions about the overall world views of these officials as they are reflected in the interviews.

These two officials apparently support the Soviet line on all issues, and there appear to be no significant differences between them with regard to policy. However, they emphasize different aspects of international questions and view the same events from somewhat different perspectives. Arbatov places a heavy emphasis on military and especially strategic nuclear matters, appears to be emotionally anti-American, consistently dramatizes the danger of nuclear war, and often explains Soviet behavior in terms of alleged Soviet “encirclement” and a history of Soviet and Russian insecurity. In contrast, Zagladin is far less interested in military questions and stresses instead the political implications of military developments. Although he opposes all aspects of U.S. policy, he seems less emotionally anti-American than Arbatov. Zagladin focuses less on the purported danger of nuclear war and justifies Soviet policy less on the basis of historical insecurities than on positive Soviet objectives such as the promotion of a “European security order” and support for “revolutionary forces” throughout the world. In contrast to Arbatov, Zagladin views international developments through an explicitly orthodox Marxist-Leninist framework.

The report concludes that interviews with the non-Communist foreign press are perceived by the Soviets as an effective means of pursuing foreign-policy objectives. But while the interviews give the Soviets unprecedented access to Western audiences, they do not allow Soviet propagandists to fully overcome the limitations imposed by Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy and many aspects of Soviet policy.
The effectiveness of these interviews in influencing Western audiences is likely to depend, in large part, on the skill and persistence of the Western journalists who interview the Soviet officials. Journalists who fail to probe for inconsistencies and contradictions in Soviet positions can serve as unwitting instruments of Soviet propaganda. In contrast, journalists who pose difficult questions and persist in trying to obtain answers to these questions make it difficult for Soviet propagandists to mislead Western audiences and can elicit information that is of interest to analysts of Soviet foreign policy as well as the general public.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to thank Lilita Dzirkals for research assistance, the staff of the Rand library for their help in locating the sources used in this report, Billie Fenton for her typing assistance, and Nanette Brown and A. Ross Johnson, who read an earlier draft and made many helpful suggestions for improvement.
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I. INTRODUCTION

Interviews by Soviet leaders in the non-Communist press have been a tool of Soviet foreign propaganda since the 1930s. Stalin, whom many historians regard as a master at manipulating foreign images of himself and of the Soviet system, often used contact with journalists and writers to launch new foreign-policy initiatives or to promote a favorable image of Soviet domestic achievements. In 1936, he revealed to American editor Roy Howard that the Soviet Union had eschewed the "export of revolution." In May 1943, he used a letter to a Reuters correspondent to explain his rationale for the dissolution of the Comintern. In 1949, he signaled his willingness to lift the Berlin blockade in his replies to questions posed by American newspaperman J. Kingsbury Smith. These approaches to the Western press were often highly effective. As Frederick C. Barghoorn noted in his study of Soviet foreign propaganda, "By skillful timing and parsimony in granting interviews, Stalin often succeeded in dominating the headlines in London, Paris, and New York."2

Stalin's successors continued to use interviews to promote Soviet policy, although for the most part with less skill and with more modest results. Khrushchev frequently met with Western reporters and even appeared once on American television. Like Stalin, Khrushchev used the interview to convey new information. This information usually concerned real or invented Soviet economic, technological, or military breakthroughs, rather than, as had been the case in Stalin's interviews, changes in policy.3 The Kosygin-Brezhnev regime was initially more sparing than its predecessors in giving interviews to the foreign press.

In the first several years of the regime, Brezhnev never met with the Western press, and Kosygin did so rarely.4

Apart from these few interviews, the Soviets relied almost completely on the local Communist press and the efforts of front organizations controlled by the Soviet Union (e.g., the World Peace Council) to propagate their views on international issues. They made little effort to convey their views to the non-Communist press in the West. As a prominent European journalist recalled, "to secure an interview with a Soviet figure... was tantamount to the semi-conquest of the ramparts of Red Square—an inconceivable enterprise."5 This reliance on Communist-controlled media severely limited the audience that could be reached by Soviet propaganda and undermined the credibility of the message among those it did reach. It also imparted a dogmatic, self-righteous tone to Soviet statements that often alienated non-Communist audiences in the West.

The onset of Soviet-American and Soviet-West European détente in the 1970s brought about a major shift in Soviet policy on dealing with the Western media. After 1975, the number and variety of Soviet officials available for contact with the Western media increased dramatically. Not only were individuals at lower levels in the government and party chain of authority now available, but officials from outside the party-state hierarchy also began to speak to the press. Economic organizations, the military, universities, sporting groups, and the Academy of Sciences all produced spokesmen able to articulate the broad objectives of Soviet policy in language and style that was tailored to the subject matter at hand and the audience being addressed.

Interviews with the foreign press were no longer used sparingly or as a means to generate surprise. Instead, they became a vehicle for the routine exposition of Soviet positions, especially on arms control and disarmament, but also on other matters as well. Moreover, the degree of spontaneity in the interviews increased dramatically. Suddenly, Soviet officials seemed relaxed and willing to debate and entertain probing questions. In addition to meeting with print journalists, they began to appear on radio and television and even to participate in live call-in talk shows via long-distance telephone.

The new style in Soviet propaganda no doubt reflected the increased personal and national self-confidence of the Soviet elite and the increased foreign-area expertise of the generation of Soviet foreign-policy specialists that had been trained after World War II. No longer

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5Frane Barbieri, La Stampa, March 15, 1984.
afraid of running afoul of changing moods in Moscow, this generation
was perhaps the first in Soviet history that was well-suited to "selling"
Soviet policy to audiences in the West. Moreover, the détente of the
1970s helped to create a favorable environment for intensified Soviet
propaganda efforts. At a minimum, détente was associated with activi-
ties such as trade and arms control that were of interest to Western
audiences and that led to increased numbers of Soviet officials travel-
ing in the West. In addition, the lessening of cold war tensions may
have made Western audiences and journalists receptive to at least
hearing, if not accepting, the Soviet perspective on international issues.

But the new willingness to grant interviews was probably more than
just a by-product of generational change in the Soviet Union and the
overall lessening of East-West tensions. In all likelihood, it also was
the result of an explicit decision by Soviet policymakers to upgrade the
quality of their propaganda efforts directed at the West. Such a deci-
sion would have been consistent with other steps taken in the 1970s,
such as the founding of the Central Committee's International Infor-
mation Department.  

Although the proliferation of interviews with Soviet officials is now
a decade old, no Western researcher has yet looked systematically at
their content, style, and relationship to other aspects of Soviet interna-
tional behavior. This report is a first attempt at such an analysis. It
looks at some 190 interviews by two prominent Soviet officials, Vadim
V. Zagladin, the First Deputy Head of the International Department
of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist party, and Georgi A.
Arbatov, the head of the Institute for the Study of the United States
and Canada.

Zagladin and Arbatov are by no means the only Soviet officials who
give interviews in Western and other non-Soviet media. Others
include Viktor Afanasiev, the editor of Pravda; Aleksandr Bovin, an
Izvestiia commentator who is believed to be an influential foreign-
policy adviser; Valentin Falin, a foreign-affairs commentator for Izves-
tiia who was formerly ambassador to West Germany and the First
Deputy Head of the International Information Department; Leonid
Zamiatin, head of the International Information Department of the
CPSU Central Committee; Genrikh Trofimenko, a researcher at the
USA Institute; Evgeni Velikhov, Vice President of the USSR Academy
of Sciences for Science and Technology; and Nikolaï Portugalov, a
former Novosti (APN) correspondent who is now a consultant to the
International Department of the Central Committee. Interviews have

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6See Harry Gelman, The Brezhnev Politburo and the Decline of Détente, Cornell
also been given by several active military officers, including Colonel General Nikolai Chervov of the Soviet General Staff, Deputy Defense Minister General Konstantin Mikhailov, and Major General Viktor Starodubov of the General Staff. The analysis that follows occasionally draws on interviews given by these and other officials, but only those of Arbatov and Zagladin are examined systematically.

Zagladin and Arbatov first became available to the Western media in the mid-1970s. Zagladin's early interviews took place in France and Italy, where he was heavily involved in relations between the CPSU and the West European Communist parties, which at that time were of general interest to French and Italian readers. Later Zagladin became a spokesman on general Soviet foreign-policy questions. Arbatov gave his first interview in December 1976 to the West German weekly Der Spiegel, in which, as an "America expert," he focused on Soviet views of the incoming Carter administration. Like Zagladin, Arbatov subsequently began to address a broad range of topics, with particular emphasis on arms control.

There are two reasons for analyzing interviews by Soviet officials in the Western media. First, these interviews offer a new source for the study of Soviet attitudes, perceptions, and policy positions. In contrast to articles in the Soviet press, interviews cannot be ghostwritten. They usually have easily identifiable and sometimes highly specific audiences. Above all, the spontaneous exchange with Western reporters can provide insights into Soviet thinking that do not emerge from the analysis of written articles in the Soviet media.

The interviews make it relatively easy to determine which lines of argumentation these influential Soviet officials think will sway particular Western audiences. This in turn makes it possible to draw conclusions about how they view these audiences. The interviews also offer a glimpse of the personalities and character of individual Soviet officials. Used with other sources of information, the interviews could lead to a better understanding of the "political culture of Communism" by giving Western researchers insights into how particular Soviet officials have "internalized" the values of the Soviet system.7 The interviews also can help to identify differences of outlook or perhaps competing "schools of thought" among Soviet officials.

Ultimately, of course, the interviews do not provide a way around any of the methodological problems that researchers confront when

attempting to extract “real” Soviet thinking from public statements by Soviet officials. The interviews clearly have an instrumental purpose. They are made by skilled propagandists who are quite capable of masking their “real” thoughts to promote Soviet foreign-policy objectives. As in written statements in the Soviet press, differences between interviews can be the product either of genuine differences of view or of a functional division of labor among Soviet officials, organizations, and media. But, if used with caution and in conjunction with other data, the interviews can provide insights into Soviet thinking and overall Soviet behavior toward the outside world.

The second reason for analyzing these interviews relates to policy. Soviet efforts to promote state interests by working through the Western media raise certain policy questions for journalists, scholars, and governments. The U.S. government already has been involved in controversies with Arbatov over his access to the American media. In 1981, the U.S. State Department refused to extend a visa to permit Arbatov to appear on the television program Bill Moyers’ Journal. In 1983, the State Department granted Arbatov a visa to lecture in the United States, but only on the condition that he not meet with the news media. In both cases, the administration’s actions led to controversy and disputes with the news media. This report does not explicitly address the policy issues raised by Soviet efforts to work through the non-Communist media or by government attempts to hinder these efforts, but it should help to provide a context for future investigations of these issues.

Section II provides a brief sketch of Zagladin and Arbatov and their roles in the Soviet system. Section III then analyzes in detail the content of the interviews given by these two men and the insights they provide into Soviet thinking on missiles in Europe, the situation in Afghanistan, Poland, and the East-West balance. Finally, Section IV

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9See Moyers’ account in “Broken Debate,” The Nation, April 18, 1981.

10When he visited Iowa to lecture at Grinnell College, Arbatov violated the terms of his visa by giving interviews with Iowa Public Television and the Des Moines Register, claiming that they were local media and not covered by the ban. In reacting to the State Department ban, Arbatov took refuge in his parliamentary status, telling reporters: “I don’t understand why the State Department behaves in such a way with a member of the Soviet Parliament,” adding that he could not “imagine what would happen if our government did this to an American senator or member of the House.” (Associated Press, April 21, 1983.) Arbatov added, “My human rights in this country are endangered. . . . This is a free country. Why is such a problem? The media asks me about Soviet viewpoints and suddenly I become a trespasser.”
draws conclusions about the overall world views of these Soviet officials as they are reflected in the interviews and offers a preliminary assessment of the effectiveness of these interviews as a propaganda tool.
II. INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Zaglaidin and Arbatov are both members of the generation of Soviet officials that was educated in the late 1940s and that first rose to positions of influence in the mid-1960s. Both are well known in the West, Zaglaidin mainly in Europe, and Arbatov in both Europe and the United States. Both are well educated and have written extensively for the party press as well as for academic audiences. At earlier stages in their careers, both were preoccupied with the subject of propaganda.¹

Both men began their careers with graduation in 1949 from the Moscow Institute of International Relations. Zaglaidin remained at the Institute until 1954 as a postgraduate student and later as an instructor, after which he joined the staff of Novoe vremia.² Zaglaidin’s first article in Kommunist, the theoretical journal of the Central Committee, appeared in November 1954.³ It contained a strong denunciation of the Paris agreements and West Germany’s projected admission to NATO, steps which Zaglaidin argued were incompatible with the goal of promoting collective security in Europe. Throughout the 1950s, Zaglaidin was a prolific writer, establishing himself as a leading Soviet expert on France. In 1961, he joined the staff of Problemy mira i sotsializm (Problems of Peace and Socialism), an international Communist journal published in Prague.⁴ In 1964, he left journalism to join the Central Committee apparatus. By 1967, he had risen to the position of Deputy Head of the International Department. He was promoted to his present post of First Deputy Head in 1975.

The International Department is responsible for Soviet policy toward Communist and “progressive” parties in non-Communist countries. Headed by Boris Ponomarev, a former Comintern official and a protégé of Mikhail Suslov, it employs several hundred professional staff members and draws on the expertise of consultants from Soviet universities and research institutes.⁵ Although mainly concerned with

²Also published in English as New Times.
³V. Zaglaidin, “Parizhskie soglasheniiia nesovmestimy s interesami obespecheniiia bezopasnosti v Evrope (The Paris Agreements Are Incompatible with the Interests of Assuring Security in Europe),” Kommunist, No. 17, 1954.
⁴In North America this journal is published as World Marxist Review.
revolutionary and "progressive" forces in the West, the Department has a major voice in all aspects of Soviet foreign policy. Some Western specialists have gone so far as to suggest that it controls the Foreign and Foreign Trade Ministries.\textsuperscript{6} The more commonly held view is that Foreign Ministry and International Department responsibilities overlap and that they are partners—and to some extent rivals—in the shaping of Soviet foreign policy. Each has its own particular bias, with the International Department more interested in propaganda and the ideological side of foreign policy.\textsuperscript{7}

Zagladin continues to play a major role in managing relations between the CPSU and foreign Communist parties. He spends much of his time meeting with foreign Communists and has edited successive editions of the book that serves as the CPSU's guide for non-ruling Communist parties.\textsuperscript{8} He also works with non-Communist groups in the West and devotes particular attention to the Socialist and Social Democratic parties of Western Europe. Zagladin's status as a policymaker was enhanced by the 1979–1983 Soviet campaign against the deployment of new NATO intermediate-range (INF) missiles in Europe. A Soviet official revealed to Paul Nitze, the chief U.S. negotiator at the INF talks in Geneva, that Soviet arms-control policy was determined by a high-level committee in Moscow chaired by Foreign Minister Gromyko. Zagladin was a member of this committee, which also included representatives of the military, the KGB, the Foreign Ministry, and the International Information Department of the Central Committee.\textsuperscript{9}

Arbatov's career parallels that of Zagladin in many respects. After graduation from the Moscow Institute in 1949, Arbatov served until 1960 on the editorial staff of Kommunist. He also wrote for Voprosy filosofii (Questions of Philosophy) and New Times. During this period, he developed close ties with Otto Kuusinen, the old-Bolshevik co-founder of the Finnish Communist party, and through him, with Mikhail Suslov, the USSR's leading ideologist. In 1960, Arbatov left Kommunist to work alongside Zagladin on the staff of Problemy mira i sotsializma. Two years later, he left journalism to become a section


\textsuperscript{7}For an interesting view of this rivalry, as well of Zagladin as an individual, see Arkady N. Shevchenko, Breaking with Moscow, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1985, pp. 190–191.


chief at the Institute of the World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), the most prestigious of the USSR's international institutes. He held this post until 1964, when he joined the apparatus of the Central Committee. In 1967, he was selected to head the newly formed USA Institute, which in 1974 was renamed the Institute for the Study of the United States and Canada. The Institute employs about 300 people, about half of whom are professional researchers. It sponsors conferences, publishes the monthly journal SShA: Ekonomika, politika i ideologiya (USA: Economics, Politics and Ideology), and has commissioned and published more than 30 book-length studies. Western experts are divided on the question of how much influence the Institute has over Soviet policy. Some believe it is very influential, while others contend that it is mainly a vehicle for influencing Western perceptions. The most likely explanation is that the Institute has both policy and propaganda functions, although the latter may have grown in importance over time.

Like other Soviet officials, Arbatov and Zagladin both hold several positions in the "interlocking directorate" that characterizes the upper reaches of the Soviet bureaucracy. Both are members of the CPSU Central Committee and the Supreme Soviet, the USSR's nominal parliament. Zagladin serves on the board of the State Committee for Science and Technology and is a member of the Scientific Research Council on Peace and Disarmament. He is also on the editorial board of SShA and the monthly Voprosy istorii (Questions of History). In addition to heading the Institute for the Study of the United States and Canada, Arbatov directs the "Problems of Disarmament" section of the Scientific Research Council on Peace and Disarmament. Both men are recipients of the Order of Lenin.

As members of the Soviet parliament, Arbatov and Zagladin take part in the various East-West parliamentary exchanges that have proliferated since the early 1970s. In the summer of 1975, the fall of 1978, and the summer of 1983, Arbatov participated in conferences attended by members of the U.S. Senate and delegates of the Supreme Soviet. As a member of the latter's Foreign Affairs Commission, Arbatov is

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10 This organization was set up in 1979 as a joint project of the State Committee for Science and Technology, the USSR Academy of Sciences, and various nongovernmental organizations. In conjunction with the Soviet Committee for European Security and Cooperation, the Research Council produced the pamphlet How to Assert the Threat to Europe, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1983, a work that takes the form of an extended interview.

11 In the 1975 exchange, Arbatov was one of the more active participants on the Soviet side. In meetings with the Senators, Soviet delegates expressed concern over what appeared to them to be a growing opposition to détente in the United States. They cited in particular an article by former Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird in the July 1975
coequal, in terms of protocol if not power, with members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Zagladiн became a deputy to the Supreme Soviet in 1979 and was immediately named Deputy Chairman of its Foreign Affairs Commission. Subsequently, he took part in parliamentary discussions with members of the French National Assembly in 1981, with the Dutch parliament’s Second Chamber Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs in 1982, and with the Japanese Diet in 1984. For both Zagladiн and Arbatov, these parliamentary exchanges were the occasions for a number of the interviews examined below.

Unlike Zagladiн, who spends much of his time dealing with representatives of foreign Communist parties, Arbatov devotes himself almost entirely to working with non-Communist organizations in the West. He has been a participant in the Pugwash Conference since 1967, the Dartmouth Conference since 1969, and the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues (the Palme Commission) since 1980. Although he is not a medical doctor, Arbatov has been a leading member of Soviet delegations to meetings of the “International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War.”

As East-West relations deteriorated in the early 1980s, a growing number of American, Japanese, Canadian, and West European organizations sought Arbatov’s participation in activities intended to promote communication with the Soviet Union. In early 1983, he headed the Soviet delegation to a joint meeting of the American and Soviet United Nations Associations. Later in the same year, Arbatov was contacted by Dr. David A. Hamburg, President of the Carnegie Corporation, to discuss Soviet participation in the establishment of joint crisis centers. In May 1984, the Institute for Soviet American Relations (ISAR) hosted a working dinner for Arbatov to introduce him to experts from the private sector interested in using satellite communications for, as ISAR put it, “stabilizing relations between the two

issue of Readers Digest. The U.S. delegation invited the Soviets to respond to the charges in the Laird article. The response, which was toughly worded and in parts abusive, was written by Arbatov and Pravda commentator G. A. Zhukov (also a parliamentarian) and printed in the report issued by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. (See “What Is Detente After All? (Reply to Melvin Laird Article by G. A. Arbatov and G. A. Zhukov),” in Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Report of a Conference Between Members of the U.S. Senate and Delegates to the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., November 1975, pp. 33–36.)

Also unlike Zagladiн, Arbatov rarely writes in or is interviewed by the non-Eastern bloc Communist media. Exceptions include an interview with L’Unita, February 27, 1983, and several interviews in Yugoslavia in November 1984.

Associated Press, February 16, 1983.

countries."\(^{15}\) In that same month, Arbatov also testified before a committee of the Canadian parliament about a proposed government-funded peace academy. Although Arbatov is avidly sought by private organizations interested in arms control, he is regarded skeptically by present and former government officials, who have long resented his access to the American media and academic communities, which they argue is not reciprocated on the Soviet side.\(^{16}\)

Arbatov also has been the subject of controversy in Sweden, where a leading Stockholm newspaper called him the Soviet Union’s “political confidence trickster.”\(^{17}\) Arbatov is reported to have remarked at a dinner in Washington in early 1982 at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace that as a great power, the Soviet Union had a right to violate Swedish waters with its submarines and would continue to do so. These remarks, the exact substance of which was disputed by the various Americans at the dinner, took on even greater significance several months later during the “Ferm affair.” In September 1982, shortly after a Swedish commission issued a report on Soviet submarine violations, Arbatov met at the United Nations in New York with Andreas Ferm, a close personal aide to Prime Minister Olof Palme. At this meeting, Ferm is reported to have passed a private message from Palme to Arbatov assuring that the Swedes would downplay their criticisms of the Soviets if no further intrusions occurred. A storm of criticism, mainly directed at Palme but touching Arbatov as well, erupted in Sweden when the contents of the letter, which Palme had sought to conceal from his own foreign ministry, were leaked to the press.

Zagladin is best known in Europe, where he has dealt for many years with the West European Communist parties, whose congresses he has often attended along with Ponomarev. In the late 1970s, Zagladin dramatically increased the range of his dealings with the West Europeans and now can be regarded, along with Zamiatin, as one of the Soviet Union’s chief point men for dealing with West Germany. He also has increased his contacts with political leaders in Japan. In February 1984, he used the occasion of General Secretary Andropov’s funeral to arrange for the resumption of contacts between the Japanese


Communist Party (JCP) and the CPSU and to negotiate a resumption of the exchanges between Japanese and Soviet parliamentarians which were cut off after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Although Zagladin has never traveled to the United States, he has increased his meetings with visiting Americans in Moscow. In 1984, for example, he received former Governor Jerry Brown of California, and in 1985, he met with a visiting U.S. Congressional delegation led by House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill.

Like Arbatov, Zagladin has been involved in clashes with Western governments and political leaders as a result of his activities in the West. In a November 1983 meeting with Rudolf Hartung, the leader of the West German Young Socialists, Zagladin disclosed that two years earlier Chancellor Schmidt had proposed a disarmament plan under which NATO would forgo deployment of its INF missiles in exchange for a reduction of the Soviet SS-20 force to a level somewhat in excess of 140. Schmidt's office rejected this assertion as "totally false." In September 1984, Zagladin met with a Swedish newspaper correspondent and produced a "secret report" in an attempt to prove that a violation of Swedish airspace about which the Swedish government had complained did not take place. The Swedish Foreign Minister characterized the Soviet willingness to supply highly detailed information to a newspaper that it had withheld from the Swedish government as an "affront that was difficult to understand."

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19 Hamburg Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA), November 15, 1983.
III. ISSUES

This section examines statements by Arbatov and Zagladin about seven general issues: missiles in Europe, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the post-1980 crisis in Poland, the likelihood of nuclear war, attitudes toward the United States, the global balance, and the international role of Western Europe and Japan. The first three of these issues were front-page matters that were of concern both to Soviet policymakers and to the Western news media in the period covered by this report. The majority of the interviews deal with these topics, explicitly and often at considerable length.

The other four topics generally were not explicitly addressed either by Western journalists or their Soviet interlocutors. Western reporters usually do not ask questions such as, “Mr. Arbatov, what is your view of the global balance?” or “Mr. Zagladin, how do you perceive Japan’s global role?” However, in the course of discussing other issues, Arbatov and Zagladin often reveal their views on these fundamental questions. These views in turn reveal much about the overall world views of these men and, to the extent that they are shared, those of other high-ranking Soviet officials.

MISSILES IN EUROPE

More than any other issue, the controversy over the INF deployments in Europe helped to propel Arbatov and Zagladin to prominence in the European media. Zagladin was active throughout 1979 in the Soviet campaign to block NATO’s December 1979 double-track decision.\(^1\) He gave several interviews, met with members of the Dutch parliament, and participated in a Communist-sponsored rally in Belgium.\(^2\) Arbatov played a less prominent role in the early period of the anti-INF campaign but was very active in the crucial 1982–1983 period when the missile issue ultimately was decided in Europe.

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\(^1\)Under the terms of this decision, the NATO members endorsed U.S. efforts to negotiate reductions in the numbers of theater nuclear weapons in Europe. If these negotiations failed to produce results, the United States would deploy, beginning in December 1983, 572 Pershing II and cruise missiles in five West European countries (Britain, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, and the Netherlands).

\(^2\)Le Soir, October 26, 1979; Die Währheit, November 19, 1979; Der Spiegel, November 5, 1979; Luxembourg Radio and Television, November 22, 1979; French television, November 22, 1979; La Stampa, November 25, 1979; and Le Monde, November 28, 1979.
The interviews of both officials mirror the changes in Soviet propaganda and negotiating strategies that were made in the course of the INF controversy. In the months preceding NATO's 1979 decision, Zagladin reiterated the Soviet position that Soviet missiles targeted on Western Europe were a counter to the American "forward-based systems" (FBS) and that American refusal to bring FBS into SALT I and SALT II, as the Soviets had demanded, was responsible for Soviet unwillingness to eliminate the SS-20. As he told Le Monde, "I can assure you that if there are no American forward-based system forces in Europe we will have no need for medium-range missiles."³

Throughout this period, Zagladin's statements unambiguously reflected the Soviet position, which Brezhnev had outlined to West German Chancellor Schmidt at the 1980 summit, that the Soviets were concerned only with American missiles and not with the French and British independent deterrents.⁴ Asked in 1980 about the inclusion of French systems in U.S.-Soviet negotiations, Zagladin replied, "For the time being, we are talking only about the American missiles," although he did add that over the long run, discussions on the French systems would have to take place.

But in 1983, after Soviet negotiators offered to reduce their intermediate-range arsenal to a level that they claimed would just offset French and British systems, thus rendering any U.S. deployments unnecessary, Arbatov and Zagladin shifted the focus of their remarks to the French and British systems. In June 1983, Zagladin told an interviewer that he did not see why France rejected the inclusion of its nuclear forces in the U.S.-Soviet negotiations in Geneva, since its troops were included in the Vienna Mutual Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) talks and its nuclear weapons were counted in the 1972 SALT I agreement.⁵ French officials strongly disputed these statements.

Like Zagladin, Arbatov contradicted earlier contentions that the SS-20s were tied to American FBS alone. Asked by a West German reporter how it might become possible to do away with the SS-20s, he replied:

[If you could talk your British and French alliance partners into scrapping their intermediate-range missiles, and if your American alliance partner were not to bring any intermediate-range missiles to Europe, then we wouldn't need to have any SS-20s. Of course, this

⁴Details of the summit were leaked and appeared in Die Welt, July 7, 1980.
⁵Reuters, June 30, 1983.
would also require a solution to the problem of the other intermediate-range weapons.  

The "other intermediate-range weapons" Arbatov cited clearly meant the American FBS, which by then had changed from being the central rationale for the SS-20 to being a residual element in the debate over balance.

In the same interview, Arbatov went so far as to hint that Brezhnev had made a mistake in his discussions with Schmidt:

Interviewer: . . . the British and French missiles were described as strategic weapons not by the West, but by Leonid Brezhnev, the Soviet General Secretary at the time, when he discussed the subject with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt.

Arbatov: That was a misunderstanding. I did not attend the talks, but people who were present have made it clear that something was misunderstood at the time. In any event, Brezhnev did not mean it that way, because no negotiations on intermediate-range missiles had taken place yet. Maybe it was meant to say that such negotiations should take place.

Also in this interview, Arbatov flatly stated that during the "walk in the woods," the Soviet negotiator, Kvitsinskii, "only listened" to what Arbatov characterized as "nothing but small talk by the American negotiator, Nitze." Zagladin also rejected suggestions that there had been any Soviet interest in a compromise agreement that would have allowed some U.S. deployments, stating "the deployment of a single Pershing missile in Federal Germany would radically alter the strategic and political situation."  

Although the discussion of INF centered on numbers rather than the operational rationale for Soviet systems, Arbatov and Zagladin occasionally were drawn into discussions of the mission and capabilities of the SS-20 and other Soviet systems. As noted, Zagladin claimed in many interviews that the SS-20s were deployed solely to counter the U.S. forward-based systems.

Interviewer: [The SS-20s] are directed at Europe.

Zagladin: They are directed at American bases in Europe, against America's forward-based system which has been in existence for 20 years. So, for 20 years our systems have been in existence, in our

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6Der Spiegel, October 24, 1983. In a November 14, 1979, interview with London ITV Television, Arbatov did mention that the United States had "two nuclear allies in Europe," but he did not press the point.

7Ibid.

8Paese Sera, January 24, 1983.
territory, as a guarantee against the danger emanating from the American forces in Europe.9

And, as he told a French radio audience, "we do have SS-20 missiles, and others—SS-4 and SS-5 as well. But these missiles, which are in principle medium-range missiles, have existed in Europe since 1960. They were brought in response to American missiles, American aircraft, American submarines, American aircraft carriers which exist today in Europe as well. . . . So, do these missiles threaten Europe? No, definitely not."10

By using phrases such as "in response to" or "guarantee against" to link the SS-20 to FBS, the interviewees leave unanswered the question of whether the SS-20s are actually targeted on U.S. nuclear weapons. Arbatov and Zagladin probably do not know the answer to this question and would be loath to reveal it if they did. But the rationale for the SS-20 that they offer to Western audiences is politically important. With the Soviet Union accusing the United States of planning to launch a "first strike" against Soviet nuclear weapons and command posts, the reported accuracy and hard-target capabilities of Soviet SS-20s were at least potentially embarrassing to the Soviets, in that they suggested the possibility that Soviet military planners were preparing for a "first strike."

In the course of arguing that deployment of the SS-20 was a routine modernization, Zagladin implied that the SS-20 was directed at military targets. In a July 1981 article in the French newspaper Le Matin, he stated that "the Soviet SS-20 missiles, which are now being portrayed as something completely unexpected which has greatly changed the situation in Europe, have in fact changed nothing, at least as far as the civilian population is concerned."11 A year later he was even more explicit:

The SS-4 and the SS-5 are really out of date. This also means that they have a much greater explosive force than the SS-20. . . . When the SS-4 and SS-5 were being developed we had not made such great technological advances, there was less accuracy and it was therefore necessary that we have greater explosive force in order to be able to hit an intended target with any degree of certainty.12

But in a discussion with Der Spiegel, Arbatov disparaged claims, then current in the West, that the SS-20 was intended to destroy hard targets in Europe:

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9Paris Domestic Service, October 25, 1981.
10France Inter, Paris Domestic Service, June 30, 1983.
I do not want to praise any weapon, not even the SS-20. Viewed from the strategic point of view, it is nothing new, and cannot be taken for a first-strike weapon. Just think for a while about what would be the “hard targets” for the SS-20’s—except for the 18 French nuclear missiles, there are no other targets. We have no intention at all of waging a first strike against Europe. This would also be impossible because West Europe is an ally of the United States.\textsuperscript{13}

However, on another occasion Arbatov stated unequivocally that the SS-20s were targeted on U.S. nuclear forces in the Far East:

Interviewer: Foreign Minister Gromyko hinted at a possible Soviet nuclear attack against Japan.

Arbatov: Foreign Minister Gromyko made no such statement. The Soviet Union unequivocally declared that it will never be the first to use nuclear weapons. I do not know what SS-20’s in Asia are targeted at, but it is certain that the Soviet Union primarily has the U.S. nuclear force in mind. The United States has, in the same region, nuclear missiles that can be launched from land or sea and hit targets in the USSR. Aren’t [U.S.] bases situated in Japan and South Korea? . . . The Soviet Union cannot but be apprehensive.\textsuperscript{14}

The interviews thus reveal an inconsistency in Soviet argumentation that flows from the requirements of Soviet foreign policy but that was not always seized upon by Western reporters. On the one hand, Soviet officials eschew or downplay the ability of their missiles to strike preemptively at missiles in the West. They do so as a way of disparaging U.S. and NATO doctrine, which is premised on a possible first use of nuclear weapons. On the other hand, the Soviets sometimes strongly imply or even explicitly state that their missiles are targeted on U.S. missiles deployed in third countries. They do so clearly to increase the sense of threat among audiences in these countries and to encourage the growth of anti-nuclear and anti-U.S. sentiments.

Arbatov’s interview in \textit{Spiegel} reveals another potential inconsistency in the Soviet line of argumentation on INF. On the one hand, Arbatov argues that the West Europeans should not be concerned about the SS-20 because Europe remains, in effect, “coupled” to the United States. On the other hand, he claims elsewhere in the interview that the West Europeans should not allow deployment, since doing so is tantamount to cooperating with the United States in planning a limited nuclear war that would not involve U.S. territory.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Der Spiegel}, October 24, 1983.
\textsuperscript{14}\textit{Yomiuri Shimbun}, November 14, 1983 (italics added).
\textsuperscript{15}Some European officials have noted this contradiction in the Soviet line and have used it to defend NATO policy. According to a German official interviewed by David S. Yost for a forthcoming study, “I have found it very possible to turn the Soviet argument
Arbatov’s “coupling” rationale was only one of many convoluted arguments Soviet officials put forward in the course of the anti-INF campaign. In 1983, Zagladin even claimed that because the SALT II agreement had not been ratified, the U.S. nuclear umbrella remained intact and therefore no INF missiles were necessary:

When the Brussels decision was made in 1979 it was said explicitly that the new U.S. missiles in Western Europe were needed because the U.S.-Soviet SALT II agreement provided for a balance between the strategic nuclear arms in the United States and the Soviet Union. The view was that as a result Europe would lose the U.S. “nuclear umbrellas” and would need a replacement for this [in the form of European-based medium-range arms]. But the SALT II agreement has still not been ratified by the U.S. Senate. Thus the “nuclear umbrella” has been retained and the new medium-range nuclear missiles are unnecessary.\(^{16}\)

On other occasions, Zagladin argued precisely the opposite—that because the United States had not ratified SALT II, it had changed the circumstances under which NATO had agreed to the two-track decision, and therefore the Europeans should feel under no obligation to deploy.

The interviews also shed light on Soviet views regarding the West European political scene and on the frame of mind in which Soviet officials launched their anti-INF campaign. Although it is difficult to distinguish between claims that are made for propaganda purposes and genuine expectations, Zagladin in particular appeared to be hopeful that the Soviet Union would be able to derail the INF deployments. Speaking to a West German reporter in mid-1981, he stated: “I frankly admit that I find it difficult to understand the attitude of the Federal Government. Federal Chancellor Schmidt—a man who can make a decision if he wants to—says that he is in favor of negotiations, but then he must do more for bringing negotiations about.”\(^{17}\) While publicly placing his hopes on (and thereby generating pressure against) Chancellor Schmidt, Zagladin downplayed suggestions that Schmidt’s

\(^{16}\)Dagens Nyheter, October 13, 1983.
\(^{17}\)Frankfurter Rundschau, June 1, 1981.
government might fall over the INF issue. When it was suggested to him that Soviet pressure would “achieve the resignation of Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Genscher, who have linked their political fate with the Pershing II,” he replied, “Chancellor Schmidt probably favors the deployment of the missiles because he considers it necessary for the security of Western Europe. Is that his aim? I must doubt he wants to resign if he does not get the missiles.”

And later in the same interview:

We hope that [Schmidt and Genscher] will revise their position . . . . This position [i.e., in favor of the 1979 dual-track decision] had been adopted under the conditions of yesterday and today. But these conditions may change—if you allow me to express myself diplomatically. A realistic head of government like Schmidt—I hope that he stays that way—could well change his position if realities change.

Arbatov seems to have been more cautious in his assessments of the possibility of derailing implementation of the 1979 decision. But like Zagladin, he placed great stress on not compromising the USSR’s principled rejection of the missiles, even if the anti-INF campaign were to fail. In October 1983, he characterized Western proposals that the negotiations continue after U.S. deployments as

variant attempts to compel us to accept American weapons and, what is more, to give them our blessing in one way or another. However, we do not intend to do this, and we will not do it. We will perhaps not be able to prevent deployment, but in that case the United States, the Federal Republic, and the other NATO states will be fully responsible.

Speaking in a Dutch newspaper, Arbatov characterized the West German decision to accept deployment of the Pershings as “very probably a Pyrrhic victory” for President Reagan “and the European governments that have fallen in with him.” He placed particular emphasis on the effects the INF controversy had had on the Social Democratic parties:

Merely take the SPD, which just like Den Uyl’s party [the Netherlands Labor Party] before it, has done a turnabout. It is clear what a difference there is between public opinion in the West European countries on the one hand and parliaments and governments on the other hand. This process of deception on the part of those governing West Europe is at the same time creating great political power among the people . . . .

18 Der Spiegel, June 9, 1981 (italics added).
19 Der Spiegel, October 24, 1983.
Kohl and his people must realize, must have realized, that the fact that they are liked by Reagan does not contribute to their own stability in the FRG. That they must pay a price. I have already said: In Western Europe—the Social Democrats have done a turnaround. It will be very difficult for a Den Uyl or a Vogel to change this decision.20

These remarks would seem to support the view, reportedly held by some European officials, that Arbatov is among those who believe that the battle over INF missiles is lost only in the short term and that in the long run the erosion of the domestic base of support for NATO in West Germany will more than counterbalance the setback of deployment.21

AFGHANISTAN

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in late December 1979 marked the start of a period of several months in which few high-ranking Soviet officials were available for on-the-record interviews with the Western press. Soviet policymakers appeared to have decided to use background rather than on-the-record interviews to propagate the Soviet line on the invasion. In early 1980, “informed Soviet sources” granted background interviews to American journalists, in which they disclosed that the decision to invade had been taken very reluctantly and in the face of considerable internal opposition.22 Some West European reporters received similar messages from the Soviets. The London Observer, for example, reported that it had learned from “an exclusive Soviet source” that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was approved at a secret Central Committee session on December 19, at which Brezhnev was forced by an “inner circle of hard-line Politburo members and military representatives” either to accept the invasion or to resign.23 Other West European reporters received rather different messages from Soviet interlocutors who also spoke on background or off-the-record. In a remarkable off-the-record session with West Germany’s Die Welt, an unnamed official at the Soviet embassy in Washington defended the invasion of Afghanistan in terms that his

20De Volkskrant, December 6, 1983.
21See La Repubblica, February 18, 1984.
West German interlocutor described as “brutal, plain, bitter and aggressive.” The contempt for the United States expressed in this and similar interviews—the official spoke, for example, of the United States’ “worm-eaten constitutional system”—seemed intended to frighten off the West Europeans from cooperation with the United States.

Zagladin (accompanied by Falin) gave his first major post-invasion interview in late January 1980 to the West German weekly *Stern*. In this interview, Zagladin stuck to the legalistic position that the Soviet Union was acting fully in accordance with international law by responding to the request of the legal Afghan government. When pressed by reporters about the identity of this government, Zagladin was evasive.

Interviewer: [Daud] was murdered ....

Zagladin: While the subversive activity against the new government was gaining ground, President Taraki asked us several times for help ....

Interviewer: Why did you not give help at that time?

Zagladin: Moving troops into the territory of another state is always a difficult matter, even if it takes place at the request of a legal government. All aspects and interrelations must be carefully viewed. Taraki then was overthrown by Amin ....

Interviewer: He was also murdered.

Zagladin: Amin also asked us several times for help. But as we have now learned, it was only a tactical move. He did not expect us to comply with such requests. Then he would have had the pretext of establishing contacts with the opponents of the revolution.

In this exchange, Zagladin tried to have it both ways on the question of Amin’s alleged request: On the one hand, Amin’s allegedly insincere request served to bolster the USSR’s claim that the invasion was a legal response to an Afghan government request. On the other hand, precisely because Amin was insincere in his alleged request and intended to sell out the revolution, the Soviet invasion was justified.

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25 On January 21, Zagladin spoke briefly with French television interviewers about the Soviet response to President Carter’s call for a boycott of the Moscow Olympic games if all Soviet troops were not withdrawn from Afghanistan by February 20. (Reported by AFP, January 21, 1980.)
In this same interview, Falin lied and claimed that Karmal had been in Afghanistan for two months at the time of Amin’s murder.27

In trying to substantiate the claim that the Soviet intervention was a legitimate response to external attack, Zagadlin made fantastic charges about alleged American machinations against the Afghan revolution prior to December 1979. In the interview with Stern, Zagadlin gave a vivid picture of U.S. actions against the Afghan revolution, even giving the street address of a house in New York City from which an Afghan rebel was directing a campaign to obtain U.S. aid, and claiming that 2,000 tons of U.S. war materiel had been shipped from Britain to Karachi in July 1979.

Appearing on Radio Luxembourg in July 1980, Zagadlin pushed back the date of the start of the alleged American campaign against the Afghan revolution, claiming that two months after the April 1978 revolution, 270 American generals, admirals, and diplomats met in Annapolis, Maryland, to plot a strategy against the new Afghan government. As a result of this meeting, he said, in the summer of 1978, camps allegedly were set up in Pakistan where some 15,000 officers and NCOs and some 40,000 guerrilla fighters were trained. This rebellion was headed by three U.S. citizens of Afghan origin and an “ex-Mafia” official who had been expelled from Afghanistan and was living in London.28

While defending the USSR’s legal and moral right to intervene, Zagadlin gave out vague and misleading information about the size and expected duration of the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. He refused to give the number of Soviet troops in Afghanistan, claiming that secrecy on this matter was “a condition of our agreement with the Afghan government.”29 But he did say that the number was far lower than that estimated by the United States—“under 85,000”—and stated unequivocally that “the withdrawal has already begun. A fairly significant number of Soviet troops has been evacuated . . . 10,000 men were recently evacuated.” When pressed by a reporter, however, Zagadlin admitted that the 10,000 men who were withdrawn had been replaced by fresh troops from the USSR. In a June 1980 interview (one of the

27Western sources are confident that Karmal was in the Soviet Union at the time of the invasion. For background on the events in Afghanistan, see Anthony Arnold, Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, California, 1981; and Arnold, Afghanistan’s Two-Party Communism, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, California, 1983.


29Ibid.
few that Arbatov gave between late 1979 and March 1981), Arbatov also claimed that Soviet troops had begun a partial withdrawal.30

Like Zagladin, Arbatov claimed that Soviet intervention had been a response, perfectly defensible under international law, to American and other interference directed at Afghanistan. But by the time Arbatov resumed giving frequent interviews with the Western media, the furore over Afghanistan had died down considerably, and Western reporters were generally less interested in the exact sequence of events in Kabul that had precipitated the Soviet invasion than in the general factors that had influenced Soviet decisionmakers.31

Over time, Arbatov’s pronouncements on Afghanistan thus dealt less with the internal situation and more with the general East-West climate that he claimed had led to the invasion. In March 1981, for example, he stated:

In Afghanistan a revolution took place which was supported by the majority of the population but which also set in motion a counter-revolution by the toppled former leaders accompanied by large-scale foreign interference—the counterrevolutionaries are trained by the Chinese and the Americans with financial help from Saudi Arabia and the support of Egypt and Pakistan. This was the reason why we, after several attempts on their part, finally heeded a request for military aid from the Afghanistan government. That was certainly not a decision which was taken lightly, but it proceeded from the consideration that the situation had become extraordinarily critical, not only in Afghanistan itself, but internationally.32

To bolster the claim that the decision to invade was not “taken lightly,” Arbatov stated that throughout 1979, the Soviet Union had turned down requests from the Afghan government “eleven or twelve times” for help by Soviet forces.33 These alleged “eleven or twelve” requests, which Arbatov mentioned for the first time in July 1981, subsequently became a standard part of Arbatov’s pronouncements on Afghanistan. (The requests were never mentioned by Zagladin).

Although international considerations always played a part in Arbatov’s rationalizations for Afghanistan, the precise nature of these

31 The reasons for Arbatov’s absence from the Western media in the first half of 1980 were probably at least in part political. Arbatov was reported to have had a heart attack in late November 1979. But in early 1980 he appears to have been involved in the Soviet background campaign directed at the Western news media. Theo Sommer, co-publisher of the West German weekly Die Zeit, conducted background interviews in March 1980 with an individual identified only as “the Kremlin’s best expert on the United States.” (Die Zeit, April 4, 1980.)
32 De Volkskrant, March 16, 1981.
considerations changed over time. Initially, Arbatov stressed alleged foreign interference in the strictly local setting of Afghanistan. But he later shifted attention to the overall deterioration in U.S.-Soviet relations in the months preceding the decision to invade. The shift to a primarily East-West focus (and the downplaying of the alleged roles of China, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan) was made possible by the passage of time and the blurring in Western minds of the precise sequence of events in the 1978–1979 period. It also seemed to be motivated by a Soviet attempt to capitalize on anti-Reagan sentiments in Europe that had been fueled in part by administration statements on limited nuclear war.

On at least one occasion, a Western interviewer tried to pin down Arbatov and get him to confirm or deny his suggestion that the deterioration in East-West relations and in particular the delay in ratifying SALT II had been decisive in bringing about the invasion:

Interviewer: ... Can I bring up the question of linkage. I mean, was there a linkage between the Russians eventually deciding to intervene or to give help in Afghanistan and the whole process of the SALT negotiations and the SALT treaty appearing before the United States Senate?

Arbatov: I don't like this dirty word ....

Interviewer: But it's a fact. Is it not a fact?

Arbatov: I would call it differently, which I think is more accurate. You know taking such a decision—and Brezhnev called it a very difficult decision, really difficult, for us difficult. I would use another word, assessment, if you take such difficult decisions. You have to take into account different factors. ... And I think this assessment has changed, not only due to SALT process. The SALT process was cut off simply at this period—before Afghanistan—and it is lies when people tell that this is because of Afghanistan. ...

Interviewer: But you are saying that, if the SALT treaty had still had a very good chance of getting through the United States Congress, that you would not have jeopardized this by the intervention in Afghanistan?

Arbatov: If you allow me, I will explain it a bit more, because it is not only SALT treaty ....

Arbatov then went on to list a whole series of other Soviet grievances—the 1979 INF decision, the “amassment of naval forces of the United States in the Persian Gulf, rather close to Afghanistan and

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34 BBC World Service, July 20, 1981.
also to our borders”—and to conclude:

All of this could be read in Moscow, already in the middle of December—and I personally read it this way, as a man who studies international relations—that some basic attitudes in the foreign policy of the United States and part, at least, of the NATO community, had changed for the worse. . . . And in this case, of course, the whole political thinking can go another way.

In this exchange, as in many others, Arbatov carefully avoided flatly stating that SALT and the NATO INF decision had played a decisive role in Moscow’s calculations, but sought to foster the general impression that the Soviet Union was not aggressive and that a combination of unusual circumstances—for which the West was entirely responsible—had caused the move into Afghanistan. By 1983, Arbatov had perfected a smooth but very general speech on Afghanistan that explained the decision to invade largely in terms of SALT, INF, and U.S. activities in the Persian Gulf. By this time—some four years after the events in question—few Western reporters continued to question the particulars of Arbatov’s explanation. As he told an American magazine:

Actually we were asked by the Afghan government twelve times during 1979 to render them military assistance. We declined eleven times; the twelfth time we agreed. It was the end of December.

What had happened to change our position? The SALT ratification process was derailed, and we were told many times by the U.S. that in the approaching election year there would be no hope. The NATO decision about intermediate nuclear forces, Pershing II, and cruise missiles, despite all our protests and proposals to first have negotiations, was made by NATO in the middle of the month.35

In addition to defending the invasion itself, the Soviets have used interviews to attempt to generate Western interest in a diplomatic settlement to the Afghanistan crisis that would legitimize the Karmal regime and, by implication, Soviet intervention on its behalf. In early 1983, for example, Zagladin told an Italian newspaper that talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan could lead to a “possible political solution to put a halt to external intervention and allow the withdrawal of our soldiers.”36 In no interview, however, has either official hinted that the Soviet Union would be willing to change the Karmal regime to achieve such a settlement.

36Paese Sera, January 24, 1984.
POLAND

Interviews given by Arbatov and Zagladin on the subject of Poland and the rise of Solidarity provide the most striking contrasts between the two officials. Throughout the Polish crisis Zagladin generally was willing to discuss events in Poland with Western reporters. In contrast, Arbatov often maintained a sullen silence on the issue or at best made very perfunctory remarks. In March 1981, he told a Dutch reporter that “it would be wrong of me if I entered into such a subject here. I would gladly talk about it with my Polish friends, but I find such a discussion in the West misplaced.” In a similar vein, several months later he told the BBC that “Poland is not my field really and there are not all problems connected with Poland I am ready and willing to discuss with you.” Once Solidarity had been crushed, Arbatov’s silence turned to gloating, as he repeatedly charged that Western hopes had been dashed by the successful Jaruzelski coup. He told Joseph Kraft, “We have surmounted the sharp crisis of the Polish problem. . . . You Americans are upset because you reckoned we would be weak, and we aren’t.”

Zagladin was simultaneously more forthcoming and more militant than Arbatov in discussing events in Poland, as he was in discussing the issue of Afghanistan. In December 1980, he admitted the existence of “forces within the country [Poland] which wanted[ed] to plunge the country into anarchy and counterrevolution,” although he hastened to add that these forces were supported from abroad. To minimize the international embarrassment to the Soviet Union posed by the rise of Solidarity, Zagladin often professed sympathy in principle for the Polish workers. He told Paese Sera, “The old leadership of the Polish Communist party did not live up to the promises it made at its congresses. The Gdansk strikes demanded that those pledges be fulfilled, and there is nothing contradictory with the essence of the socialist system in that.”

But as in the case of Afghanistan, Zagladin also accused the West of instigating the turmoil in Poland and of massing troops, ships, and aircraft to intimidate the Polish “people.” One of his most striking statements was his comparison of the events in Poland with the turmoil in France in 1968:

37 De Volkskrant, March 16, 1981.
40 La Repubblica, December 11, 1980.
41 Paese Sera, December 22, 1980.
Let's stick to the facts. The facts show that American observation planes move around the Polish border, that the American fleet is near the Polish sea, that NATO holds talks about Poland. In 1968, a tough year for France, what would have been said if the Soviet Union sent its fleet toward French ports and the Warsaw Pact held a meeting to discuss the May 1968 student unrest.\textsuperscript{15}

As a major architect of Soviet policy toward Western Europe in the 1970s, Zagladin frequently linked his attacks on alleged Western interference in Poland to the Helsinki Final Act and the postwar settlement in Europe. He not only charged that alleged Western interference was illegal under the Final Act, he also suggested that under the norms of détente, the West European countries had a positive obligation to strengthen "socialism" in Poland:

The Helsinki charter and the entire détente process are based on the recognition of the changes that took place in Europe following World War II. To support the antisocialist forces in Poland today means to try to annul the results of the Helsinki conference, to try to destabilize East-West relations as a whole... [M]y opinion is that the strengthening of socialism in Poland contributes to the strengthening of détente. Consider the negative role played by prewar Poland in European politics and then consider Poland today—Gierek's role in the Brezhnev-Giscard meeting in Warsaw which gave a new thrust to the dialogue between the two Europes, or the plan for a disarmament conference submitted by the Poles in Madrid.\textsuperscript{16}

Zagladin attributed broad geopolitical significance to the alleged Western interference in Poland. As he told an Italian newspaper in late 1980, "The attempts of certain Western sectors to support and encourage the antisocialist forces in Poland are now more than evident, and their objective is also clear: to shift Poland's position within the European context, to remove it from the alliance of socialist countries."\textsuperscript{17} He went on to say that Western policy was "extremely dangerous." However, after the December 1983 coup, Zagladin generally downplayed the international significance of what had happened and stressed what the Polish "people" and "comrades" were doing to correct the situation.

There appears to be no simple explanation for the differences in the approaches of Arbatov and Zagladin to the crisis in Poland. However, these differences are consistent with the overall approach of each man to the discussion of international issues and probably relate to how each believes Western audiences are best influenced. Zagladin shows

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{16}La Repubblica, December 11, 1980.

\textsuperscript{17}Ibid.
little hesitancy about plunging into discussions of controversial and potentially embarrassing subjects, even if doing so requires him to make wild and inaccurate statements to defend Soviet practices and policy. Arbatov, in contrast, seems to prefer to stay away from such issues and, whenever possible, to direct the discussion to the alleged danger of nuclear war and alleged Soviet insecurities. In one of his few extended comments on the situation in Poland, Arbatov deflected the course of the interview toward the latter theme:

Interviewer: The Soviet attitude toward what is happening in Poland causes great concern [in the West]. You accuse the West of interfering, which raises alarms about what you might do there.

Arbatov: There are attempts by right-wing West Germans and Western right-wing trade union leaders to interfere. We warn them and the Poles warn them. But in general, the foundations of society there are solid and firm and I'm very optimistic about the prospects. [But] you must understand why we are so sensitive. The West has interfered in our affairs from the first days of our revolution. Even now, you have a Captive Nations Week sponsored by the Congress and the President. It is declared that, in your opinion, all our republics don't actually belong to the Soviet Union, even the Urals and the northern Caucasus and Siberia. We are left with the space maybe from Moscow to Leningrad, from Smolensk to Gorky. What would the American reaction be if our Supreme Soviet, our President, would declare a Captive Nations Week of America and demand, with a lot of justification, by the way, that your country be given to whom it belongs: Indians, Mexicans, Canadians, blacks, and Alaska, maybe to us?45

As happens so frequently in these interviews, the American reporter chose not to press Arbatov either on the accuracy of his facts or on the appropriateness of his analogy to the situation in Poland.

THE LIKELIHOOD OF WAR

Pronouncements by Soviet officials on the likelihood of war must be examined against the background of authoritative assessments by the Soviet Communist party of whether the danger of war is increasing or has been “pushed back” by successful Soviet policy.46 In the early 1970s, the Soviet leadership declared that the danger of war had

46 According to Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy, “imperialism” is inherently warlike and, were it not for the restraining effect of Soviet power, would launch a global nuclear war to save its crumbling positions. As long as “imperialism” exists, the danger of war cannot be overcome, but can merely be “pushed back.”
declined, a line that remained valid for the rest of the decade. However, on June 24, 1980, the Central Committee of the CPSU adopted a resolution entitled “On the International Situation and the Foreign Policy of the Soviet Union” which concluded that “the adventuristic actions of the United States and its accomplices have increased the danger of war . . . .”47 Several days later, Arbatov gave his first post-Afghanistan on-the-record interview to a Western reporter, and specifically linked his new willingness to speak out to the Central Committee resolution.48

Most of Arbatov’s interviews from this point onward contain references to the war danger. The following remarks are fairly typical of his statements over a four-year period: “In the arms race now, all of us have approached tremendously close to ‘a dangerous brink.’ Everybody, whether they are in Europe or in China, must understand that we are close to a situation of no return. We cannot go on as we did.”49 “We cannot go on like this. If you extrapolate what is happening today, it could lead to the end of the world.”50 “Time is running out for all of us.”51 “We have no way out if we want really to stay away from catastrophic, you know, holocaust.”52 “We really are in a mess now—all of us.”53 “Things cannot go on this way. The world is being plunged into a general catastrophe.”54 In contrast, Zagladin has always been less inclined than Arbatov to speak about the danger of war, even after the June 1980 CPSU Plenum.

In addition to issuing such general warnings about the danger of war, Arbatov and, to a lesser extent, Zagladin argue that particular American policies increase the danger of war. For example, in 1982 Arbatov told Time that “because of the Reagan administration’s rhetoric—and maybe it’s more than just rhetoric—some of our military people and even some members of the Central Committee believe

47Pravda, June 24, 1980. For a discussion of the importance of the June 24 resolution, see Myron Rush, “The Defense Burden and the Specter of War,” unpublished paper, 1985. According to Rush, the Soviets attributed the increased war danger to two factors: NATO’s adoption of a course “aimed at disrupting the current military equilibrium” and a U.S.-Chinese rapprochement “on an anti-Soviet basis.” The Soviets later dropped the second reason in explaining the alleged increase in the danger of war.
49The Daily Yomiuri, December 6, 1981.
51Cold War or Détente, p. 206.
52London BBC Domestic Service, October 25, 1983.
53Comment to David Steel, leader of the British Liberal party, in The Observer, February 5, 1984.
America is preparing for nuclear war.\textsuperscript{55} Shortly thereafter, he told Joseph Kraft that because the Reagan administration was "absolutely hostile," he had concluded that "we are approaching the time when we cannot afford the luxury of negotiation. If you deploy the Pershings, we will have to turn the whole thing over to the computers. We will have to put our missiles on launch-on-warning status."\textsuperscript{56} Leonard Silk of \textit{The New York Times} reported that in the course of a discussion of Soviet economic problems, an unidentified Soviet official claimed that "the Soviet Union would not allow itself to be dragged into economic debilitation. But neither, he said, would the Soviet leaders retreat from their political positions in the face of an American military buildup. Instead, he said, the Russians would 'lower the threshold' for the use of nuclear weapons." According to Silk, "This I took to mean that they would adopt a strategy of 'launch on warning'."\textsuperscript{57}

Soviet officials also invoke the specter of war in attempts to dissuade allies from cooperating with the United States. In many cases these "warnings" sound like thinly veiled threats. For example, Zagladin told a German newspaper that deployment of the Pershing and cruise missiles in West Germany would increase the danger to that country. "The Pentagon said itself in 1979 that these are first strike arms. The first strike would be launched at us from German soil. A counterstrike would logically be aimed at the Federal Republic."\textsuperscript{58} In a similar vein, Arbatov told a Japanese audience, "Japan needs an improvement in the international environment more than any other country. Japan is the only country that experienced an atom bombing and, geopolitically speaking, is vulnerable."\textsuperscript{59} In the same interview, Arbatov stated that "deployment of the SS-20s in the Far East may become necessary, however, because of the existing factors of instability as seen in the rapid militarization of Japan and the buildup of the U.S. 7th Fleet."

While Arbatov and Zagladin warn the West Germans about the dangers of hosting nuclear weapons capable of striking Soviet territory, they are almost as blunt in pointing up the dangers to countries that

\textsuperscript{55} \textit{Time}, December 6, 1982.

\textsuperscript{56} "Letter from Moscow," January 31, 1983. On a few occasions, Arbatov invoked the war danger for defensive purposes, as when he used the "hair trigger" motif to explain the Soviet reaction to the intrusion of Korean Airlines Flight 007 into Soviet airspace. Several times he compared the KAL incident to Sweden's reaction to alleged violations of its waters by Soviet submarines, claiming "it is bad when an aircraft is shot down, but that is the world in which we live." (Remarks to the Canadian House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, reported in \textit{Svenska Dagbladet}, July 30, 1984.)


\textsuperscript{58} \textit{Frankfurter Rundschau}, June 1, 1981.

\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Yomiuri Shimbun}, November 14, 1983.
do not allow nuclear weapons to be based on their territory but that cooperate with U.S. military forces in other ways. Arbatov, for example, invoked the nuclear danger in discussing the status of Spain, a country whose Parliament has voted not to allow nuclear weapons at U.S. bases within its borders:

Interviewer: With regard to Spain's international situation, from the Soviet viewpoint what differences are there between Spain's present role as a U.S. ally with military bases on its territory and Spain as a member fully integrated into NATO's military structure?

Arbatov: We do not approve of the presence of any U.S. or NATO military bases, including those in Spain. It was more understandable in the past, when Spain and the Soviet Union did not even maintain diplomatic relations and Spain had a different policy. Now it is more difficult to explain. I am referring to the policy of having U.S. nuclear weapons in military bases on its territory.

Interviewer: But the Spanish government has given guarantees that there are no nuclear weapons on its territory. Are they perhaps not to be believed?

Arbatov: But nuclear weapons can be transferred there. Well, at least it is a very ambiguous situation. And if Spain takes another step toward greater integration into NATO, we must regard it in the light of our assessment of NATO as an organization hostile to the USSR, an organization expressly created against the USSR.60

Similarly, Central Committee apparatchik Stanislav Menshikov told an Australian television audience in 1983 that Australia "would no doubt be one of the targets of a nuclear attack" in a nuclear war. Speaking bluntly, Menshikov said that U.S. "bases" would be destroyed as well as facilities not connected with them, such as ports in which American ships might dock.61 The "bases" to which Menshikov alluded do not contain nuclear weapons, although they are reported to help the United States track Soviet activities.62

Not surprisingly, Soviet officials also invoke the danger of nuclear war in addressing audiences in countries that do not have nuclear weapons on their territory, that do not contain U.S. bases, and that are not even allied with the United States. For example, Arbatov has told Swedish audiences that although "Sweden was able to remain neutral and almost entirely unharmed according to its own decision" in World

60El Pais, October 20, 1984.
61Reported by TANJUG, July 25, 1983.
War II, “in a nuclear war [Sweden] can never manage equally well . . ., because a nuclear war will bring about such destruction that hardly any part of Europe will be able to survive.” According to Arbatov, it follows from this fact that “Sweden’s neutrality must be an active neutrality. This means that you must very actively participate in efforts to carry out very radical improvements, that is, to secure very solid guarantees against a nuclear war and for disarmament.”\textsuperscript{63} In Soviet parlance, an “active” policy is one that supports Soviet proposals.

Although these interviews contain dozens of references to Soviet concerns about nuclear war, it is impossible to extract from them an accurate picture of concrete Soviet fears that could be of use to Western policymakers in formulating arms-control or crisis-management policies. It may be that Soviet officials privately see certain Western policies as particularly threatening. In their interviews, however, Soviet officials invoke the nuclear specter indiscriminately. From MX and other major strategic programs on the one extreme to Sweden’s foreign policy on the other, any issue can serve as a pretext for Soviet officials to raise this specter. The indiscriminate use of the nuclear war motif suggests that Zagladin and Arbatov, and Soviet policymakers in general, are more interested in promoting Soviet political objectives than in conveying to Western audiences authentic Soviet assessments of the likelihood of nuclear war.

**ATTITUDES TOWARD THE UNITED STATES**

Apart from the incessant drumbeat about the danger of nuclear war, the most salient feature of Arbatov’s pronouncements is the extent to which they reflect a visceral dislike of the United States. Zagladin and Arbatov both object to American policy, but only Arbatov routinely disparages American culture, the U.S. political system, and other aspects of American life. In interviews with Western media, Arbatov has used the phrases “provincial ideologues,”\textsuperscript{64} “militarist and extremist,”\textsuperscript{65} “ignorant,”\textsuperscript{66} “illiterate about foreign affairs,”\textsuperscript{67} “extremely obtuse and [who] know nothing of politics,”\textsuperscript{68} “trogloidyte anti-

\textsuperscript{63}\textit{Stockholm Domestic Service}, September 7, 1982.
\textsuperscript{64}\textit{La Repubblica}, January 24, 1984.
\textsuperscript{65}\textit{The Guardian}, October 27, 1983.
\textsuperscript{66}\textit{Tbid}.
\textsuperscript{67}\textit{BBC Television}, November 2, 1983.
\textsuperscript{68}\textit{Hamburg ARD}, May 13, 1982.
Commissars,” 69 “Neanderthal people,” 70 and “cowboys” 71 to describe either the President or his advisers. In his writings in the Soviet press, Arbatov has been even more vitriolic. At the height of the Soviet campaign against INF, he accused the Reagan administration of “outright medievalism” and suggested that some administration officials “had been found in need of medical help.” 72 Zagladin generally has been much more restrained in his criticisms of the U.S. administration, although he has claimed that Reagan is unique in his anti-Sovietism. As he told an American reporter, “As long as I can remember, only in 1919 did some U.S. politicians announce that the main aim of the USA was to abolish socialism. In this, Reagan is a unique case.” 73

Arbatov and Zagladin differ not only as personalities but in their fundamental interpretations of the United States and the forces that determine its policy. As a Communist ideologue, Zagladin applies what can only be called a highly orthodox Marxist-Leninist framework in analyzing the United States. Informed by an Austrian reporter that a Democratic administration could come to power, he replied, “I do not know about that… Should new elections be held, something might change, but it does not necessarily have to change. The present situation in American democracy is such that big capital at any rate enforces what it wants.” 74

While Zagladin adheres to the orthodox Marxist-Leninist view that “big capital” controls America, he admits that “capital” is split on how to deal with external challenges:

[The events of the recent past show that there is a discussion within the ruling circles in the United States as well as in West Europe. The Reagan administration today is doing what it wants. But there is another trend, and not only in the Democratic but also in the Republican party. There is not merely a discussion going on between the doves and the hawks. This discussion is a tactical one. However, another issue is at stake: How can the continuation of the capitalist system in America be ensured? The group around Reagan believes that this can be accomplished by power politics. Power politics vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, power politics vis-à-vis the West European countries, power politics vis-à-vis the developing countries.]

The other group is beginning to understand that an approach like

70BBC World Service, July 20, 1981.
71Ibid.
72Pravda, March 17, 1983.
74Volksstimme, April 7, 1983. Volksstimme is a Communist publication, which in part accounts for the ideological emphasis in Zagladin’s reply.
Reagan’s is dangerous. *This Reagan policy cannot save capitalism, but it might possibly destroy everything.* . . .

In Europe, for example, this second trend is much more pronounced than in the United States. We have not created this contradiction. . . . But, naturally, we are for cooperation with the men of the second trend whenever possible.75

In contrast to Zagladin’s orthodox Marxist-Leninist framework, Arbatov often uses categories that could be derived from New Left or “revisionist” critiques of American foreign policy in his analyses of the United States. There is less ideology and more psychology in Arbatov’s assessments. In explaining, for example, why President Reagan moderated his initial opposition to arms control, Arbatov referred not to a split within “capital” but to popular pressure born of anxiety. As he told an Austrian newspaper, “Eventually, the President-elect made arms control and readiness for peace his main argument. This characterizes at least the subliminal mood of the population.”76

Arbatov is particularly interested in external and internal constraints on the ability of a U.S. president to conduct policy toward the Soviet Union. In his Soviet writings and in his interviews abroad, Arbatov several times has stated that “Reagan can only be good to the extent that he is not allowed to be bad.”77 Factors that do not “allow Reagan to be bad” include domestic political pressures, economic constraints, and the preferences of U.S. allies.

Shortly before Reagan was elected President, Arbatov told an American audience, “In the U.S. itself, it won’t be easy to endlessly increase a military budget. Washington can’t cut back severely on social appropriations.”78 More often, he stresses the direct and indirect effects of allied sentiment on U.S. policy, rather than U.S. domestic pressures. For example, he told a Dutch newspaper, “It remains clear that no matter how far Reagan would like to go, the opposition to his policies can only, indeed will, increase. Add to that our policies, the opposition of his allies, and the whole international situation with all its various forces, and it is clear that we must never lose sight of the world as a whole.”79

Speaking to audiences outside the United States, Arbatov urges allies to become “active” in working to undercut U.S. policy and has

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75 *Volkstimme*, April 7, 1983 (italics added).
76 *Die Presse*, December 15, 1980.
77 *De Volkskrant*, December 6, 1983.
79 *De Volkskrant*, December 6, 1983.
suggested that these allies have had some (in his view) positive effects on the United States. For example, he told Spiegel, "The FRG and other NATO states have gotten Washington to use different words for the past few years," and urged the West Germans to exert greater pressures on the United States. Speaking to U.S. audiences, Arbatov invokes the alleged unwillingness of the allies to support the United States to argue against assertive American policies toward the Soviet Union:

[T]he U.S. allies very probably won’t simply follow the leader without thinking of their own interests. They are greatly vulnerable to a small war in Europe, which may be considered “tactical” from the American viewpoint. And take economic relations. West German trade with the U.S. is about as great as with Eastern Europe. The picture is similar for other West Europeans’ trade.\textsuperscript{51}

In analyzing U.S. policy, one of Arbatov’s favorite themes is that the United States is “militaristic” and dangerous because its elites are unable to adjust to becoming an “ordinary” country. In addressing American audiences, Arbatov tries to foster the idea that global tensions are not the product of Soviet aggression or even the unavoidable result of two rival powers competing for influence, but are rather the product of an unwillingness on the part of U.S. leaders to adjust to change. He urges Americans to view international developments not in terms of Soviet gains, but rather in terms of an inevitable passing of an era of American “exceptionalism”—to think of the period of containment (1947 to 1968) as historically “abnormal,” and of the 1970s as the beginning of a transition to a more historically “normal” period. He told one American audience:

It began to look to many Americans that the time of Manifest Destiny had arrived—the American Century—and that you could either stamp over people or buy them. You assumed that you would have perpetual eminence. Then, things began to change.

You lost your nuclear monopoly. You began to meet with strong economic competition—from Japan and Western Europe, for example. By the end of the 1960s you were at a crossroads. You had to find a way out. You had to find ways to adjust to the new situation, to new forces in the world which caught you up in Vietnam and Iran. The world had changed since the end of the Second World War and that era will not be repeated. It is a new world.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{50}Der Spiegel, October 24, 1983.
Arbatov gives the same speech, with slight variations, to audiences outside the United States. He shrewdly tries to associate Soviet difficulties with the United States with those between the United States and its allies, thereby seeking to establish a link between the United States' unwillingness to accede to Soviet political demands and what he portrays as an American reluctance to accept the relative rise—economic and political—of U.S. allies and friendly third world countries.

Frequently, Arbatov advises that the United States should learn to become more "humble" in its dealings with other countries. As he told an American audience:

There are chances for all countries to learn to be more humble, because life today tends to be extremely complicated. There was a time when the British thought that this was their century and they acted accordingly. Maybe the French and the Germans also had dangerous illusions. . . . The Americans went through such a period as well, and I do not think they are completely cured of these illusions.\(^\text{82}\)

The "humbility" theme is one that other USA Institute personnel have echoed. In response to an unusual question by a BBC reporter, Arbatov's colleague Genrikh Trofimenko also listed humility as a quality that he found lacking in American policy:

Interviewer (after complaints from Trofimenko about U.S. foreign policy): What sort of American policy do you think the Soviet Union deserves?

Trofimenko: That is a very, very, quite an unusual way to put the question about American foreign policy . . . . I think, to everyone's satisfaction, that policy could be more restrained, more humble, I would say, a policy of accommodation, a policy of reconciliation, a policy of deciding collectively what you have to do with the world, or what you have to do with this or that question, not the policy of unilateral dictation.

Interviewer: Is the policy of the Soviet Union a humble one?

\(^{\text{82}}\)Atlas World Press Review, September 1983. Applying the "humbility" theme to Central America, Arbatov claimed, "The Soviet Union is not bent upon threatening U.S. security in Central America. We cannot be blamed for the socialist revolutions in Cuba and Nicaragua. The U.S. position supporting the dictatorships was to blame. The United States should learn a lesson from these historical facts. I would like to say the United States should become more humble." (Yomiuri Shimbun, November 14, 1983.)
Trofimenko: I think it is much more humble in comparison not only with American policies but many others. 4

Arbatov's emphasis on the need for American "humility" and his efforts to portray American opposition to Soviet actions as a product of a generalized failure to adjust to change may account for the enormous importance that he attaches to the strategic nuclear competition and to the Soviet Union's ability to hit the United States with a devastating nuclear strike. Unlike Zagladin, who rarely talks about the nuclear competition and who reflects a certain self-assurance about the moral and intellectual correctness of Soviet ideology, Arbatov sees nuclear weapons as the key to Soviet equality and American recognition of Soviet legitimacy. As he told a Japanese newspaper, "Achieving strategic parity has always been a condition of being treated as an equal by the U.S. We have to come to terms with the reality that many Americans regard us an illegitimate child of history, as an abnormality which has to be corrected." 85

Arbatov's purpose in emphasizing the Soviet Union's ability to strike the United States with nuclear weapons appears to be to sow doubts about the credibility and competence of American policy. He argues that the American people are unable to adjust to the unprecedented state of vulnerability brought about by the development of Soviet capabilities. Because of their general inexperience of war and their dislike of this new vulnerability, Americans are simultaneously more and less concerned about the nuclear danger than are the "Europeans." As he told an Italian newspaper, "The Europeans are more aware [than the Americans] of the threat of a nuclear disaster. It is easier for us to talk with them because we know what war is. I believe that the Americans imagine war, and particularly war on their own territory, in somewhat abstract terms." 86 But Arbatov also argues that the same Americans who have an "abstract" view of nuclear war and an inadequate awareness of its consequences are dangerous precisely because they are so afraid of the danger posed to them by Soviet weapons:

For over 200 years the United States lived in complete security across the ocean, with very weak neighbors, and therefore long had the feeling of running no risks. Suddenly, however, it discovered that it was similar to us poor Europeans, that is, vulnerable and within range of weapons and therefore also liable to possible destruction.

84BBC Domestic Service, February 27, 1982.
85 The Daily Yomiuri, December 6, 1981.
86 La Repubblica, March 29-30, 1981.
The first reaction was purely U.S.—namely, to try to overcome these things by paying the price in cash or technology.\textsuperscript{67}

In claiming that the United States is at once vulnerable and dangerous, Arbatov appeals both to those in Europe who doubt the credibility of American nuclear guarantees and to those who fear that the United States will uphold its guarantees in a way that may mean the destruction of Europe. He also insinuates that the arms race is mainly a product of an American failure to adjust to new realities.

**THE GLOBAL BALANCE**

Arbatov and Zagadlin both claim that the Soviet Union requires military forces capable of simultaneously counterbalancing those of the United States, NATO Europe, and Japan. Sometimes China is classed as a potential adversary as well. Asked about French President Mitterrand’s claim that the Soviet Union had achieved military supremacy in Europe, Arbatov replied that “in planning for its defense, the Soviet Union has to consider, as possible adversaries at least, the United States, its European allies, and Japan, which is allied with the United States.”\textsuperscript{68}

In making this argument, Arbatov generally sidesteps suggestions that matching three or four potential adversaries in effect represents a bid for Soviet superiority over the United States as well as over any combination of Eurasian powers:

Interviewer: ... you call the United States, Western Europe, Japan and China potential adversaries... Is that not an argument for military superiority for the Soviet Union vis-à-vis the United States?

Arbatov: It only means that we attribute special significance to military security. We would much rather achieve this security by political means, through détente and disarmament. Nobody in our country has the illusion of being able to gain superiority over all the others.\textsuperscript{69}

In this reply, Arbatov shows the delicate balancing act that Soviet propagandists must perform when discussing the global military balance. On the one hand, they want to generate sympathy by pointing out the Soviet Union’s many potential enemies and its global “encirclement.” On the other hand, they seem to be afraid that if they go too

\textsuperscript{67} L’Espresso, November 27, 1983.

\textsuperscript{68} Politique Étrangère, No. 1, 1983.

\textsuperscript{69} Der Spiegel, March 23, 1981.
far in complaining about their strategic situation, they may be seen as admitting weaknesses that their rivals then might be able to exploit. Thus Arbatov quickly adds, "By the way, we are sufficiently armed to beat every attacker back." Moreover, he admits that the chief objective of Soviet policy is to negate the very "encirclement" to which the USSR appeals in justifying Soviet force levels. As he told the same interviewer, "Only a very bad policy could lead to a joint military attack by the four. That can be avoided by good policy."

Like other Soviet spokesmen, Arbatov treats "balance" and "parity" as existential conditions "that have been created" or "have come about." (The passive voice is almost always used, perhaps to avoid stating that the USSR was behind and made efforts to catch up.) Although the West is said to be perpetually striving for superiority over the East, actual achievement of superiority is ruled out. By the same token, it is impossible for the Soviet Union to achieve or even aspire to superiority over its rivals. To make the latter point, Arbatov frequently points up the disparity in population and economic potential between the Soviet Union and its potential adversaries: "[W]ith 25 per cent of the gross national product and 15 per cent of the population of these four, we can never be militarily stronger than these four together."^{90}

The theme of Soviet inferiority in size of economy and population is one that recurs frequently in Arbatov's interviews, although different ratios and different combinations of potential adversaries are used. (Omitting China, he told an American publication, "We feel confident that we have a dependable defense. But our gross national product is only 60–70 percent of yours. If you combine NATO and Japan, then we have about 30 percent of your GNP and much less population."^{91}) But Arbatov never explains why he believes the Soviet Union is entitled to match, at the military level, the combined resources of its potential adversaries. Zagladin, who generally exudes optimism about the Soviet Union's economic and social achievements, never refers to Soviet economic inferiority in laying claim to military parity.

The interviews suggest that these officials see arms control as a mechanism for codifying the "existential" East-West balance, but not as a way to rectify alleged imbalances—which by definition cannot be said to exist. Arbatov is in fact quick to dismiss suggestions that the Soviet Union might negotiate away some of its hard-won military achievements in arms-control talks with the United States. Asked by an Italian correspondent why the United States was more open than

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^{90}Ibid.

the Soviet Union about its military programs, Arbatov replied, “We are not so secretive and they are not so open. For instance, they have said everything about the MX missiles, including technical characteristics. In some cases they hope to achieve an exchange between what we already have and what they only have on the drawing board.” He also expressed contempt for the failure of the United States to take unilateral steps to overcome asymmetries about which Americans sometimes complain:

There is a lot of talk about Soviet tanks. Why have Americans complained for thirty years about our tanks? You have a first class auto and tractor industry and a lot of money. You could have built tanks, but you preferred to introduce more sophisticated anti-tank weapons, so you shouldn’t complain. You have superiority in GNP and people and you were not limited by any treaties, so if your country felt that something was wrong it should have rectified it.

In short, if the United States has not rectified the imbalance, it must not exist, hence allegations that it does exist are evidence of striving for superiority.

Although Arbatov claims that a balance exists and that the Soviet Union has taken steps to assure that it is able to “beat back every attacker,” he nonetheless resents the fact that the United States has friendly neighbors. As he snapped to a West German reporter, “Throughout this world everybody feels encircled by everybody, with the sole exception of the United States, which is encircled only by Canada and Mexico.” Arbatov uses the Soviet Union’s alleged disadvantages to justify many aspects of Soviet policy. Asked about the Soviet military buildup, he replied, “I wonder how the Americans would act if instead of their secure border with Canada in the north they had a border like ours in the west with massive forces from NATO on the other side? No, we are not paranoid. But we are cautious, and with good reason.” Asked why the Soviet Union is not more open about its defense data, he replied, “That is a sensitive question. Here we are dealing with divergent traditions and political mechanisms. A land that has had to suffer so much under foreign aggression as ours is obviously more cautious with defense data than a country like the United States.” Asked by a Japanese reporter about continued Soviet occupation of the Northern Territories, he replied, “It’s easy to exploit

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92L’Unità, February 27, 1983 (italics added).
94Der Spiegel, October 24, 1983.
95Hufvudstadsbladet, April 26, 1982.
96De Volkskrant, March 16, 1981.
the Northern Territories as a polemical gimmick. It is so difficult to look at a situation from another nation's point of view. It is, for example, very difficult for others to understand the psychological consequences of our own history of 'encirclement'.'

Zagladin is much less prone than Arbatov to invoke insecurity and encirclement in defending Soviet policy. Instead, he takes a less "militarized" but more militant view of international politics. In discussing weapons deployments, he tends to downplay the threat they pose to the physical security of the Soviet Union and to stress instead their symbolic role in the power struggle between East and West, as is evident in the following exchange regarding INF:

Interviewer: Do you believe that the older soldiers of the Bundeswehr want to assault Russia once more or that Bonn wants to have a revenge—this time with American missiles?

Zagladin: *It is not this that matters to those now advocating the new U.S. missiles, but simply the change in the power ratio.* According to Secretary of State Haig the Soviet Union has about 1,040 medium-range weapons. In Western Europe, too, there are about 1,000 means of delivery now and should the NATO decision be implemented they will number as many as about 1,600, meaning a predominance.

Zagladin interprets East-West détente and especially the Soviet-West German Ostpolitik as a broad political framework, the norms of which take precedence over purely intra-NATO arrangements and constrain West European policy toward Eastern Europe. As in the case of the crisis in Poland, Zagladin appealed to the "Helsinki charter" in arguing the inadmissibility of alleged Western interference in West Germany. He also argued that NATO's INF deployments were incompatible with and indeed rendered unnecessary by Ostpolitik. As he told Spiegel, "The NATO decision is at odds with any reasonable Ostpolitik. More and more I get the impression that these missiles were targeted not only at the Soviet Union but at the federal government." And, as he remarked to an Italian newspaper, "Ostpolitik and the treaties which have been signed exclude Germany's need for the Pershing." After the first INF missiles were deployed, Zagladin stressed not only the change in the military situation, but the political implications of U.S.-West European security cooperation:

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97 The Daily Yomiuri, December 8, 1981.
98 Der Spiegel, June 9, 1981 (italics added).
99 Ibid.
100 Paese Sera, January 24, 1983.
[T]he danger of the present situation in Western Europe is not confined to [the military danger]. The fact is that the missiles' deployment implies a substantial shift by the countries on whose territories they are sited away from the line laid down in 1975 in Helsinki. It is a matter of associating these countries with the U.S. plans to jeopardize the USSR’s security.  

Zagladin’s characterization of the INF deployments as a violation of the Helsinki “line” and of Soviet-West German Ostpolitik reflects his long-standing interest in promoting a European security system, which Arbatov also supports but generally accords less importance in his statements.

A few Soviet officials are even more straightforward than Zagladin in defending Soviet policy on grounds of politics and principle rather than with reference to the alleged insecurities that figure so prominently in Arbatov's statements. Particularly noteworthy is Aleksandr Bovin, who gave a very different answer than Arbatov to why the Soviet Union will not discuss a return of the four Japanese islands:

Interviewer: . . . is it for military reasons that the Soviet Union cannot return the Northern Territories?

Bovin: This involves an important issue. It is a principled position of the Soviet Union that it will reject any proposal aimed at readjusting territorial delineations reached as a result of the Second World War. It took us thirty years to make Europe understand this position, which was at last recognized at the Helsinki Conference. . . . Our position of preserving political and geographical borders delineated after the Second World War is also applicable to Asia.  

Bovin also gave a very straightforward view of the crisis in Poland, stressing prestige rather than insecurity as a motivating force for the Soviet leadership:

It is not a matter of our physical security. . . . It is a matter of relations between a great power and smaller states that are Socialist states. Not only security is at stake but ideology as well. For example, if Lech Walesa became leader of Poland, Poland would leave the Warsaw Pact. That would not be a threat to our physical security, but it would be a terrible loss of prestige. It would be like what happened to you in Iran. When the United States was thrown out of Iran, the United States lost prestige everywhere.  

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102 *Mainichi Shim bun*, April 21, 1981.
THE ROLE OF WESTERN EUROPE AND JAPAN

Statements by Soviet officials about the role of Western Europe and Japan must be seen in the context of authoritative assessments by the Soviet Communist party on the nature and importance of "intra-imperialist contradictions." Since the early 1970s, authoritative Soviet sources have claimed that world "imperialism" is now subdivided into three "centers": the United States, Western Europe, and Japan. They also claim that a primary objective of Soviet foreign policy is to foster "contradictions" between these "centers." Interviews by Arbatov and Zagladin show how they believe these "contradictions" can be exacerbated and for what purposes.

Addressing audiences in Western Europe and Japan, Arbatov and Zagladin explicitly state that the long-range objective of Soviet policy is the breakup of the existing alliance structures and, by implication, the withdrawal of American power from Europe and Northeast Asia. As Arbatov told a French journal, "We start with the fact that this confrontation is not normal and that in the future these blocs, or at least their military organizations, must be liquidated." Asked by a West German reporter whether the Soviet Union favored neutrality for the Federal Republic, Zagladin replied that "on a short-term basis this would be unrealistic," but he added, "we have always advocated a dissolution of the blocs, thinking of this as a long-term target even now."  

In discussing the international roles of Western Europe and Japan, Arbatov has adopted the terms "bipolarity" and "multipolarity" from the Western literature on international relations. But he uses these terms in a carefully defined manner. In late 1983, when the Soviet leadership sought to give the impression that an exasperated Soviet Union was finally "giving up" on dealing with the Reagan administration, Arbatov began to stress the importance of fostering multiple power centers. As he told a French newspaper:

We are in favor of West Europe playing a far more important role in world politics, like Japan and like China. That would not simplify the problems; it would make some of them more complex. We would have to talk with many countries, but I believe that it would be better, because it would be more in keeping with reality.... [The existing bipolar] structure is a combat, cold war structure which dates from the time when West Europe was very weak politically and economically, and the very strong United States was attempting to

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105 Politique Étrangère, No. 1, 1983.
106 Der Spiegel, June 9, 1981.
rally all possible allies against the Soviet Union. This is no longer the real balance of forces, and there are many more power centers.\textsuperscript{107}

But, as was noted above, Arbatov does not accept “multipolarity” when it comes to calculating the global military balance. Like other Soviet officials, he defends the Soviet Union’s right to match the combined military potential of all the other world “poles.” From Arbatov’s perspective, then, the loosening of bipolar structures is good if it lessens U.S. influence, but bad if it entails efforts by Western Europe and Japan to increase their ability to stand up to the Soviet Union independently of the United States. He made this point in the same interview:

Interviewer: Have you ever considered that a more united Western Europe would be able to react more freely, be more independent of the United States?

Arbatov: The USSR would judge it in a world context. The assessment would not be the same in a context of détente as in a context of cold war and strengthening of military potentials. But when you talk about European unity, is it not in order to face up to the East better? Would that Europe become a military organization?

Arbatov himself appears to have concluded that prospects for European unification and Western Europe taking on more responsibility for its own defense are rather small. He told the same interviewer:

I believe that many Europeans display over-optimism when they talk about a united Western Europe. It is a very ambiguous concept. Remember Lenin and what he said about the plan for a United States of Europe . . . .

The Europeans are sometimes so optimistic that they forget the troubles they have . . . . the Corsicans, the Basques, not to mention the Common Market’s problems.

Confident that any move toward greater West European or Japanese autonomy would not be accompanied by greater defense efforts directed at the Soviet Union, Arbatov inveighs against the “passivity” of these power centers and calls on them to adopt more “active” foreign policies. Traditionally, Soviet speakers reserve the term “active” for countries such as Finland, Sweden, and Austria, which often are exhorted to support Soviet proposals for the cause of peace.\textsuperscript{108} But since late 1983,

\textsuperscript{107} \textit{Le Matin}, March 29, 1984.

\textsuperscript{108} Arbatov told a Swedish radio audience, “Sweden’s neutrality must be an active neutrality. This means that you must very actively participate in efforts to carry out very radical improvements, that is, to secure very solid guarantees against a nuclear war and for disarmament. . . . Several neutral countries, among them Austria and Finland,
Arbatov has been directing calls for "active" policies at other countries in Western Europe as well as at Japan, as is seen in the following exchange which took place between Arbatov and Christoph Bertram, the director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, during a panel discussion in Tokyo:

Bertram: But what do you want Japan to do in addition to what it is already doing? It spends less on defense than any other industrialized country; the self-defense forces are underequipped. They are repeatedly pressured by the U.S. to increase their defense spending and yet they have remained reluctant to do so; they have a Constitution which prevents them from becoming a fully fledged military power. If there was ever a non-aggressive country, it is Japan.

Arbatov: I am not blaming Japan for being aggressive. I blame them for being passive.

Bertram: If you were in the situation of Japan with four islands occupied by a country which then calls for confidence-building measures...

Arbatov: This is a counter-productive example.  

In contrast to Arbatov, who tends to look upon Europe for the influence it can exert on the United States, Zagladin is more interested in the internal dynamics of West European politics. He is also a strong advocate of Soviet proposals for the creation of an all-European security system. He often portrays Europe as a collection of individual countries, all of which are participating to one degree or another in joining with the Soviet Union to fashion a new all-European order. As he told a West German newspaper:

Helsinki, the place of the signing of the CSCE Final Act, has become the symbol of a process which continued slowly but permanently, although not equally among all states. Austria, for instance, was more strongly involved in the détente process, while England was less involved. Good headway has been achieved as a whole. Much closer cooperation exists now in the economic field.

Against this background, Zagladin draws rather fine distinctions between the various European countries with regard to their policies toward the USSR and their perceived degree of support for the emerging all-European system. Asked by an Italian reporter about the role

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have acted in this way. Sweden, too, has done so occasionally." (Stockholm Domestic Service, September 7, 1982.)

109 The Daily Yomiuri, December 6, 1981.

110 Frankfurter Rundschau, June 1, 1981.
of Helmut Schmidt in the INF controversy, Zagladin claimed that he “would rather not assign grades to the various European governments,” but then went on to add:

What I can tell you, however, is that we in Moscow were unpleasantly surprised by Italy’s vacillating stance, especially if we compare this attitude to Germany’s. And we regret this, because Italy is a country with which we have begun major economic exchanges, with which we have broad cultural cooperation and with which we intended to increase our political cooperation more and more. But unfortunately our hopes have been dashed…" 111

On other occasions, he has singled France out for particular praise. He remarked in early 1981, “We greatly appreciated Giscard d’Estaing’s visit to Warsaw last year. That visit was the starting point for some major steps in international policy. We are often able to make progress with France.” 112 Not surprisingly, Finland frequently crops up in Zagladin’s remarks as an example of how a state should conduct policy toward the Soviet Union:

Finland has good relations with the neighboring Soviet Union and has very intensive trade exchanges with the Soviet Union. Its shipyards work almost exclusively for us; its timber industry is practically linked to our economy. We are at present constructing a metallurgical plant together, and we have constructed nuclear power plants for Finland which, according to Finnish experts, work better than any other nuclear power plant in the world. They are as perfect as the best make of Swiss watch. Where are the negative effects, then? Has Finland lost its independence? No. 113

In promoting his vision of an all-European system, Zagladin frequently stresses the commonality of security interests between Western Europe and the Soviet Union. Implicit in his appeals is the assumption that were it not for the United States, Western Europe (and Japan) would have no need to fear the Soviet Union. On several occasions, Zagladin has admitted that the Soviet Union feels no threat from Western Europe as such. He told a German newspaper in 1981, “The states of East and West Europe do not threaten each other. The frequently mentioned Soviet danger is nonexistent, which is known to leading Bonn politicians and which they have said occasionally. We equally do not feel threatened by West European states. They do not

111 La Repubblica, May 8, 1982.
112 Le Point, March 2, 1981.
113 La Stampa, November 25, 1979.
have plans to attack.” Before tactical requirements dictated a shift of focus to the French and British forces, Zagladin even went as far as to claim that he did not feel threatened by French nuclear weapons. After characterizing the Pershing II as a first-strike weapon, he added, “Of course you can say that there are also French missiles. But, you know, I believe the Europeans do not have any aggressive attitude toward us. But the Americans say quite openly that they are preparing for the first strike.”

To promote the theme that West European and Soviet security interests are convergent, Zagladin has adopted the West German Social Democratic slogan of “common security.” As Zagladin told a West German audience:

All of us must realize together that it is impossible now to have security just for your own country in Europe. Every atom bomb ignited at some place in Europe is a danger for all Europeans. The security of the Federal Republic is therefore important for us too. Your security and ours are the same. Our common security is not being threatened by Moscow or by Bonn, but by Washington.

In one interview, Zagladin also made clear that unlike the leaders of the Italian Communist party, he did not see any inconsistency between a tough Soviet policy and Soviet efforts to encourage the growth of the Western peace movement:

Interviewer: It has happened that the movements for peace and disarmament have been in conflict [with Soviet foreign policy]; they have even interfered with each other, after certain events like those which occurred in Afghanistan in 1979 and in Poland in 1981, events which involve you directly or indirectly.

Zagladin: That is not true. The peace movement has never been so extensive in Europe as it was after Afghanistan in 1979–1980. If there was a delay it was in Italy. . . . In other countries, if anything it was the opposite that happened, because it was then that the movement against the Pershings and cruise [missiles] reached its peak. As for the influence of Poland, a meeting has just ended in Vienna with the participation of all the political forces concerned at a highly qualified level. All over Europe there are many initiatives, meetings, congresses, and demonstrations occurring and being prepared.

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114 Frankfurter Rundschau, June 1, 1981.
116 Frankfurter Rundschau, June 1, 1981.
117 Paese Sera, February 8, 1982.
The interviews suggest that there are no fundamental differences between Arbatov and Zagladin in their attitudes toward Western Europe and Japan. Both support the established Soviet "line" regarding the second and third "centers" of "world imperialism." Within the context of this basic support for Soviet policy, however, there are differences of emphasis. Arbatov is more interested in Japan and Western Europe as forces capable of influencing American policy. Zagladin is also interested in influencing the United States, but he seems much more impressed with the depth and permanence of "intra-imperialist" contradictions. He therefore devotes a great deal of attention to Soviet policies designed to woo Western Europe and Japan away from the United States. Arbatov seems somewhat skeptical of these policies. However, he is more aware than Zagladin of the extent to which American policy is subject to popular and allied pressures.
IV. CONCLUSIONS

In the West it is frequently suggested that Arbatov, largely because of his support for the Brezhnev policy of détente and his frequent comments about the danger of nuclear war, represents the “dovish” end of the Soviet political spectrum.¹ In contrast, Zagladin is almost invariably classed as a “hardliner,” albeit a highly intelligent one who has an excellent grasp of the internal politics of Western countries.

However, analysis of the interviews does not support the conclusion that Arbatov’s and Zagladin’s views can be differentiated by terms such as “hard” or “soft.” Both men uncompromisingly defend the Soviet Union on every issue. Nevertheless, these two officials do appear to differ in other respects. Each tends to view the same issues from a slightly different perspective. Arbatov is clearly obsessed by military, and especially strategic nuclear, matters in a way that Zagladin is not. By the same token, Zagladin retains a certain optimism about the prospects for revolution and the ultimate vindication of Marxist-Leninist ideology that is largely absent in Arbatov’s statements.² There also seem to be differences between their motives for promoting Soviet interests. Arbatov seems chiefly driven by an emotional and deep-seated anti-Americanism, whereas Zagladin appears to be attracted by the “positive” elements in Soviet dogma: promotion of collective security under Soviet sponsorship, support for revolution and “progressive” change throughout the world, and “building socialism” at home.

¹Former British Labour party leader Michael Foot has claimed that Arbatov’s position in the Soviet elite is analogous to that of George F. Kennan and Paul Warnke in the United States. (See the preface by Foot to Georgi Arbatov and Willem Oltmans, Cold War or Détente: The Soviet Viewpoint, Zed Books, London, 1983, p. xi.) Canadian Sovietologist Franklyn Griffiths has called Arbatov the outstanding Soviet exponent of a “reformative internationalism” (as opposed to the “expansionist internationalism” favored by such specialists as the late N. N. Inozemtsev and his successor at IMEMO, N. N. Iakovlev) that is characterized by a desire to “work out a long-term stabilization of political and military relations with the main opponent.” (“The Sources of American Conduct: Soviet Perspectives and Their Policy Implications,” International Security, Vol. 9, No. 2 (1984), p. 34.) For a dissenting view, reportedly held by certain French officials, that Arbatov is a hardliner eager to humiliate the United States, see Barbara Spinelli’s dispatch in La Repubblica, February 18, 1984.

²“As Zagladin told an Italian newspaper in response to criticisms of the Soviet domestic order: “Building socialism is a long-term undertaking, a heroic task even in the wake of the drive and enthusiasm of the Revolution. It is 65 years, now, since that October. What was happening in the world 75 years after the bourgeois revolution of 1789? The Restoration, and a mostly feudal Europe. And 65 years after Cromwell’s revolution in England? Nothing. Yet, 65 years after October, the world has changed, and it will go on changing, which means that the internal energy of that event has only begun to yield its fruits.” (Paese Sera, January 24, 1983.)

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These differences probably can be explained in part by the fact that Arbatov and Zagladin hold different posts in the Soviet system. As a top “America expert,” Arbatov is almost required to view issues through an anti-U.S. perspective. As a leading Communist party apparatchik, Zagladin is probably required to give greater support to the positive elements in Soviet dogma. But these differences of outlook are probably more than just the product of different roles— they most likely also reflect genuinely different ways of perceiving the world.

At the risk of oversimplification, one could characterize Zagladin as a “revolutionary” and Arbatov as an “anti-American.” These labels convey a sense not only of the motives that seem to drive each man, but of the intellectual framework through which each views the world. As a “revolutionary,” Zagladin sees the United States as the chief obstacle to the achievement of Soviet objectives. But his main interest seems to be the objectives, not the United States. As an “anti-American,” Arbatov seems to regard the pursuit of Soviet objectives chiefly as a means to undercut the United States. His main interest is the United States, not the declared Soviet objective of world revolution or the preservation of peace.

It is difficult to say which man is more dangerous from the Western point of view or which is more effective in promoting Soviet interests. In view of the fact that anti-Americanism of one sort or another (stemming from economic, religious, cultural, or other factors) is far more prevalent throughout the world than are trust in the Soviet Union and belief in Marxism-Leninism, Arbatov may be more in tune with the “subliminal mood,” to use one of his phrases, of many audiences. But Zagladin’s more positive attitude, even if it is driven by a crude and archaic ideology, may be attractive to many people as well. Zagladin’s promotion of positive Soviet themes such as “collective security,” “pan-Europeanism,” and “international economic cooperation” may be especially attractive to the non-Communist left in Western Europe, interested as it is in “third ways” between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Arbatov and Zagladin apparently both believe in the efficacy of propaganda in influencing Western policy, as is evident not only in the great amount of time and energy each man devotes to propaganda, but also in explicit statements each has made about his propaganda efforts. Arbatov told an Italian newspaper at the conclusion of a Palme Commission meeting in Rome that “policy is not formed solely by bureaucrats in their offices; policy cannot be formed without pressure from below from the public inspired by people with influence and prestige. Here in Rome we have done good work, via the newspapers and the
other media." Zagladin has made similar claims about the role propaganda can play in influencing Western policy.

While Arbatov and Zagladin share a general belief in the importance of trying to sway Western audiences, as propagandists they have rather different styles. Arbatov is a master at shading his language to appeal to particular audiences in the West. He seems equally comfortable talking about the evils of economic sanctions with the corn farmers of Iowa, about the USSR’s commitment to population growth with National Catholic Reporter, and about “crisis centers” with the dean of Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government. On the threat of nuclear war and the need for arms control, he can sound very convincing. Compared with Arbatov, Zagladin is generally less self-pitying, less eager to solicit Western sympathy for Soviet insecurities, and far less apt to invoke the specter of nuclear war to make his point. On balance, Zagladin seems more prone to making reckless and factually incorrect statements, whereas Arbatov is more skilled at slightly modifying Western points of view to give them an anti-American twist. But Zagladin’s style also seems to be effective for dealing with Western audiences. It may be that his forcefulness and his promotion of a “positive” Soviet approach to relations with the West are useful in conveying an impression of dynamism and self-confidence to West European and Japanese audiences which tend to see the Soviet Union as an ossified power that rigidly adheres to dogma.

It is difficult to measure how effective these interviews are as tools of Soviet propaganda. The one indisputable benefit that interviews with the Western media have given the Soviets is increased access to Western publics. Unlike local Communist publications or Soviet radio broadcasts, the Western commercial and state-owned media reach virtually all of the interested Western public. But there are also disadvantages associated with use of the interviews. Although the explication of Soviet positions can win adherents, it can also alienate Western audiences, particularly when these positions are patently one-sided. Perceptive Western journalists can probe for weaknesses and inconsistencies in Soviet positions. Interviews also can expose Soviet officials to questioning on embarrassing subjects such as the KAL shoot-

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5According to a Dutch newspaper reporter, “For Arbatov the standstill in the disarmament talks between East and West is an all-pervading sorrow.” (De Volkskrant, March 16, 1981.)
down or human rights. Arbatov subjected himself to ridicule on several occasions by comparing the Soviet attack on a civilian airliner with Sweden's use of depth charges against what the Swedes believed was a Soviet submarine.

Perhaps more damaging to Soviet propaganda efforts than occasional incidents such as the KAL shootdown is the difficulty any Soviet spokesman, official or unofficial, has in offering anything but a purely negative line to a Western audience. Although the interview format permits a great deal of vagueness, which often seems calculated to invite Western audiences to hope for Soviet moderation (provided the West behaves in certain ways), in the last analysis Soviet interviewees cannot escape the limitations imposed by official Soviet dogma. No Soviet official can admit the existence of basic errors in the Kremlin or even concede the right of "bourgeois" societies to exist and to defend themselves from external threat.

The negativism of the Soviet approach is evident in the way these officials handle specific issues such as arms control and foreign aid. Although Arbatov can skilfully adopt the language of Western arms-control theory to condemn U.S. strategic programs as destabilizing, he is unable to grant legitimacy to any U.S. defense posture, including one of minimum deterrence. This negative and entirely orthodox posture limits the extent to which he can build bridges to Western critics of existing U.S. policy. In the economic realm, Arbatov's approach is also fundamentally negative. Although he links arms spending to poverty in the third world in his condemnations of Western defense efforts, he cannot endorse positive measures to aid third world

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6Aleksandr Bovin once stormed out of a Copenhagen television studio when Danish journalists asked him about the existence of special stores for the Soviet elite. Bovin denied knowledge of any such stores, and angrily terminated the interview when one of the journalists gave him the address of one. (Poul Erik Petersen, "Sore Russian Walked Out of Television Interview," Berlingske Tidende, October 17, 1983.) It is unlikely that Bovin's performance advanced the Soviet cause with the average Danish viewer.

7For example, at an August 1983 meeting of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, Arbatov rejected Retired Admiral Noel Gayler's proposal that the United States (and the Soviet Union) adopt a minimum-deterrence posture. Instead, Arbatov endorsed the Soviet position that deterrence itself was unacceptable over the long run and that peace could be preserved only by "rebuilding the entire structure of international relations" along lines proposed by the Soviet Union. (Moscow Domestic Television, August 10, 1983, reported in FBIS Soviet Union Daily Report, August 12, 1983.) Arbatov spelled out this position most clearly in an interview with an Italian newspaper: "We have reached the point at which deterrence has proved to be a temporary solution, which we can leave behind by moving only in two directions. The first is to display the ability to fight and win a war, with all the known concepts of the limited nuclear war. . . . One instance of such an approach is that of Star Wars. The second way is the quest for collective security not directed against anybody, because security is indivisible." (La Repubblica, January 24, 1984.)
countries, since doing so would imply deviation from the Soviet line that poverty in the third world is the result of imperialist exploitation and that Western aid programs are a neo-colonialist sham.  

Perhaps aware of the limitations Soviet dogma imposes on propaganda efforts, the Soviets appear to be experimenting with new ways of working through the Western media. For example, in early 1984, a mysterious “Colonel X” surfaced in certain European publications. Colonel X admitted that the USSR had made “mistakes” on its southern border and added that such “mistakes” combined with “Western hysteria” could lead to war. Although Western news organizations reported that Colonel X’s views “represent[ed] an unusually flexible—and therefore encouraging—line of thought,” it is highly unlikely that he was speaking without some form of authorization from officials in Moscow.

Innovations such as these notwithstanding, on-the-record interviews by Soviet officials are likely to remain, along with APN (Novosti) dispatches, the main media vehicle by which the Soviets seek to reach Western audiences. The effectiveness of these interviews in influencing Western audiences is likely to be determined, in large part, by the skill and persistence of the Western journalists doing the interviewing. As is evident in many of the exchanges cited in this report, journalists who fail to probe for inconsistencies and contradictions can serve as unwitting instruments of Soviet propaganda. In contrast, journalists who pose difficult questions and persist in trying to obtain answers to these questions not only make it difficult for Soviet propagandists to mislead Western audiences, but can elicit information that is of interest to analysts of Soviet foreign policy as well as the general public.

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8 At a joint meeting of the Palme and Brandt Commissions, Arbatov in fact vetoed a proposal that the two commissions jointly call for an expansion of World Bank aid to third world countries. In doing so, he reflected the Soviet line that the World Bank is an “imperialist” institution. (Financial Times, January 23, 1984.)

Appendix

A NOTE ON SOURCES

The interviews analyzed in this report appeared in a variety of sources, some in the original language, others in translation. Many of the interviews with major West European and Japanese media appeared in English translation in the Foreign Broadcast Information Service Daily Report. It was not possible to obtain transcripts for some of the radio and television interviews broadcast in Europe. Excerpts from these interviews often appeared in wire service dispatches (AP, AFP, Kyodo, Reuters, UPI) or were amplified in the local Communist press. No attempt was made to determine the number of newspapers or other media that carried wire service reports of interviews that originally appeared elsewhere or that were conducted by the wire service itself for further dissemination.

All of the interviews analyzed appeared in the United States, Western Europe, or Japan. Interviews in the Soviet and East European media were not analyzed. A partial exception was made in the case of Yugoslavia, where Arbatov gave several interesting interviews. Interviews by Zagladin, and in one case Arbatov, in the Communist press of Western Europe were analyzed on the grounds that these papers (especially the Italian Communist daily L'Unità) do adopt critical stances toward the Soviet Union on some issues and do pose probing questions to the interviewees. The research turned up no interviews by Arbatov or Zagladin in third world media, although other Soviet officials have given such interviews. In addition to interviews, the report analyzes opinion/editorial pieces, articles, and letters to the editor written by Arbatov and Zagladin.

The time and energy that Arbatov and Zagladin devote to relations with the Western media have not diminished their commitments to the Eastern press or their involvement in traditional propaganda activities. Both still frequently write for the Soviet and East European press, and both appear on Soviet and East European television and radio. Arbatov writes for Moscow News, a Soviet English-language publication that is distributed in the West, and he often appears on Radio Moscow's English-language broadcasts. This study does not attempt to systematically compare statements made in these media with those published in the West, although items in the Soviet press are cited occasionally for the light they shed on particular issues.
Once the body of data was collected, it was necessary to define precisely what constituted an interview. Most of the analysis in this report is based on formal question-and-answer sessions for which transcripts are available. However, some of the interviews were brief, informal, and without an authoritative text. These interviews generally took place as Arbatov or Zagladin spoke with reporters while in transit. Apart from a few occasions on which they provided information about the health of a Soviet leader (information that invariably turned out to be false), these interviews contained little of substantive interest. In a few cases (most of them involving Communist or pro-Communist media), the “interviews” were in fact written Soviet replies to questions submitted in advance.1

The analysis also draws upon a small number of on-the-record interviews reported by Western journalists in the context of a general news story. Although such stories may be more informative than interviews for the general reader, they are less useful for this analysis, since they do not give the full context in which remarks were made and usually do not reflect spontaneous give-and-take between reporter and official. Press conferences conducted in the West (which can be thought of as interviews in which the questions are posed by a group of reporters) generally have not been used in the analysis. In most cases, the news media do not provide full transcripts of these conferences.

Using these criteria, the research turned up 91 interviews and 17 articles, books, or opinion/editorial pieces by Arbatov, and 81 interviews and 6 articles by Zagladin—195 items in all. The bibliography contains a complete listing of these items and the media in which they appeared.

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1The Soviet Viewpoint, a 200-page collection of Arbatov’s “interviews” with Dutch journalist Willem Oltmans that has been published in Britain, West Germany, Japan, the Netherlands and the United States, in fact consists largely of written responses to questions submitted in advance. (See the publisher’s preface in the British edition of Georgi Arbatov and Willem Oltmans, Cold War or Détente: The Soviet Viewpoint, Zed Books, London, 1983.) Excerpts from the book later were translated into Russian and appeared in Sotsialicheskaiia industriia, Literaturnaiia gazeta, and Komsomolskaia pravda. Discrepancies between the “interviews” published in the West and those translated into Russian reveal the extent to which Arbatov’s book is a carefully crafted propaganda document. Certain words in the English text are systematically mistranslated into Russian (e.g., the term “ideology” is systematically used in place of “philosophy” or “point of view”). In the English version, Arbatov accuses the “feudal Afghans” of forbidding the peasants to own land; in the Russian version, all mention of land ownership is deleted. There are numerous other discrepancies as well.
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