

It is true that a view, a behavior existed according to which nothing bad could be written about the Soviet Union. The world could not learn of any mistake because an unfavorable picture would then evolve about the Soviet Union in the eyes of the world public. Now, on the other hand, we name our mistakes, our problems, and it surprised many that through this a much more nuanced and favorable picture of the Soviet Union has developed. This proved to us that frankness and openness is worth much more than the most perfect, but falsely colored picture.<sup>130</sup>

Under Brezhnev, it was denied that the Soviet Union suffered such afflictions of capitalist society as unemployment and drug abuse. Under Gorbachev, the existence of unemployment has been acknowledged, and a CBS film crew was even allowed to film a Soviet drug bust for broadcast over American television! In his memoirs, Henry Kissinger describes how he found it difficult to engage Gromyko or his associates in a broad discussion of Soviet and American conceptions of international security. They were too insecure and defensive to enter into such an enterprise.<sup>131</sup> Now, with Gorbachev at the helm, the Soviets are calling for talks aimed at discussing the contrasting nature of the military doctrines of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization.<sup>132</sup> All this suggests not just new skills at public relations but a greater self-confidence, less defensiveness, a waning of the previous sense of inferiority, and a better understanding of what kinds of past Soviet behavior have stood in the way of efforts to reduce international tension and regulate the arms race.

Writing in 1981, in the twilight of the Brezhnev era, George Kennan penned a vivid picture of the mental universe of the Soviet leadership, and in so doing he provided a useful bench mark which enables us to gauge more accurately the magnitude of the changes currently under way within the Soviet Union. Kennan wrote:

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<sup>130</sup> Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Soviet Union*, 8 May 1987, p. R19.

<sup>131</sup> Henry Kissinger, *White House Years*, Boston: Little, Brown, 1979, p. 1210.

<sup>132</sup> See the proposal for discussions on military doctrine contained in the document adopted by the Warsaw Treaty Organization in May 1987, "On the Military Doctrine of the Warsaw Treaty Member States," *Pravda*, 30 May 1987, p. 2.