

side. We do not want to upset the approximate equilibrium of military strength that now exists, say, between East and West in Central Europe or between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.⁷⁰

It is instructive to compare Brezhnev's speech to the Twenty-Sixth Party Congress in 1981 with his address to the Twenty-Fifth Congress in February 1976, since this comparison illustrates some of the changes that were introduced by the "Tula line." In 1976, Brezhnev was still concerned about allegations from ultra-militant elements within the Third World and the Communist movement who charged that the Soviet Union was betraying the cause of international revolution when it sought closer relations with the West. In refutation of these accusations, Brezhnev declared:

Detente does not in the slightest abolish, and it cannot abolish or alter, the laws of class struggle. . . . We make no secret of the fact that we see detente as a path leading to the creation of more favorable conditions for peaceful socialist and communist construction.⁷¹

In defending the Soviet Union's revolutionary credentials, Brezhnev only intensified Western anxieties about Soviet policy. This passage, which was repeatedly cited by those in the West who mistrusted Soviet intentions, was not repeated in his 1981 speech.

Even as early as February 1976, Brezhnev attempted to refute Western allegations that Soviet policies posed a danger to the security of the United States and Western Europe. He specifically denied that there was a "Soviet threat," and he stated that these allegations were "a monstrous lie from beginning to end."⁷² However, it is noteworthy, that though he recognized the necessity of calming and reassuring the West, nowhere in the speech did he resort to the approach initiated in 1977 of explicitly disclaiming a Soviet interest in military superiority.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, XXIX, No. 44, 1977, p. 11.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, XXVIII, No. 8, 1976, p. 14.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 10.