

term gains that are bound to arise in various parts of the world and instead makes a genuine effort to re-orient Soviet resources and energies inward for the restructuring of Soviet society.

It is often argued that "actions speak louder than words." There is much truth in this maxim. *Perestroika* must involve a restructuring not just of Soviet attitudes, but of priorities and policies as well. However, it also must be remembered that for an outside observer, a nation's actions may be no less ambiguous than its rhetoric. For example, if the Soviet Union were to withdraw all its troops from Afghanistan, some Western observers would enthusiastically hail this as clear proof that a fundamental transformation of Soviet foreign policy was under way, while others would no doubt argue that this action was simply an opportunistic move motivated by short-term tactical considerations.

Even though the attempt to decipher Soviet doctrine is fraught with its own difficulties and ambiguities, it provides a useful body of evidence which can supplement and complement the insights derived from other sources. The study of Soviet doctrine can thus be drawn upon to increase the soundness and reliability of our interpretation of Soviet foreign policy. It is to be hoped that this study has contributed to the reader's understanding of the evolution of Soviet foreign policy by providing an insight into the perspectives and doctrines that Gorbachev inherited, the limited adjustments that he has made thus far, and the more substantial alterations that may yet be forthcoming.