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REPORT ON THE CONFERENCE ON EASTERN EUROPE: STABILITY OR RECURR--ETC(U)
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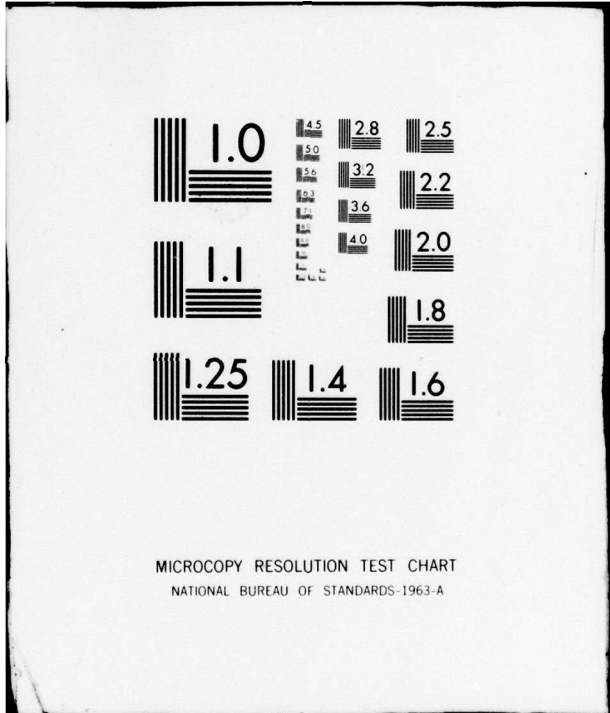
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REPORT ON THE CONFERENCE ON
EASTERN EUROPE: STABILITY OR RECURRENT CRISES?

Held at
Airlie House, Warrenton, Virginia,
November 13-15, 1975,

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INTRODUCTION

On November 13, 1975, over thirty people, some of them from the Government, and some from without, but all in one way or another concerned with Eastern Europe, gathered at Airlie House, Virginia, to discuss the problem of stability and instability in Eastern Europe, in the light of recent history as well as in current political, economic and cultural terms (see attached program and list of participants). It has been suggested that the proceedings be made available not only to all the participants, but to a wider circle of Government officials and scholars with an interest in East European affairs. However, since the full transcript comes to more than 500 pages, such a venture would prove both difficult and impractical. A summary—brief yet comprehensive—was the only logical alternative.

To compress factual information and to summarize a wide variety of views and opinions in a manner both fair and accurate is an undertaking fraught with some danger. Omissions and deletions are, of course, unavoidable; indeed, by definition. I hope, nonetheless, that the participants will find their views, however condensed, faithfully rendered, and that the other readers will find the proceedings and results of conference as informative and provocative as those who had participated in it.

One caveat: I found the transcript of the Second Session, "Economics and Integration," far too difficult to summarize, as much of the material consists of statistics and statistical expositions. The paper by Professor Paul Marer and the commentaries by Mrs. Jaffe and Professor McMillan, however, are available and may be obtained directly from the Office of External Research, INR, Department of State, SA-15, Rm. 4104 (tel. number 235-8079).

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FIRST SESSION;

STABILITY AND INSTABILITY IN RETROSPECT

The conference opened with a paper by Professor Zvi Gitelman on "Stability and Instability in Retrospect." Prof. Gitelman examined several definitions of "political stability", some of which had been applied originally to areas other than Eastern Europe. He laid stress in particular on the difference between latent stability and manifest stability. The first applies to a condition wherein both the leaders and the led, both the elite and the population at large consider the political system effective and legitimate and are generally united by an adherence to the same values. "Manifest stability", on the other hand, describes a condition where the values of the elite are not accepted by the masses (though the latter may pay lip service to them), and are propped up mainly by force and manipulation--albeit often effectively and without visible strains. In Mr. Gitelman's view, although the East European regimes have attempted to achieve the first kind of stability by "bringing elites and non-elites together, by trying to infuse the non-elites with the same kind of values as the elites," they have failed in their endeavors, and have in effect been forced to resort to methods which in the long run erode the latent stability of their systems by making them vulnerable to pressures from within and without. This failure sometimes prompts the regimes to pander to the pursuit of the "good life," that is, to // consumerism." Yet an emphasis on "goulash communism" as a method of assuring political loyalty is in itself fraught with dangers. For one thing, it tends to foster values alarmingly similar to those of Western societies (thus blurring the ideological distinctions between East and West); at the same time, it runs the risk of exacerbating societal tensions when and if popular

expectations are not met; and in the absence of "other sources of authority," the consequences of popular dissatisfaction (as the 1970 Polish riots have demonstrated) may be very grave indeed.

Mr. Gitelman's prognosis, in his own words

...would be for continued latent instability because of the failure to have elites and masses sharing values and the related failure to create and maintain institutions which are themselves valued. Power will insure manifest stability.

Regimes stability seems ever more likely given the successful leadership transitions in the GDR, peaceful leadership changes in Rumania and Hungary, though Czechoslovakia may be an exception.

The Soviet Union continues to police the area effectively. The United States continues to concede the area to Soviet hegemony, remaining largely inactive in it. Manifest stability will continue to co-exist with latent instability.

The first discussant of Mr. Gitelman's paper, Mr. Nicholas Andrews, while agreeing with many of the speaker's historical observations, nevertheless felt that the latter exaggerated the elements of instability of the East European political scene today. He also felt that Mr. Gitelman paid insufficient attention to the differences between the various countries under discussion; he mentioned in particular Bulgaria, where the regime seems to have the situation fairly well in hand, without attracting too much attention either from the United States or, for that matter, from its own subjects. Instability, in his view, is not a perennial condition but rather a fluctuating one; and it "mostly affects the regime and not...the basic systems." One

reason for it is that the "Communist system" has been successful in substituting "factionalism within the party" as a substitute for "the multi-party system in the West."

Furthermore, he questioned Mr. Gitelman's implicit assumption that stability is a good and instability a bad thing. For one thing, stability which doesn't allow for satisfaction of the needs and requirements of people may not be all that desirable. On the other hand, there may occur crises in Eastern Europe which would not necessarily "alter the balance of forces in Eastern and Western Europe." All told, however, Mr. Andrews did not foresee any great changes in the years to come--a prolonged period of "instability may be with lack of change, but also with change built inside it."

The second discussant, Mr. J.F. Brown, accepted Mr. Gitelman's distinction between surface and latent stability, and argued that the leadership of the East European countries, having failed to fashion a system of shared values with their respective subjects--that is, a common ideology--has tried to promote other values, each one of them precarious and each in the end capable of enhancing rather than diminishing the political stability of the area as a whole. These he listed as:

(a) Nationalism, especially in Rumania, Albania and Poland, and also possibly eventually in Yugoslavia, though until now nationalism in that country has been, of course, a divisive, rather than unifying force.

(b) An accommodation between the regime and certain elements in the society. Examples of it are the NEM in Hungary (regime and the economic intelligentsia) and Poland (Gierek and the working class). In each case, however, accommodation with one social class may well mean the alienation of others.

(c) "Consumerism" — applicable to all countries with the possible exception of Rumania. The countervailing factors here are the phenomenon of rising (and frequently unmet) expectations and the "movement of world economic forces which are often beyond the control of the leadership."

(d) The charisma of individual leaders—e.g., Kadar and Tito. Since death comes to us all, the transient and precarious nature of this particular factor need not be belabored.

(e) Dependence on the Soviet Union. In Mr. Brown's view, it is altogether likely that another succession crisis in the USSR will usher in a period of considerable turmoil in the East European dependencies, and a concomitant increase in the involvement of Western Europe in the affairs of the "socialist bloc."

Taking all these factors together, "the surface stability" of Eastern Europe "could in the second half of the 1970's come in for some very heavy weather indeed."

In the opinion of third discussant, Professor R.V. Burks, Eastern Europe has been continuously wracked by two forms of "manifest instability", political landslides (Hungary 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, etc.), and national deviation (e.g., Yugoslavia). To counter these trends, the regimes have had at their disposal two forms of manifest stability: political terror and "consumerism", both of which tend to be counter-productive. He agreed with Professor Citelman's observation that over the next 20 years Eastern Europe would be characterized by a stagnation of living standards. To counteract this process, the regimes may try to import western technology, but since they have "little to sell in the world market place," they may resort to economic reform. Yet as recent experience has shown, economic decentralization

inevitably promotes political pluralism. Ergo, Communist leaders turn to industrial cooperation--but that, too, acts "as a solvent of the existing Marxist-Leninist social order." Given all these destabilizing forces, "what keeps the system upright?"

The usual answer to this question is institutional elements--security police, the army, the central planning mechanism. But these institutions, said Mr. Burks, "are organizational manifestations of more basic relationships". One of them is "the enserfment of the East European masses by the Communist elites." This, he allowed, may be "strong language," but the phenomenon as such is not unknown in East Europe (e.g., the introduction of serfdom in the 15th and 16th centuries benefitting the East European aristocracy), and it has clearly occurred within the last 30 years as well. The second "basic relationship" is between one area and another--in Yugoslavia, between the wealthier and poorer republics, and within the bloc as a whole, "the Soviet Union dictates to the East European states a product mix which depresses their own living standard in order to advantage Soviet industrialization." As an example he cited the GDR, "where the living standard is now only two-thirds of that prevailing in West Germany, while the gross national product is such as to make of East Germany the eighth industrial power in the world, its exports going primarily to the USSR."

The third basic relationship is the "far-reaching interdependence" of the regimes. Moscow's fear in 1968 that the Czech thaw might spread to neighboring countries including the USSR demonstrates the Communist' fear of "domino destabilization" and their belief that "the regimes gather

strength by clinging to each other."

Since political legitimacy is therefore the "overwhelming problem faced by the socialist system in Europe," and since "lack of legitimacy blocks the road to economic reform," Mr. Burks concluded—as did Mr. Brown—that Eastern Europe is faced by a long and troubled period of political instability.

Discussion

In the ensuing discussion, a number of speakers took issue with the assumptions of Gitelman et al, arguing that there may well be far greater stability in East Europe than they had indicated. Thus Professor Lowenthal wondered whether a distinction should be drawn between stability and legitimacy, with the East European powers having achieved the first while having failed in the latter. Haven't the masses actually accepted a number of basic elements of the system, such as nationalization of the means of production, or the inevitability of some kind of socialist systems living on good terms with the USSR? Mr. Steele thought Mr. Gitelman exaggerated the extent of grievances within the system and that it was also a mistake to talk about the "masses" in general, without taking into consideration the differences between one group and another, with some groups accepting the regimes far more so than others. He also questioned Mr. Brown's contention that ideology in the Soviet bloc is extinct; the regimes, he felt, have been fairly successful in "making ideology more flexible" by, say, giving "consumerism" a specifically "socialist" twist, thus making it qualifiedly different than the pursuit of material incentives in the West. The regimes have also created a greater degree of political flexibility and while it would be absurd to compare the degree of freedom in Western

society with that existing in Eastern Europe, it is nevertheless clear, in his opinion, that there has been considerable advance of it in the latter's case. In a similar vein, Professor Korbonski argued that the regimes have considerable more stability and that certain groups in those society, such as the peasants, have a very real stake in preserving it. Professor Tokes went even further, suggesting that the categories employed by Professor Gitelman really may not pertain to Eastern Europe at all, that the various prognoses advanced by Gitelman, Brown and Burks remain unsubstantiated, and that legitimacy has been attained by means different than we generally take for granted. Mr. Dean, too, basing himself on the experiences of Poland and Hungary, argued that the East European regimes have shown a remarkable capacity for adaption and for the preservation of the status quo.

Professor Jowitt, on the other hand, agreed with Mr. Gitelman that the East European regimes face a period of continued instability, but questioned the latter's criteria in arriving at that conclusion. The instability, he asserted, would come from entirely different sources--in the first place, from the secondary political leaders whom the parties have groomed as loyal apparatchiki but who, having benefitted from the new groundrules that make it possible to be a party member regardless of his social status or origin, may "in periods of crisis...articulate the dissent of groups that trust them." They are no longer fully controlled by the center; they can "converse with their constituencies" and articulate their grievances. The case of party secretaries in Poland in 1970 who, when the riots began, emerged as the spokesmen of the workers rather than of the Party is a case in point. True, they were struck down but they made themselves heard. What will happen if a similar upheaval

takes place? No one can tell; nor can one tell, indeed, whether the increased role and independence of local party leaders will lead to democracy.

In a brief commentary on Mr. Jowitt's remarks, Professor Croan stressed that the regimes in Eastern Europe have indeed moved from "assimilation" to "co-optation," but that the results of this change may be the very opposite of what Mr. Jowitt suggested--namely, to create stability by "co-opting" the "economic managers, the technical specialists, the administrative experts," by making them feel that they have a stake in the system, and thus also, in this way, strengthening the leading role of the party.

Professor Gati addressed himself to another point--namely, to Mr. Andrews' implicit (or explicit?) contention that instability is not necessarily a good thing for the United States, and that "our interests now dictate of a policy of supporting stability." Isn't there any policy alternative between the two extremes? In reply, Mr. Andrews--who reminded his listeners that he spoke only for himself--did in fact agree that "encouraging instability in Eastern Europe would...create the semblance of a threat against the Soviet Union," which probably would not "do us any good." On the other hand, to "say that we support stability in Eastern Europe is probably going a little too far. What I would like to suggest is that the stability that we would like to see in Eastern Europe is stability with change coming from inside."

The session ended with a few concluding remarks by Messrs. Gitelman, Brown, and Burks, in which they answered some of the criticisms that had been directed at them, and clarified their own positions, frequently by

pointing out that some of the differences between them and their critics were rather insignificant.

THIRD SESSION:

INTELLECTUALS, IDEOLOGY, YOUTH

The principal speaker, Professor Kolakowski, summarized a few points developed extensively in his prepared paper. What is the role of ideology in the East European countries—that is to say, under Soviet-style Communist regimes? A recent controversy between Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Andrei Sakharov is apposite in this context. According to Solzhenitsyn, the whole Soviet system is ruled, guided, and dominated by Marxist ideology; and it is therefore the latter that is responsible for all the abominations of Soviet life. In Sakharov's view, Marxist ideology is but a facade, the ultimate rationalization of Soviet power, but intrinsically meaningless, and treated with indifference if not contempt by those who pay lip service to it. Who is right—Solzhenitsyn or Sakharov? In a sense—both, said Mr. Kolakowski, in that ideology, while dead, is indispensable to the survival of the system, for it is the only force that imbues it with legitimacy. In some ways, ideological dogmas impose restraints on the behavior of Communist powers; in general, however, ideology is employed for the purpose of justifying policy. Within the past two decades, the gap between the claims of Marxism and "the way people really see themselves" has become grotesque. The regimes realize it, and are therefore wont to appeal to other sources of legitimacy, such as *raison d'etat* and national sentiments. Excessive reliance on the latter, however, runs the risk of becoming anti-Soviet. The regimes are fully cognizant of it, as well as of the fact their their subjects have no use for ideology. As a rule, therefore, they have given up their attempts

to indoctrinate the people, and ask them only accept it--that is, to obey. The tensions thus created may remain latent and subteranean, and emerge only in moments of crisis, provoked by either domestic or international events, or by a combination of the two. Precisely what forces would emerge in another moment of crisis is difficult to foretell; most probably they would be nationalistic in character. But it is important to realize that these forces exist and that crises are as possible as they are probable.

The first discussant, Professor Rudolf Tokes, disagreed with Mr. Kolakowski's approach. For one thing, he felt that Mr. Kolakowski exaggerated the role of ideology as a source of legitimacy; while this had indeed been so, say, twenty years ago, by now ideology is only one of the ingredients of regime legitimacy, the others being economic, cultural, political, and psychological forces. Second, Marxism-Leninism should perhaps be viewed as "a commitment of what Robert Tucker once called 'distributive justice,' this is to say, to welfare, to education, to over-all increase of living standards," etc. In this light, "there is a considerable amount of ideological legitimacy to the extent that regimes in Eastern Europe are very naturally trying to sell ideology through very tangible material benefits." As for intellectuals in Eastern Europe, they have become, over the years, isolated and emasculated and--what is perhaps most important--pitted more against the masses ("popular culture") than the regimes.

All told, in Mr. Tokes' opinion, the East European regimes have created an impressive pattern of legitimacy, first in the eyes of the people, and second also in the eyes of "selected elites".

As far as dissent in Eastern Europe is concerned (a subject elaborated in Mr. Kolakowski's paper rather than oral remarks), Mr. Tokes felt that there are important distinctions between dissent in the USSR and that in Eastern Europe. In the USSR, dissent is largely parochial, intellectually unimpressive, fragmented and variegated. In Eastern Europe, it had played an impressive intellectual and political role in the past, but by now has largely been smothered by clever regime manipulation—first by a refusal to turn intellectual dissidents into martyrs, second by "co-opting" nationalism—the one potentially serious rallying point for the opposition. Prof. Tokes offered a capsuled history of recent dissent in Hungary which, he feels, bears out his major propositions. He also cited a recent survey research on the attitudes of Hungarian youths, who were found to be extraordinarily apolitical. Given all these considerations, he pleaded for an assumption of stability of East European regimes with "built-in", "pragmatic" ideologies rather than an assumption of instability, which he felt was central to the deliberations of this conference.

Mr. Jiri Hochman, the second discussant, stressed the unique position of Czechoslovakia in the political spectrum of Eastern Europe. To begin with, Marxism-Leninism has nothing to do with "social welfare" or "medical treatment for your child" (all that had existed already under the Austro-Hungarian Empire)—that is, with the welfare state. At least in Czechoslovakia any attempt to achieve legitimacy by appropriating the benefits of a welfare state would be absurd. At the present time the imposition of Marxist-Leninist doctrines on the intellectual life of the country amounts to nothing less than "intellectual castration." Of 160 members of the Union of Writers in 1968, 140 are still blacklisted. The mass media are

on an abysmally low level. The theatre repertoires consist almost exclusively of Soviet classics; even numerous Czech plays are taboo, lest they arouse nationalistic sentiments. Censorship does not allow any flexibility whatsoever. The authorities had embarked upon a deliberate policy of "overskill" in the hope that eventually new cadres of loyal intellectuals will replace those who have been effectively purged from the contemporary scene.

The third discussant, Prof. Melvin Croan, disputed Prof. Kolakowski's assertion that ideology is extinct in the East European bloc. As "an action-directed police system" it no longer exists, but as "a bureaucratic instrumentality for the enforcement of social-political disciplines" it is still alive and kicking, certainly in East Germany. Nor is it correct to maintain that there no longer exists a single ideological authority; while this may have been so under Khrushchev, Brezhnev has certainly tried very hard to impose "Soviet-centered ideological coordination," and has done so quite successfully in Eastern Europe. As for dissent in East Germany, it is fragmented and negligible. This may be attributed to the fact that intellectuals in Germany have never tried to play an important political role, as well as to the fact that the regime has been successful in enlisting a good part of the intelligentsia into the ranks of the ruling elite. Once enlisted, the technocrats behave in an eminently German fashion--that is, they manifest "the requisite ideological and political discipline." The Party--again in an echt German fashion--has shown a remarkable ability to keep its ranks closed and preserve internal discipline and authority. As for the population at large, there are of course those who are enthusiastically pro-regime, for whatever reason ("the 150 per-

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centers"), as well as those completely opposed to it, but the majority are determinedly apolitical, and just as determinedly consumer-oriented. It is precisely the hunger for more goods that the regime can utilize in its economic program, and has indeed done so to the extent of having achieved the highest living standard in the "socialist camp." But this is a mixed blessing, inasmuch as East German citizens are wont to compare their standard with that of West Germany, rather than with the rest of the socialist camp, and that contrast between the two is still quite staggering. Finally, as regards nationalism, Mr. Croan is of the opinion that at least for some East German bureaucracies, identification with COMECON affairs and "socialist internationalism" may to some extent compensate "for the absence of a national base with genuine historical roots." However deep this identification, the regime is not about to take it for granted, and persists, therefore, in perpetuating tight political controls and rigid ideological orthodoxy.

Discussion

According to Mr. Kolakowski, said Mr. Lowenthal, ideology is indispensable for legitimacy. According to Mr. Tokes, legitimacy depends much more on performance than on ideology. Mr. Lowenthal doubts that performance alone can assure legitimacy, as no regimes' performance can be uniformly successful; rather, there are three dimensions of legitimacy in post-revolutionary Communist countries: (1) value consensus--an assumption, on the part of the people, that their aspirations and values are the same as those of their leaders; (2) the Party's own conviction of playing a necessary and meaningful role; (3) the people's conviction that the Party with its actual institutional procedures and composition is the proper instrument for achieving common values. There is some of the first in East Europe today; there is precious little of the

second—which is precisely what we mean by the death of ideology, and which makes the regime very vulnerable in times of crises; and there is not much of the third—that is to say, people are very dubious that the Party can achieve, for example, economic progress; which again is bad for the Party in times of crises.

Perhaps this is so, said Mr. Tokes, if one thinks in terms of performance vs. ideology; but not necessarily so if you redefine ideology. At present Communist ideology in Eastern Europe consists of "operational principles" e.g., an ideology that sees the Party as "a problem-solving agency whose legitimacy is obviously hinging on its ability to deliver and to perform." Mr. Steele agreed, citing the complaints voiced by Polish workers during the 1970 upheaval as evidence of the fact that dissent centers around "core socialist values" (acceptance of socialist institutions but criticism of its defects) rather than "bourgeois values--the parliamentary system, free elections, national independence and so on." Czechoslovakia was a special case, but interestingly enough the workers there played a negligible role in the reform movement at first. Not so, said Mr. Hochman: the workers "were on the political scene immediately." The reformers knew they had the support of the workers; tactically, the first priority was to wrest the Party apparatus from the hands of the reactionaries. In Mr. Jowitt's opinion, Mr. Steele's example of the Polish workers was an interesting one, but for somewhat different reasons--namely, because it illustrated the fact that in Communist societies--as for that matter in all societies--the idiom people use is one most calculated to get a response. It's only when the idiom (which in effect defines the issues discussed) does not get a response that other idioms begin to be used. In the case of the

Polish workers, the idiom was appropriate to their immediate demands. But the trouble with Communist regimes in general is that they impose severe sanctions on other idioms—that is to say, "they don't want the articulation of alternative ways of looking at the priorities" in their societies. They "monopolize discourse." And the contradiction between presiding over a society which is becoming more sophisticated and which has a growing number "of potential articulating points on the one hand, and imposing a monopoly over the mode of articulation on the other creates tensions which may well erupt into major crises."

In another commentary on Mr. Tokes' remarks, Mr. Brown noted that it was in the 1960's that the Party played a role of a "problem-solving agency". But now, "when the Party feels that it cannot solve the problems which it is confronted with, then there is increased control," and an increased emphasis "on the party as the arbiter, director, of practically every walk of political life." Furthermore, Mr. Brown cautioned against writing off the intellectuals as a potential force for change; a new set of circumstances could well "give them a new lease on life"—as happened in Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Next Mr. Kolakowski replied to some of the criticisms directed against him. He didn't mean to suggest that ideology is the only source of legitimacy, but simply that without this element the party finds itself in a state of disintegration when a crisis sets in. To be sure, people make distinctions—e.g., they "hate ideological symbols"—but they don't necessarily hate given individual leaders; and they readily agree that a native Communist—or that a native Communist regime—is better

than a Russian one. But when the regime uses the argument of "raison d'etat" which "obviously contradicts the ostensible terms of state ideology," the consensus it obtains is shaky "and is bound to collapse if a moment of real confrontation comes for one reason or another." The role of intellectuals may be minimal now, but again, in moments of crisis it may assume huge proportions. In sum, the regimes aren't necessarily faced with imminent catastrophes. But they have failed to achieve proper legitimacy "or this sort of stability which would prevent them from crumbling quickly in the case of a sudden crisis" the precise nature of which "we are unable to predict."

Mr. Gati then offered a few comments in support of Mr. Tokes' contention that intellectuals in Eastern Europe no longer count as a potential source of change. They have been co-opted, or "even bought," by means of (a) imbuing them with considerable prestige (a traditional role for intellectuals in those countries); (b) making it possible for them to make a lot of money; (c) convincing them that they could no longer look to the West for support--that, in effect, the West has abandoned them. Young people, however, do remain alienated--partly because of their incipient nationalism, and partly because of their strong pro-Western attitudes, which aren't tinged, as in the case of the intellectuals, by disappointment. All told, however, the 1970's may well usher in new crises--first as a result of economic difficulties, and second as a result of "the post-Tito crisis in Yugoslavia, which quite obviously might well entail Rumania and very possible Hungary."

Mr. Andrews made two additional points: first, that intellectuals have found a means of voicing their dissent by allying themselves with certain forces in the political elites of their countries; second, that if crises occur, they will not have "a domino effect," but will be restricted to given countries, inasmuch as there hasn't been a case of "unity of action among the Eastern Europeans in any area to try to create a sort of consensus versus the Soviet Union, or versus each other, for that matter." Miss Remington demurred, reminding her colleagues that both 1956 and 1968 were "area-wide crises", and that in moments of crises ideology again becomes important. Mr. Burks agreed, providing some illustrations of the domino effect of Czechoslovak events in Poland and the Soviet Ukraine in 1968. Mr. Tokes expressed his agreement with Mr. Kolakowski, but stuck to his guns as far as the relative stability of the East European regimes is concerned. In answer to Mr. Brown, he allowed that intellectuals may become important again in case of a crisis "or extremely abnormal conditions." In fact, intellectuals are a weathervane: if they suddenly become important, you may be sure that "something must be terribly wrong." His words elicited no disagreement, and so the meeting was adjourned.

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FOURTH SESSION

THE MILITARY: LOYALTY TO WHOM?

The loyalty of the Warsaw Pact powers, said the speaker, Mr. Ross Johnson, can be viewed in terms of (1) their current capabilities, (2) their participation in the Soviet alliance and Warsaw Pact, and (3) the basic attitudes of the respective officer corps. (1) With the exception of the Czechoslovak forces, whose capabilities have declined since 1968, the WTO forces have been greatly improved. (2) With the exception of Rumania, the members of the WTO have increased their participation in the military affairs of the organization as a whole, and, as a result of the institutional changes effected in 1969, have obtained a greater consultative voice in WTO military affairs. This is "presumably a source of some satisfaction in Eastern Europe." Yet this is but a surface phenomenon, for there is no indication whatsoever that the joint command could assume any meaningful functions in time of war, or that Moscow regards its East European military allies "as even junior military partners." There is continued monopoly of Soviet postings in second and their level command positions, and Soviet military secrecy and nationalistic disdain for the East Europeans are as strong as ever. As for (3), the growing professionalization of the military has given rise to a distinct sense of group pride and group loyalty within the military establishments, which in turn is a breeding ground for new dissatisfactions with and grievances vis-a-vis the USSR. All of which amounts to the fact that the military in EE are loyal above all to themselves.

What about their behavior in case of hostilities? In a campaign that is perceived as purely defensive, the East Europeans (especially the Poles and East Germans) could probably be expected to vigor and determination. If the hostilities were to go on indefinitely, and their purposes were to become more ambiguous, withdrawal and internal disintegration could very possibly set in. The viability of EE troops would become even less certain in case they were asked to fight on the Soviet side against one of the members of the WTO or, say, Yugoslavia (though, understandably, Bulgaria might choose to behave differently). The same is certainly true as far as their role as a police force in Eastern Europe in behalf of Moscow is concerned. Finally, there is not a ghost of a chance that the military could ever be mobilized by Moscow against their own respective national party leaderships.

The first discussant, Mr. Robert Dean, offered some specific examples to illustrate the fact that the increased integration of the WTO forces in effect gives far greater power to the Soviet primus inter pares than before. Regarding professionalization, he described the tendencies in that direction within the Czech armed forces—very much, incidentally, at the expense of party control—and similar tendencies in the other East European military establishments. In each case, increased professionalization has gone hand in glove with a greater cleavage between political and military controls on the one hand, and a greater identification of the military with the security of their respective countries on the other. The second discussant, Miss Robin Remington, disagreed with Mr. Dean's emphasis on the purely military aspects of professionalism, and stressed instead the political dimensions. In her view, there has been an increasing tendency

on the part of the military establishments in Eastern Europe to forge a distinct ethos potentially inimical to the party elites; "in the future, "therefore, the armed forces could assume a leading role within the parties of Eastern Europe either for or against the status quo." As straws in the wind she singled out the recent civil-military conflict in Albania (the dismissal of Balaku in October 1974) and the Rumanian decision to opt for the Yugoslav model of "all people defense."

Discussion

Mr. Korbonski cautioned against making definitive statements that rest on a paucity of evidence. For instance, how can one speak with so much certainty about the growing professionalism of the military establishments and their increased prestige in the light of various studies that indicate that the social status of the military in Eastern Europe is exceedingly low as compared to its standing in the 1930's? The economic burden of maintaining large armies is clearly very great; what reason is there to assume that the leaders of the EE states as well as the respective populations would not be delighted to cut it down to a bare minimum? Nor is there any reason to assume--as does Mr. Johnson--that there could be no more Czechoslovakias; indeed, "a Hungarian army invading Rumania with pleasure" cast by Mr. Tokes to the effect that the speaker and discussants had not taken the trouble to investigate the political and sociological aspects of the role of the military as factors of stability or instability. Miss Remington had raised the intriguing problem of the military as a distinct interest group, and surely more research ought to be done in this area.

The question of military and ideology is another one requiring further elucidation; the available instructional manuals should yield a good deal of information regarding the attitudes that the military would wish to inculcate in the population. As for the reaction of the people, they might be gleaned from an examination of letters written by recruits back home.

Mr. Hochman observed that the Czech officer corps has been thoroughly disillusioned as a result of the August 1968 invasion, and that its reliability as an ally of Moscow is by now nil. As for the integration of Warsaw Pact countries, it is altogether bogus; even during war games there is strict segregation between the various troops, and Soviet soldiers are absolutely forbidden to meet, say, their Czech or Polish counterparts.

Mrs. Jaffe offered some additional information regarding the 1969 Warsaw Pact reforms, whose basic purpose, in her opinion, was to assure firm Soviet control over the respective armies through nationals of those countries (à la Marshall Rokossovsky in Poland circa 1945-56) subordinate to Soviet orders. The Military Council, as presently constituted, consists-- in addition to the Soviets, who are most heavily represented--of the respective Vice Ministers of National Defense. They could be removed from the aegis of their political authorities in case of conflict. However, whether, if it ever came to actual hostilities, the army would actually obey Soviet orders, especially if the military operation were

clearly unpopular, is an open question.

Other speakers—Mr. Kolakowski, Mr. Andrews, Mr. Hardt, Mr. Brumberg, and Mr. Jowitt—asked the speakers and discussants to elaborate on various matters such as professionalization, the exact meaning of terms such as "autonomy" and "integration", East European economies, the nature of the evidence (if any) that the military budgets are drains on the relative reliability of WTO troops in case of hostilities against NATO or in case of a conflict between the USSR and one of the member states—or Yugoslavia, and the nature of political-ideological indoctrination in the armed forces—that is, the relative weight assigned to Marxism-Leninism as against patriotic propaganda.

In reply, Mr. Dean contended that purely military aspects cannot be ignored when assessing the degree of professionalization of the military establishments, that the Soviets are trying to get the WTO countries to assume a far greater share of the defense burden (which may become an issue between the party and the military), and that there is some evidence to indicate that the Soviets are trying to involve the East Europeans—at least theoretically—in military operations beyond Europe, and that the East Europeans are resisting these attempts. Miss Remington stressed the differences between the various countries under discussion; nevertheless, on balance it is quite clear that the military reliability of the East European military forces, from the Soviet point of view, is not worth a great deal. Indeed, the value of the Warsaw Pact is not military; it is political—e.g. as a bargaining lever in the MBFR negotiations. As far as military indoctrination is concerned, it is clear that the issue of ideology vs. patriotism is important and plays a role in the occasional

conflicts between the military and party elites.

Mr. Johnson noted that the question of military budget is a potential source of friction. The increased role of the military may mean, eventually, a larger role in the top levels of decision-making. The Soviets had never enjoyed the ability of using the East European forces against their own people; in the past they were able to divide, neutralize and polarize the national military establishments—e.g. in Hungary and Poland in 1956. This ability has by now been greatly reduced. Ambassador Richard Davies, who chaired this session, concluded by noting that it would clearly be impossible to answer all the questions that had been raised, but that, in his opinion, the papers by Johnson, Dean and Remington, as well as the discussion that followed, "have given us a great many insights and considerations which I at any rate find enormously stimulating in thinking about the possible answers."

FINAL SESSION

US POLICY: DO'S AND DON'TS

The principal speaker, Professor Charles Gati, offered a summary of the proceedings, plus his own commentary on current US policy on Eastern Europe. The general consensus of the group was, first, that Eastern Europe, as a whole, is a fairly stable area; yet its stability depends on Soviet power and still lacks legitimacy. Second, East European intellectuals are far more quiescent than they had been, say, in 1956 or 1968. Third, Eastern Europe is dependent economically on the USSR. Fourth, the West is no longer as attractive to East Europeans as it had been in the past.

Assuming that this consensus is accurate, it follows that the East European regimes have been quite successful, both compared to their past performances as well as compared to the situation in Western Europe. US policy towards that region has been, generally speaking, one of "hands off," as exemplified by concrete actions as well as by official statements (Prof. Gati offered some quotations by Kissinger et al); which is to say that it has been a policy "with long-term aims only, rather than short-term expectations, as in the past." Practically it has meant eschewal of politically provocative statements, psychological warfare, and the like, and an emphasis on trade and cultural contacts, on the theory that the latter will, in the long run, reinforce Western political values in Eastern Europe as well as create a degree of normalcy in the relations between the US and Eastern Europe. While Prof. Gati is largely in favor of this policy, he thinks that it is a mistake to assume that economic involvement and cultural contacts will in themselves reinforce Western political values in

Eastern Europe. Furthermore, he suggested that the US be more "selective"—i.e., that we support countries with latent or incipient Western values (Yugoslavia, Hungary, Poland), and less so countries like Rumania, which, while free from Soviet control, is far more authoritarian and ideologically orthodox than most of its neighbors. The US Government should be explicit about affirming these values—first because they "are superior to others," and second because a long-range accomodation is unthinkable unless the EC regimes become more liberal and democratic. In addition, Prof. Gati was critical of the tendency to emphasize agreements with Eastern Europe which are of little consequence, and the reluctance to negotiate on more substantive matters.

But what if the consensus is wrong, and Eastern Europe, below its surface calm, is actually quite unstable? This would, indeed, be Prof. Gati's conclusion. In that case, is the US prepared for new and always sudden eruptions, crises, upheavals? The answer, in his opinion, is "no," and moreover, the US, as in the past, is prone to ignore opportunities to negotiate with the Soviet Union for important changes in the status quo. Thus it was American reluctance to take a firm stand on the Czech liberalization of 1968 that played a decisive role in the Soviet decision to suppress it by force. The US has over the years come to accept the Soviet definition of what is, and what is not negotiable, this on the assumptions (a) that "almost any political change in Eastern Europe would constitute a grave threat" to the USSR, and (b) that the US can only negotiate from a position of military strength, which it plainly does not command in Eastern Europe. Yet the Soviet Union has learned to live with, say, the defections of Yugoslavia and Albania, and it has also frequently negotiated

with the Western powers even if the latter were not in a position of strength (e.g., the Austrian peace treaty of 1955). The US should change its policy, inasmuch as it is likely that if another crisis erupted, the Soviet Union would rather make concessions than court further difficulties inherent in its hegemonial relations with Eastern Europe. To--in effect--sacrifice Eastern Europe on the altar of detente is a mistake, if only because detente may not yield the desired results, and relations between the US and the USSR may revert, not to the Cold War, but to competition. This reversal, in Prof. Gati's opinion, is highly likely, and for that reason he suggested that the US pursue three major aims: First, dissociating the Soviet Union from Eastern Europe as much as possible; second, diminishing Soviet power "by depriving the Soviet Union of human and material resources that Eastern Europe still offers"; and third, depriving "the Soviet Union of its universalist pretensions." To be sure, if detente does succeed, these aims will become unimportant; but if it doesn't, then it will be essential for the United States to pursue them.

Discussion

Mr. Gati's remarks gave rise--as could be expected--to a lively discussion. Mr. Burks questioned Mr. Gati's assumption that any part of the East European Communist bloc has ever been negotiable. The only way to get the Soviet Union out of Eastern Europe is by risking a nuclear confrontation which, needless to say, the US is not prepared to do. Instead of devising impractical schemes, it would be better to concentrate on making Soviet control over Eastern Europe "more liveable," to reduce tensions in that area--and on this score, in Mr. Burks' opinion, US policy has been "rather successful." The exploitation of the "Yugoslav defection" and the

deployment of Radio Free Europe have both played a very positive role. In the future, we should encourage not revolutionary but evolutionary change, and the best way to do it is to provide long-term credits to the USSR and a great deal of technological aid, on the theory that the USSR would then become more dependent on the US, and that the internal pressures that make it so difficult for the Soviet leaders to experiment with structural changes in their economy would recede. The US should insist on certain substantive qui pro quods, such as military concessions in the MBFR negotiations, in return for large-scale economic aid.

Ambassador Davies took Mr. Gati to task for mistaking postures for policies—e.g., "liberation" was never really a policy of the US, just a slogan advanced by John Foster Dulles for domestic political reasons. In fact, US policy towards Eastern Europe began to change perceptibly a long time ago, and its thrust has been by and large that of helping "the people over a long-term perspective", Poland being a case in point. Mr. Gati's recommendation, while he might not agree with that formulation, really adds up to "confrontation," that is, to a return to the Cold War. This is one thing that people in Eastern Europe, intellectuals as well as all others, regard with deep apprehension. They realize that detente—that is, a more amicable relationship between the US and the USSR—will, in the long run, be good for them, too.

In a somewhat similar vein, Prof. Jowitt criticized Prof. Gati for the vagueness of his recommendations which—precisely because they are so vague and also because they are so moralistic—may well result in the return to the Cold War "through the back door." A "single standard"—namely, the superiority of our values—may in effect "restore the Manichean world...where basically the Soviets and the United States have

parallel images of one another, the only difference being the values they place on each image." What we need are "more differentiated statements" that have specific operational value--e.g., "the increasing plurality, diversity of political regimes in the world." More specifically, Prof. Jowitt pointed to the development of a "nuclear family arrangement in place of a corporate family arrangement" in international politics-- that is the demise of an international structure based on only two patriarchal families in favor of an international arena with multiple autonomous entities. At the same time, Prof. Jowitt disagreed with Ambassador Davies' view that foreign policy is one thing, and sloganeering another. Dulles' "rollback" slogan was "an integral part of the way our policy was perceived, domestically and internationally, and consequently it was an integral part of our foreign policy, the Cold War foreign policy," and it was accepted as such by the American people.

Mr. Dean also deplored what he considered the abstractness of Mr. Gati's proposals, and contended that any return to "competition" would aggravate the lot of the East European nations, whereas a continuation of the present policy makes it more possible for the USSR to tolerate a greater diversity in Eastern Europe. He also felt that Mr. Gati underestimated the appeal of West to East Europeans; in fact, it has never been as great as it is now. Mr. Korhonski raised the question of why we should assume Eastern Europe is important to the US in the first place. Mr. Johnson wondered whether the lack of formal statements on the part of US policy--or low key statements--should be taken as indicators of the real interest of the United States in Eastern Europe; in his opinion, the fewer statements, the better, all the more since actual contracts, political, economic, etc., have actually

increased over the past 10 years. Mr. Brumberg also commented on the lack of specificity in Mr. Gati's recommendations, and asked him to lay out some possible scenarios with concrete policy alternatives to follow.

Mr. Kaplan dwelt on the actual aims of detente, and concluded that in terms of the stated goals there has been considerable progress; no one had ever assumed that cooperation would take the place of competition: simply that the competition would be tempered with some restraint. The negotiations have been held over the past few years—on Berlin, on Polish-West German relations, CSCE, etc.—have all proved that there can be no resolution of the basic issues which divide East and West, but that improvement is possible. If the US has not attempted to do away with Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe, it is not because of indifference, but simply because it is impossible to do so short of war. Mr. Gati's proposals, on the other hand, "smacked of brinkmanship," and cannot possibly contribute to stability between East and West. The general aim for the future should therefore be more of the same—steady improvement of East-West relations. There are two questions which present themselves: should US aim principally at "de-satellization" (increased independence vis-a-vis Moscow) or "de-Stalinization" (liberalization)? While he, like Mr. Gati, would opt for the second, it is probably true that we have little choice in the matter. And a second question—should it be the United States or Western Europe that is to take the lead in improving the situation in Eastern Europe? In Mr. Kaplan's view, West Germany is probably the best bet of all.

Mr. Garrison felt that Ambassador Davies exaggerated the "Cold War" character of Mr. Gati's proposed aims but he thought, too, that they lacked

precision and should be applied to concrete examples or scenarios. He went into the history of the 1968 Czech events, maintaining that it was impossible to know in advance whether or not the Soviets would attack and the US had only a few options, anyway, if one excludes--as one must--armed intervention. Mr. Armitage noted that the conference was helpful in clarifying three major assumptions about Eastern Europe: First, that the regimes have not achieved legitimacy; second that in the foreseeable future, at least, the East European countries will be ruled by Communist regimes; and third, that the US is not really the "prime mover" in what happens in Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, US policy has as one of its aims the limitation of Soviet power, militarily, economically, and otherwise, and on the whole this aim is being attained. He also observed that while we might indeed prefer de-Stalinization to de-satellization, the latter policy has proved very valuable, as shown by the case of Rumania; the Soviet Union has learned that it can live with situations which it might not have tolerated earlier, and this learning process is of obvious benefit to the other countries in the bloc as well. With regard to the latter point, Mr. Andrews said that on balance he would probably favor destalinization to de-satellization, if only--as again in the case of Rumania-- because dealing with a single leader who makes decisions by himself exposes us to the danger of a reversal of these decisions once the leader is gone.

Mr. Whitman addressed himself to the question posed earlier--what could and should the US do in case of another crisis, say à la Czechoslovakia? To be sure, rhetoric can be meaningless, and there are times when it should

be eschewed altogether. But there are also times when rhetoric is important, especially if backed up by specific acts, as a means of "complicating the Soviet picture, not giving them a free ride, amplifying the ambiguities and uncertainties, and making them worry about what we know from the Czech case was a very difficult decision, even when they had every confidence that we would not involve ourselves." Even direct military moves should not be ruled out; nor negotiations with the country in peril. Perhaps all these moves would fail—but even so, even, that is, if the Soviets succeed, they would succeed with many misgivings, with deep doubts about risking similar ventures next time. In any case, action of this sort is better than nothing; and it might even make us "beat the odds and win."

Next Mr. Kolakowski raised the problem of what do we really mean by detente? For instance, does detente mean the abolition of Radio Free Europe? When assured by Ambassador Davies that this doesn't even enter into US calculations, he went on to point out that while many East Europeans do indeed approve of detente in terms of extended trade relations, and so on, they are frequently worried that it may also mean concessions in which their rights are traded away by a West excessively eager to establish good relations with the USSR.

Professor Gati replied to the comments and criticisms, but since little time remained at the conference, he has supplied, upon request, a written statement as well. What follows below is a summary of both his oral and written remarks.

To begin with, he has been falsely charged with advocating "confrontation," and even "brinkmanship." This is hardly the case. He expects a return to "a more competitive relationship with the Soviet Union," which is a far cry from the vagaries of the Cold War.

Noone at the Conference rebutted his contention that under certain circumstances the Soviet leadership would be willing to negotiate different (e.g., Austrian or Finnish) solutions for some of the EE countries, and that the West has never bothered to explore these possibilities. During the cold war, anticommunist polemics took the place of negotiations; now "we take refuge in such inconsequential accords as Helsinki's Final Act." Precisely because of that, the Soviet leaders may well be surprised if and when the US supports the status quo of post-Tito Yugoslavia.

It remains a fact that Eastern Europe fared better during the pre-detente, rather than during the present, detente, period. With the exception of Poland, it was a time of liberalization, experimentation, and the Rumanian deviation. By contrast, there has been considerable regression since then. Part of the reason is the intensification of the ideological campaign, which the regimes deem necessary in order to counteract the potentially corrosive effects of detente.

Mr. Gati considers his view of detente as such the most important difference between himself and his critics. This policy was, at first, eminently sound and justifiable. By now, however, "detente policy has outlived its usefulness." The agreements with the Soviet Union have been unimpressive, yet the Administration has celebrated them in the most extravagant terms. This applies as much to the "unnecessary Helsinki declaration" as to the SALT agreements. Our pessimism regarding more meaningful accords has prevented us from pursuing long-term objectives. The time has come to "place our relationship with the Soviet Union on the back burner," much in line with Kissinger's admonition, in 1961, about expending energy and ingenuity "in finding things to agree on, no matter how trivial," instead

of "coming to terms with the issues that have caused the tensions." By pursuing a low-key yet cordial and correct policy vis-a-vis the USSR the US would find time to concentrate on its relations with Europe, Japan, China, etc., while calmly hoping that the USSR will eventually come to terms with reality and "seek a genuine detente." In this context the US could also pursue fruitful relations with "some of the countries of Eastern Europe, especially Yugoslavia and to a lesser extent Hungary, Poland, and Rumania. Their leaders know, even if they cannot often say, that their interest in promoting political and economic semi-independence coincides with ours-- and that should provide sufficient basis for limited cooperation and mutually advantageous accords."

EASTERN EUROPE: STABILITY OR RECURRENT CRISES?

Conference sponsored by the Bureau of Intelligence and Research
Department of State

Airlie House, Warrenton, Virginia

November 13-15, 1975

PROGRAM

Thursday, November 13

4:00 p.m.	Chartered bus leaves Department of State for Airlie House-- Diplomatic Entrance on C Street
6:30 p.m.	Dinner
8:00 p.m.	<u>First Session:</u> "Stability and Instability in Retrospect" <u>Speaker:</u> Zvi Gitelman <u>Discussants:</u> Nicholas Andrews, J.F. Brown, Richard Burks <u>Chairman:</u> Richard Lowenthal
9:15 p.m.	Coffee
9:30-10:45 p.m.	Discussion (continuation)

Friday, November 14

8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 a.m.	<u>Second Session:</u> "Economics and Integration" <u>Speaker:</u> Paul Marer <u>Discussants:</u> Irene Jaffe, Carl McMillan <u>Chairman:</u> John Hardt
10:30 a.m.	Coffee
10:45-12:15 p.m.	Discussion (continuation)
12:30 p.m.	Lunch
2:00 p.m.	<u>Third Session:</u> "Intellectuals, Youth, Ideology" <u>Speaker:</u> Leszek Kolakowski <u>Discussants:</u> Melvin Croan, Jiri Hochman, Rudolph Tokes <u>Chairman:</u> Abraham Brumberg

3:30 p.m.	Coffee
3:45-5:30 p.m.	Discussion (continuation)
5:30 p.m.	Cocktails (hosted by the Department of State)
6:30 p.m.	Dinner
<u>Saturday, November 15</u>	
8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 a.m.	<u>Fourth Session: "The Military: Loyalty to Whom?"</u> <u>Speaker:</u> Ross Johnson <u>Discussants:</u> Robert Dean, Robin Remington <u>Chairman:</u> Richard Davies
10:30 a.m.	Coffee
10:45-12:15 p.m.	Discussion (continuation)
12:30 p.m.	Lunch
2:00 p.m.	<u>Final Session: "U.S. Policy: Do's and Don'ts"</u> <u>Speaker:</u> Charles Gatl <u>Chairman:</u> Harry Barnes
3:30 p.m.	Coffee
3:45-5:00 p.m.	Discussion (continuation)
5:00-5:30 p.m.	Cocktails (cash-bar)
5:30 p.m.	Chartered bus leaves Airlie House for Department of State

PARTICIPANTS

Airlie House Conference November 13-15, 1975

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Wayne University

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