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Reply

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It is some time since I wrote *GRIT, Gorbachev and the End of the Cold War* and I am grateful to Jason Ralph for giving me an opportunity to re-examine the piece. It is always nice to be 'congratulated' and to be noted for providing 'instructive' analysis, even if, apparently, the article 'suffers from epistemological flaws' and 'obstructs' the future construction of security communities. The latter is particularly puzzling since the pursuit of GRIT-type strategies is an aid, not a hindrance, to the creation of security communities.

Ralph raises two main issues in his critique that I will respond to, but first, some readers might be confused as to the purpose behind Ralph's section on the definition of the security dilemma, given that the concept is mentioned only once in the article and that in the abstract. This section represents a difference between us over what constitutes a security dilemma. In brief, the security dilemma describes a situation in which war can occur between two or more participants where none of those involved desired such an outcome. Thus war can occur without the participation of a revisionist or revolutionary state seeking to alter the status quo. Hence Herbert Butterfield's claim that, '[t]he greatest war in history could be produced without the intervention of any great criminals who might be out to do deliberate harm in the world. It could be produced between two Powers both of which were desperately anxious to avoid a conflict of any sort'.[1] Likewise it was the existence of the Nazi revisionist regime in Germany which led John Herz to assert, the Second World War was 'provoked by Hitler's policy of world domination. It can hardly be maintained that it was a German security dilemma which lay at the heart of that conflict, but rather one man's, or one regime's, ambition to master the world'.[2] The security dilemma thus operates amongst status-quo powers and since neither desires war its operation can be considered a tragedy. This seems to me to be the essence of the security dilemma, and while uncertainty is a key criterion (how could it operate if both participants knew each did not intend the other harm), it is not sufficient on its own to account for the paradoxical nature of the spiralling process of insecurity. This is not to suggest that it is easy to determine the ambition of the other, as Barry Buzan writes, '[e]valuating what is, and what is not, a threat, to whom, in what ways and over what time-scale can be a tricky business'.[3] Yet is Myron Weiner wrong—as Ralph implies when he questions the validity of illusory incompatibility—to assert,

[1] Herbert Butterfield, *History and Human Relations* (London, 1951), pp. 19–20.
[2] John Herz, *International Politics in the Atomic Age* (New York, 1966), p. 234, fn. 5.
[3] Barry Buzan, 'Societal security, state security and internationalisation', in Ole Waever, Barry Buzan, Morten Kelstrup and Pierre Lemaitre, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe* (London, 1993), p. 43.

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'[w]e . . . need to distinguish between real and reasonably perceived threats, on the one hand, and paranoid notions of threat or mass anxieties, on the other'?[4]

The first issue Ralph raises is that I underestimate the difficulties Gorbachev faced in translating his aim into policy and that until Gorbachev was securely in place the US would be reluctant to reciprocate. Richard Bitzinger's suggestion that there was a lack of a Western response to Gorbachev was therefore, according to Ralph, due not to the US administration being uncertain of Gorbachev's goals, but rather, of his ability to carry them out. I have three responses to this first point. First, while Gorbachev did have a conservative element within the USSR to overcome, his achievements should not be underestimated. Ralph writes that Gorbachev had to wait for Soviet military doctrine to be reformulated before he made his concessions. However, military doctrine was undergoing fundamental changes *because* of the political initiatives introduced by the Gorbachev leadership. The military doctrine was changing to reflect Gorbachev's new political thinking, hence Raymond Garthoff writes, 'these fundamental changes in Soviet military doctrine stemmed directly from political initiatives of the new Gorbachev leadership in 1985'.[5] Gorbachev did not wait for the military doctrine to change before initiating proposals, his announcement in December 1988 cutting back troop levels and the acceptance of core Western proposals at the Conventional Force in Europe negotiations, preceded by two years a draft Soviet statement on military doctrine.[6] With regard to the general criticism of rationalism, while it is right to acknowledge the insights provided by authors working on bureaucratic politics, for instance, it is pertinent to recall that in the most analysed of decision-making examples—the Cuban Missile Crisis—David Welch concludes, 'those who seek useful general propositions about international politics should think twice about abandoning rational actor analysis'.[7]

Second, the degree of scepticism towards Gorbachev's goals should not be underestimated, with the 'clever bear syndrome' lingering longer in the US than in Europe. Raymond Garthoff notes that despite the improvements in US–Soviet relations at the end of Reagan's administration, confrontation over the Krasnoyarsk radar and a United Nations General Assembly resolution on international dialogue meant that '[n]ew thinking still had a way to go in American policy'.[8] I do not, as Ralph states, 'miss the important insights that the literature on transnational coalitions offers', indeed the comparison between the US and West Germany notes

[4] Myron Weiner, *The Global Migration Crisis: Challenges to States and to Human Rights* (New York, 1995), p. 135.

[5] Raymond Garthoff, *Deterrence and the Revolution in Soviet Military Doctrine* (Washington, 1990), p. 108.

[6] Thomas Risse-Kappen, 'Ideas do not Float Freely: transnational coalitions, domestic structures, and the end of the Cold War', *International Organization*, 48 (Spring 1994), p. 203.

[7] David A. Welch, 'The Organizational Process and Bureaucratic Politics Paradigms: Retrospect and Prospect', *International Security*, 17 (Fall 1992), p. 138. Welch notes that during the Cuban Missile Crisis 'Kennedy was constrained neither by Congress nor by his advisers. Indeed, when disagreements between the president and the ExComm became acute, Kennedy simply bypassed the ExComm'. (p. 132). This example is obviously drawn from a period of high tension. However, the relevant literature has acknowledged that a state's top decision-maker is not subject to the restraints of the bureaucratic process to anything like the extent of his/her subordinates. See, J. Bendor and T. Hammond, 'Rethinking Allison's Models', *American Political Science Review*, 86 (June 1992), pp. 301–22.

[8] Raymond L Garthoff, *The Great Transition: American-Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War* (Washington, 1994), p. 372.

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the value of meetings such as Pugwash in producing a positive response from the Germans.[9]

Third, if there were members of the US administration that were sceptical towards Gorbachev's proposals, not because they were uncertain of his goals but because they feared a possible Soviet defection if Gorbachev was removed from office, we need to know how influential they were. The evidence certainly points to a cautious US administration, even in early 1989 the Bush administration was advocating 'status quo plus' as a response to Gorbachev. The evidence from the Reagan administration though seems to show the US intent on pocketing the concessions on offer from the USSR, and believing that these concessions were forthcoming because of the tough negotiating stand of the US.[10] A competitive, unilateral pursuit of security—as opposed to a common security approach—by the US was seen to be successful. This competitive approach explains the Russian perception of Western betrayal in the 1990s which can partly explain the failure of the US and Russia in the post-Cold War era to achieve a durable strategic partnership. Alexei Arbatov wrote, 'the West . . . perceived Russia's policy as a course of concessions, and very quickly learned to take it for granted'.[11] This betrayal was seized upon by the more extreme politicians, and in turn this forced the hand of more moderate politicians to oppose the expansion of NATO and delay ratification of the START II treaty.

Ralph's second issue is that the US wanted the Soviets to adopt a liberal identity and until this was achieved the US administration would not be in a political position to fully reciprocate. Although Reagan may have sincerely believed that the American government could not 'have a constructive relationship with a government that trampled upon the rights of its people', US history has shown quite the opposite, with the US engaged in constructive relationships with authoritarian regimes throughout the Cold War. Where such relations would prove difficult for the US population to accept, the government engaged in covert deals, such as the Iran-Contra affair. The identity issue Ralph raises seems more to do with the emphasis in the article on military matters, than identity *per se*. The Cold War was more than a military stand-off, and Gorbachev's *glasnost* and *perestroika* were important factors in de-demonizing the image of the USSR. However, the military element was far from insignificant, and by making concessions in this field Gorbachev was dismantling the most tangible sign of the Cold War confrontation. With a Marxist ideology that warned of the dangers of an imperialist attack Gorbachev's, perhaps unconscious, use of a GRIT-type strategy in the military realm seems deserving of special attention.

The article sought to determine to what extent Gorbachev's foreign policy initiatives resembled a GRIT-type strategy and whether this helps to explain how the Cold War came to an end. It was never intended as a definitive account of why the Cold War came to an end, and therefore Ralph's critique, which almost exclusively focuses on the US side, does not supplant, but rather supplements, a piece concerned primarily with Gorbachev.

[9] Alan R. Collins, 'GRIT, Gorbachev and the End of the Cold War', *Review of International Studies*, 24 (April 1998), p. 212.
[10] This was especially true after Geneva and Reykjavik, for details see Garthoff, *The Great Transition*.
[11] Alexei G. Arbatov, 'Russia's Foreign Policy Alternatives', *International Security*, 18 (Fall 1993), p. 22.

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