

## Cold War Endpoints?: Beginning the Debate

by David Wolff

Chronology and periodization are the bread and butter of the historical profession, so it is no surprise to see the proper dating of the beginning and the end of the Cold War under discussion. 1945 is often favored, for how could a cold war be an age's dominant feature, while a hot war was still going on? Churchill's Fulton speech is also mentioned as an important turning point, but so is the Marshall Plan, the Cominform, the Truman Doctrine, the Soviet bomb, NSC-68, the Lublin Poles and the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Clearly this discussion will go on for a long time.<sup>1</sup>

Similar disagreements are also evident regarding the end of the Cold War. As we approach 1999 and the activities planned to commemorate the tenth anniversary of Berlin Wall and Iron Curtain collapse, we will certainly hear more on this topic. Although 1989, like 1945 at the beginning, has many commonsensical advantages to recommend it, different causal emphases in analyzing the end of the Cold War will produce different chronologies. If Gorbachev's appointment as General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was the beginning of the end, then 1985 looms large. If the Reagan build-up and Star Wars drove the Soviets to bankruptcy and despair, then the early 1980s grow in importance. Specialists who give primacy in their analytical priorities to either the fall of Leninism or the rise of nationalism are likely to pick the 1991 demise of the Soviet Union.

This section of *CWIHP Bulletin 10* begins with a remarkable essay by the director of the National Security Archive, Thomas S. Blanton, with accompanying Russian documents. It seems that on Christmas Eve 1989, with state authority crumbling in Romania and the Ceausescus only a day away from the firing squad, the United States proposed that the Russians send a peacekeeping mission to the area. The Russian Deputy Foreign Minister I. Aboimov, in refusing the offer, made a "Christmas gift" of the Brezhnev doctrine to the American ambassador Jack F. Matlock, Jr. This seems to have been the first direct American request for increased Soviet military activity in Eastern Europe since 1945. As such, it represented a sea change in comparison with the fears and concerns of the Cold War era. Of course, what was a key moment of mutual self-recognition for the superpowers was relatively insignificant in Romania's end of Cold War, since no Soviet troops were actually sent.

As this final comment makes clear, the Cold War ended differently in different places, since the historical chronologies of countries and regions overlap and diverge. In the second part of this section, Tsuyoshi Hasegawa introduces new archival evidence on Soviet-Japanese

relations in the late Cold War period that suggest that in Asia the endpoint may not yet have been reached. This implies that this relatively neglected field has much to offer as we refine analytical tools for the study of the Cold War. Unfortunately, until recently, little documentation was available. The working group transcripts are a remarkable study in Soviet-Japanese stalemate, one of the great "givens" of late twentieth-century history. Change is more exciting to study, but enduring continuities are no less important. The tit for tat back and forth of the diplomatic dialogue demonstrates one of the more arcane uses of history, too. Of course, the American role in the ties between the US's most important economic "partner," Japan, and its most important security "concern," Russia, has also been understudied, although a National Security Archive initiative on US-Japanese security relations run by Robert Wampler has recently begun to remedy that situation.

Both the Romanian and Soviet-Japanese revelations fall among that group of cases where the availability of East-bloc evidence has outpaced the more systematic and expansive declassification process in the West. Up until 1968-69, the opening of Western holdings has followed the thirty-year rule, for most classes of documents, to outnumber the East-bloc counterparts. Starting from 1969, the reverse is, by and large, true with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) offering sole recourse.<sup>2</sup> If Blanton's FOIA fails, the Matlock instructions and conversation will only emerge from the American vault in the year 2014. The fact that Blanton was able to corroborate the Russian documents with Matlock's recollections points out one of the distinguishing characteristics of Cold War studies and contemporary history, in general — the importance of oral history. When combined with and tempered by documents, these two genres of testimony are most revealing.<sup>3</sup>

Keeping this in mind, perhaps there ought to be a mechanism to accelerate release of documents deemed crucial to the learning of historical lessons from the recent past, at least for already non-existent East European regimes whose archives are open, and before the surviving participants leave us for good. These are, after all, the lessons with deepest and most immediate bearing on the present.

If the Cold War ended at different times in different places, then it is entirely possible that it is not quite over yet in some places. This is a statement of great practical import for the Cold War International History Project and all scholars associated in the endeavor of excavating the Cold War. Wherever the documents are least accessible, some strain of ongoing Cold War mentality is probably

still present. In this sense, the archival openness work of CWIHP, through relations with scholarly and archival authorities in many countries, indirectly measures the Cold War's lasting legacy. Success in obtaining documentation on a given topic is the ultimate proof that that moment of Cold War can finally be made into history, one more thread in the new international history of the twentieth century.

<sup>1</sup> One of the few things that all of these events have in common is that Stalin's thoughts on them were decisive in shaping Soviet policies viewed simultaneously as international actions and reactions. In order to broaden and deepen this discussion of Cold War origins, CWIHP has begun a project on "I.V. Stalin as a Cold War Statesman." Transcripts and memcons of Stalin's meetings with foreign leaders are being collected for future publication and research in

connection with a major CWIHP-sponsored international conference, scheduled for late 1998. The Yugoslavia section of this *Bulletin* has a first installment from the Stalin project. Additional conversations with Stalin will go up on the CWIHP website ( [cwihip.si.edu](http://cwihip.si.edu) ) in the course of 1998.

<sup>2</sup> Russian archives are an exception on the East-bloc side with post-1969 documents emerging only in special cases. On the American side, extensive declassifications have taken place on certain post-1969 topics due to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) suits that generated the National Security Archive's foreign policy series. These include: Afghanistan, 1973-80; El Salvador, 1977-84; Iran, 1977-80; Iran-Contra Affair, 1983-88; Nicaragua, 1978-1990; Philippines, 1965-86; South Africa, 1962-89; US Nuclear Non-Proliferation, 1945-91.

<sup>3</sup> For an insightful discussion and demonstration of "critical oral history" with reference to the Cuban Missile Crisis, see James Blight and David Welch, *On the Brink* (New York, 1989).

## When did the Cold War End?

by Thomas Blanton

When the Cold War memorial rises on the Mall in Washington D.C., what exactly will be the date carved therein as the end of the Cold War?

Ambassador Robert Hutchings writes that "Americans of an earlier generation knew when V-E Day and V-J Day were; there were dates on the calendar marking victory in Europe and victory over Japan in 1945. But the Cold War ended on no certain date; it lacked finality.... The end of the Cold War thus evoked among the American public little sense of purpose fulfilled—and even less of responsibility for the tasks of postwar construction."<sup>1</sup>

Other commentators have picked the obvious candidate—25 December 1991, when the Soviet Union ceased to exist.<sup>2</sup> Yet this date is far too neat, since by any rational measure the Cold War was already over by then. Well before December 1991, the Cold War featured many symbolic and substantive markers of its demise. Among these, and on the basis of new archival evidence from Soviet files, this article nominates Christmas Eve 1989—when a hitherto somewhat obscure U.S.-Soviet meeting in Moscow discussed the violent revolution then taking place in Romania—as a strong contender for the title of Cold War finale.

The process of carbon-dating the end of the Cold War benefits from having December 1991 as the latest outer limit of the period. Similarly, the literature gives an earliest limit as well. This occurred on 1 June 1988, when then- Vice-President George Bush, on vacation in Kennebunkport, reacted to President Reagan's bouyant May 31 stroll through Red Square in Moscow by telling reporters dourly, "The Cold War's not over."<sup>3</sup>

By the end of the year, many Cold Warriors disagreed with President-elect Bush. On 7 December 1988, Mikhail Gorbachev made his famous speech at the United Nations, which Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan summed up as follows: "In December 1988, Gorbachev went to the General Assembly

of the United Nations and declared, 'We in no way aspire to be the bearer of ultimate truth.' That has to have been the most astounding statement of surrender in the history of ideological struggle."<sup>4</sup>

For other observers of Gorbachev's speech, it was not so much the ideological concessions as the unilateral military cutbacks that most impressed. Retired Gen. Andrew Goodpaster, a former NATO commander and top aide to President Dwight D. Eisenhower, called the cuts "the most significant step since NATO was founded" and said they opened the way to broad military reductions on both sides.<sup>5</sup>

The stream of Soviet eulogies for the Cold War continued throughout 1989. In January 1989 in Vienna, for example, Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze greeted the opening of the Conventional Forces in Europe talks by saying that disarmament progress "has shaken the iron curtain, weakened its rusting foundations, pierced new openings, accelerated its corrosion."<sup>6</sup> Then, on 6 July 1989, Gorbachev told the Council of Europe in his famous Strasbourg speech that the "common European home .... excludes all possibility of armed confrontation, all possibility of resorting to the threat or use of force, and notably military force employed by one alliance against another, within an alliance, or whatever it might be."<sup>7</sup>

And on 25 October 1989, as Communist governments began to tumble in Eastern Europe, Gorbachev's spokesman, Gennadi Gerasimov, coined the most memorable phrase of all, when he told reporters with Gorbachev in Helsinki, Finland, that the "Frank Sinatra Doctrine" had replaced the Brezhnev Doctrine for the Soviets, referring to the singer's signature ballad, "I did it my way."<sup>8</sup>

From the U.S. perspective, the most important signals were not so much the rhetorical flourishes of Gorbachev's "new thinking" (since contradictory rhetoric could be found in the official Soviet press throughout this period),

but the actual shifts in power within the Warsaw Pact. These included the beginning of the “roundtable” discussions in Poland in January-February 1989, which ultimately produced free elections in the summer (swept by Solidarity), and the March 1989 multicandidate elections in the Soviet Union, which put reformers and dissidents, including Andrei Sakharov, into the Congress of People’s Deputies. By May 1989, these extraordinary developments led former national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski to tell the *Washington Post*’s Don Oberdorfer: “We are quite literally in the early phases of what might be called the postcommunist era.”<sup>9</sup>

The most public finale of the Cold War, of course, came with the fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989. In the words of then-deputy national security adviser and future CIA director Robert Gates: “No one who watched on television will ever forget the images of crowds of East and West Germans dancing on top of the Wall, hacking away bits of it for souvenirs, and finally dismantling whole sections with construction machinery. If there ever was a symbolic moment when most of the world thought the Cold War ended, it was that night in Berlin.”<sup>10</sup>

One of Gates’ staff at the time, Robert Hutchings of the NSC, puts the date of his “epiphany” a little earlier. “Most of us dealing with these issues in the United States or in Europe had our epiphanies, our moments of realization that the end of Europe’s division might actually be at hand—not just as an aspiration for the 1990s but as an imminent reality,” Mr. Hutchings writes. “For many it came with the opening of the Berlin Wall on November 9; others may have had premonitions already in early 1989 (although surely not as many as later claimed such prescience). Mine came with the election of Tadeusz Mazowiecki and the early steps taken by his government. The United States was working hard to persuade the Soviet Union that self-determination in Eastern Europe could be achieved in a manner consistent with legitimate Soviet security interests; now, in Poland, the Mazowiecki government was living proof of that contention, offering an early glimmer of what post-Cold War Europe might look like. (To be sure, even the most optimistic scenario for this transition was still being measured in years, not months.)”<sup>11</sup>

But all of these memorable moments represented initiatives by Gorbachev or by the East Europeans themselves forcing change. Where was the evidence of “new thinking” by the United States?

For the Russian historian Vladislav Zubok, that evidence appeared at Malta, at the Bush-Gorbachev summit in early December 1989. President Bush’s restraint, his unwillingness to “dance on the Wall,” so to speak, his reassurance to Gorbachev as superpower-peer, their joint press conference (the first in the history of superpower summitry)—all adds up to the end of the Cold War.<sup>12</sup> More support for this view comes from Gorbachev’s own statement, which appeared in *Pravda* on 5 December that “The world is leaving one epoch, the

‘Cold War,’ and entering a new one.”<sup>13</sup> Gennadi Gerasimov told reporters after Malta: “We buried the Cold War at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea.”<sup>14</sup>

But, again, these are the Soviet announcements of the end of the Cold War. For the American announcement, we must turn to Christmas Eve, Sunday, 24 December 1989. Secretary of State James Baker, appearing on NBC Television’s “Meet The Press” show, said the United States would not object if the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies used military force to assist the Romanian revolutionaries who had just deposed the Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.<sup>15</sup> Raymond Garthoff describes this statement as “an extraordinary illustration of how rapidly and far the changing situation in Eastern Europe had affected American thinking and U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union.... It would have been hard to find a more striking example reflecting American recognition of the end of the Cold War.”<sup>16</sup>

For Robert Hutchings, however, Baker’s statement was “an unfortunate comment, but one that was not quite as egregious as it seemed.”<sup>17</sup> According to Hutchings, “The context was this. The day before Baker made his remark, officials of the provisional [Romanian] government appealed to Moscow and the West for help, claiming they were running out of ammunition and feared being overwhelmed by the well-armed Ceausescu loyalists. Responding to this appeal, French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas offered to send a brigade of volunteers and said he would welcome Soviet assistance as well, without specifying whether he meant sending fresh supplies of ammunition or rendering more direct ‘assistance.’ It was in response to a question about Dumas’s position that Baker made his statement. The desire not to offend his French counterpart may be part of the explanation, but Baker evidently was swayed by the argument that Soviet intervention on the side of pro-democracy forces, in response to their specific appeal for help, would be preferable to seeing the revolution fail and the Ceausescu returned to power.” Hutchings says this was by no means the “dominant view” among U.S. policymakers, and the next day a White House “clarification” of Baker’s remarks expressly opposed any Soviet intervention in Romania.<sup>18</sup>

But Baker had already sent instructions to Moscow, tasking Ambassador Jack F. Matlock, Jr., to feel out Soviet intentions on Romania. And so, on Christmas Eve, 24 December 1989, with Moscow some eight hours ahead of Washington, Ambassador Matlock went to the Soviet Foreign Ministry and met with Deputy Foreign Minister I. P. Aboimov. According to the Soviet documents attached to this article, Matlock’s message—while veiled in diplomatic indirection—was as striking as anything Baker said on TV, amounting to an invitation for the Soviets to intervene in Romania. In 1994, the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation declassified and published these selected documents, for the obvious reason that the Soviets come off quite well in the exchange with the Americans.<sup>19</sup> The complete record of Soviet actions and conversations

remains to be seen.

The key document for this discussion is the final one in the series published by the Foreign Ministry, a 25 December memorandum of conversation written by Deputy Foreign Minister Aboimov of his meeting the day before with Matlock. Since 24 December was a Sunday, presumably Foreign Minister Shevardnadze as well as Secretary General Gorbachev were not to be found at the office, but in their dachas.

Interestingly, Ambassador Matlock's 1995 book on the fall of the Soviet Union does not mention the discussion detailed here in the Soviet notes of the conversation. Only a very indirect hint emerges from the Matlock passage that reads as follows: "After Germany, the most traumatic event in the onetime Soviet bloc for the Communist Party and the KGB was the bloody revolution that took place in Romania at the end of the year. The violence directed at Ceausescu and his family, and members of the hated Securitate secret police, was covered in great detail by the Soviet press, and television did not spare its viewers the scenes of violence. But when the anti-Ceausescu forces invited Soviet intervention to support them, Moscow refused, signaling that the days of military intervention in Eastern Europe—even under conditions the West might have found tolerable—were over."<sup>20</sup>

Compare the language Matlock uses here—"even under conditions the West might have found tolerable"—with the language his Soviet counterpart uses to describe the U.S. approach: "Then Matlock touched on the issue that, apparently, he wanted to raise from the very beginning of the conversation. The Administration, he said, is very interested in knowing if the possibility of military assistance by the Soviet Union to the Romanian National Salvation Front is totally out of question. Matlock suggested (*probrosil*) the following option: what would the Soviet Union do if an appropriate appeal came from the Front? Simultaneously, the Ambassador hinted at the idea, apparently on instructions from Washington. He let us know that under the present circumstances the military involvement of the Soviet Union in Romanian affairs might not be regarded in the context (*podpadat' pod*) of 'the Brezhnev doctrine.'"

The Soviet diplomat Aboimov quickly refused Matlock's implied invitation: "To this sounding out (*zondazh*) by the American [Ambassador] I answered completely clearly and unequivocally, presenting our principled position. I declared that we did not visualize, even theoretically, such a scenario. We stand against any interference in the domestic affairs of other states and we intend to pursue this line firmly and without deviations. Thus, the American side may consider that 'the Brezhnev doctrine' is now theirs as our gift."

This last phrase clearly refers to the American invasion of Panama which had just occurred on 20 December 1989. Some 13,000 U.S. troops had moved overnight into that Central American country to remove its dictator, Manuel Noriega, a long-time U.S. intelligence

asset. The Soviet language here indicates that they believed the U.S. invitation to be at best "stupid," as Foreign Minister Shevardnadze later told American writers Michael Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, and at worst a provocation intended to put the Soviet Union in a position parallel to that of the U.S. in Panama.<sup>21</sup>

The Beschloss and Talbott account, clearly based on their interviews with Shevardnadze, leaves the impression that the Soviet Foreign Minister made his remonstrances directly to Matlock. At least according to the documents at hand (as well as Ambassador Matlock's own memory), this was not the case. Similarly, Aboimov's pointed comment—"Thus, the American side may consider that 'the Brezhnev doctrine' is now theirs as our gift"—differs somewhat from the version provided by Beschloss and Talbott, who have Aboimov saying "with unconcealed bitterness, 'It seems that we've turned the Brezhnev Doctrine over to you!'"<sup>22</sup>

At the heart of Matlock's case to the Soviets was the notion of an "appropriate appeal" from the Romanians for military assistance. According to the Soviet memcon, his question on 24 December couched this in the conditional—what if such an appeal came?—suggesting that no such appeal had yet been made. However, Matlock's memoirs turn the conditional into a past tense: "the anti-Ceausescu forces invited" and "Moscow refused."<sup>23</sup> Likewise, Hutchings' account cites a Romanian appeal on "the day before Baker made his remark,"<sup>24</sup> which would have been the day before Matlock's meeting. In contrast, a contemporary account, by Don Oberdorfer in *The Washington Post* on 25 December quotes "Washington officials" as saying "the only [Romanian] requests as of yesterday [24 December, the day of Matlock's meeting and Baker's TV appearance] were part of a general appeal for medical supplies and other emergency aid."<sup>25</sup>

The Aboimov memorandum of his meeting with Matlock certainly ranks as the headline document of this small batch, but the other five released by the Russian Foreign Ministry also reward close attention. They include some highly suggestive details on the Romanian situation in December 1989, in two additional categories: First, on the issue of possible Soviet involvement in plotting the fall of Ceausescu; and second, on the actual events in Timisoara and elsewhere in Romania, as expressed in Soviet discussions with the Romanian, Hungarian, and Yugoslav ambassadors to Moscow.

Did the Soviets plot the fall of the dictator Ceausescu? The second document here, of a conversation of Aboimov with the Romanian ambassador I. Bukur (on 21 December) describes specific allegations from Ceausescu, directed to the Soviet charge d'affaires in Bucharest, that the Timisoara protests arose because "the Soviet Union and other states, members of the Warsaw Treaty" were involved in "coordinated activities allegedly aimed at the SRR."

However, the first Russian document published here suggests, but does not prove, that the answer is no, at least

for the highest levels of the Soviet Union. Here we have the Foreign Minister saying to Secretary General Gorbachev, both of them leaders of the Politburo, that the Soviets were having to rely on Western telegraph services for their news of Romania as of 20 December—the day the army ceased its attack on the Timisoara demonstrations and the protesters proclaimed Timisoara a liberated city, five days after the first protests sought to protect pastor Lazslo Tokes, and three days after the army-Securitate crackdown.<sup>26</sup> This Shevardnadze-to-Gorbachev message does not mean that the lower levels of the Soviet apparatus, for example the KGB resident in Bucharest, were not plotting; indeed, based on a Ceausescu-mocking editorial in *Izvestiia* on 17 November 1989, R. Craig Nation concludes that “the involvement of Soviet security forces in the plot to topple the dictator is a distinct possibility.”<sup>27</sup> But this evidence does suggest strongly that the KGB was not providing much good information to the top. If the Soviet experience in East Germany one month earlier is any parallel, the KGB could well have become hostage in an informational sense to the very secret police forces it had nurtured and the outside world assumed to be so powerful. In that case, the Stasi completely underestimated the power of the public protests and the likelihood of the fall of the Wall.

Why should we believe this document? I think there is a relatively simple answer: If evidence existed in the Soviet files of Gorbachev plotting with the KGB to overthrow Ceausescu, against all of Gorbachev’s public speeches about non-intervention, President Yeltsin would probably have released such documents, as he did so many others derogatory of Gorbachev, during the consolidation of power after 1991 and certainly in time for the Presidential campaign in 1996, in which Gorbachev won about 1% of the vote.<sup>28</sup> The Politburo files continue to be under Yeltsin’s direct control, with access strictly limited to favored researchers.<sup>29</sup> Likewise, these Foreign Ministry files are declassified today clearly because they make the Foreign Ministry look good. We have not seen the same kinds of files on other revolutions in Eastern Europe, nor the complete record groups of any of these files, and until we do, we cannot draw complete conclusions about Soviet behavior in 1989.

But for Romanians and for historians of that epochal year 1989, these documents, limited as they are, provide some fascinating detail on Warsaw Pact diplomatic conversations at the very end of the Cold War. Almost quaint, were they not so dripping with venom, are the representations of Ceausescu’s ambassador to Moscow, I. Bukur. In this view, the heroic pastor Tokes simply serves as an agent of “outside” (read revanchist Hungarian) interests and possibly Western intelligence services as well.

The conversations with the Hungarian and Yugoslav ambassadors also give us a wealth of detail about the events in Romania from the perspective of three very concerned (and still Communist) governments. Hungary’s

Birnbauer visits the Soviet Foreign Ministry on December 22 only hours after Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu had boarded a helicopter on the roof of the Communist Party headquarters in downtown Bucharest to flee from massive street demonstrations and chaotic violence in the form of a Securitate-versus-army shootout. Referring to an atmosphere of concern and mourning in Budapest, Birnbauer says, “No doubt that the events of the past few hours will drastically alter this mood.” For his part, the Yugoslav ambassador clearly has the best information from the ground in Romania, probably because the Yugoslav consulate staff in Timisoara served as eyewitnesses to the events there.

The day after Ambassador Matlock received the Brezhnev Doctrine as a Christmas gift, a Romanian firing squad shot Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu after a farcical trial. Over the next month, the Romanian revolution turned out to be a coup d’état in effect, stage-managed by nomenklatura of the Ceausescu regime who did not hesitate to bring in the traditional Party enforcers, the truncheon-wielding miners, to crush dissent (as in the University of Bucharest student protests of April-June 1990).<sup>30</sup> This murky history exemplifies precisely the lack of finality that Ambassador Hutchings refers to in his history of the end of the Cold War. For many Romanians, the internal Cold War did not really end until November 1996, when voters replaced Ceausescu’s former aide, President Ion Iliescu, with the rector (Emil Constantinescu) of the University of Bucharest, which to this day carries the sign: “Neo-Communist Free Zone.”

---

*Thomas S. Blanton is director of the National Security Archive, editor of White House E-Mail (New York: The New Press, 1995), and coauthor of The Chronology (New York: Warner Books, 1987). He delivered an abbreviated version of this article at the symposium, “A Seven-year-old Enigma,” sponsored by the Civic Academy Foundation and the Revolution Memorial Association, in Timisoara, Romania, 19 December 1996. He thanks Ambassador Jack F. Matlock, Jr. for his comments on this paper and Vladislav Zubok for superb translation.*

<sup>1</sup> Robert L. Hutchings, *American Diplomacy and the End of the Cold War: An Insider’s Account of U.S. Policy in Europe, 1989-1992* (Washington, D.C. and Baltimore: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), p. 343.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Charles Krauthammer, “Build a Cold War Memorial,” *The Washington Post*, 28 March 1997, p. A29: “We know its exact dates. On March 12, 1947, the United States entered the fight (late, as usual: Stalin had been at it at least since V-E Day). And it ended at the stroke of midnight, Dec. 31 [sic], 1991, when the Soviet Union didn’t just surrender, it vanished from the map.”

<sup>3</sup> Alessandra Stanley, “More Worldly Than Wise,” *Time*, 15 August 1988, p. 18, quoted in Don Oberdorfer, *The Turn: From the Cold War to a New Era* (New York: Touchstone/Simon & Schuster, 1992), p. 329.

- <sup>4</sup> Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "The CIA's Credibility," *The National Interest* (Winter 1995/96), p. 111. For the full text of Gorbachev's speech, see FBIS-SOV-99-236, 8 December 1988, pp. 11-19.
- <sup>5</sup> Quoted in Don Oberdorfer, *The Turn*, p. 319.
- <sup>6</sup> R. Craig Nation, *Black Earth, Red Star: A History of Soviet Security Policy, 1917-1991* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), p. 308.
- <sup>7</sup> R. Craig Nation, *Black Earth, Red Star*, p. 308: "A more straightforward repudiation of the Brezhnev Doctrine could scarcely be imagined...."
- <sup>8</sup> Michael R. Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, *At the Highest Levels: The Inside Story of the End of the Cold War* (Boston: Little Brown, 1994), p. 134.
- <sup>9</sup> Quoted in Don Oberdorfer, *The Turn*, p. 346.
- <sup>10</sup> Robert M. Gates, *From The Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), p. 468.
- <sup>11</sup> Hutchings, *American Diplomacy and the End of the Cold War*, p. 74.
- <sup>12</sup> Personal communication, March 14, 1997; see also Beschloss and Talbott, *At the Highest Levels*, p. 135.
- <sup>13</sup> Quoted in Raymond Garthoff, *The Great Transition: American-Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1994), p. 408.
- <sup>14</sup> Beschloss and Talbott, *At the Highest Levels*, p. 165.
- <sup>15</sup> Don Oberdorfer, "Baker Implies U.S. Would Back East-Bloc Military Aid to Rebels; French, Dutch Would Support Soviet Role in Romania," *The Washington Post*, 25 December 1989, pp. A37, A40.
- <sup>16</sup> Garthoff, *The Great Transition*, p. 408.
- <sup>17</sup> Hutchings, *American Diplomacy and the End of the Cold War*, p. 86. Ambassador Jack F. Matlock, Jr. does not agree that Mr. Baker's comment was "unfortunate"; rather, "under the circumstances we would not have minded some limited Soviet assistance to the NSF [National Salvation Front] and it did not hurt to let the Soviets know." Matlock letter to the author, 21 May 1997.
- <sup>18</sup> Statement by the press secretary, White House, 25 December 1989, cited in Hutchings, *American Diplomacy and the End of the Cold War*, p. 381.
- <sup>19</sup> The Russian versions, in transcript rather than facsimile, are to be found in *Diplomaticheskii vestnik*, No. 21/22, November 1994, pp. 74-80. The present writer has filed Freedom of Information Act requests with the State Department for Secretary Baker's instructions and Ambassador Matlock's response, neither of which has yet been declassified. Ambassador Matlock notes that the memcon accords with his own memory of the conversation. Matlock letter to the author, 21 May 1997.
- <sup>20</sup> Jack F. Matlock, Jr., *Autopsy on an Empire: The American Ambassador's Account of the Collapse of the Soviet Union*, (New York: Random House, 1995), pp. 261-262.
- <sup>21</sup> Beschloss and Talbott, *At the Highest Levels*, pp. 170-171.
- <sup>22</sup> Matlock letter to the author, 21 May 1997; Beschloss and Talbott, *At the Highest Levels*, p. 171.
- <sup>23</sup> Matlock, *Autopsy on an Empire*, p. 262. Ambassador Matlock "was told that there had been Romanian appeals for Soviet assistance - thus the instruction to me—but I have no direct knowledge of such appeals." Matlock letter to the author, 21 May 1997.
- <sup>24</sup> Hutchings, *American Diplomacy and the End of the Cold War*, p. 86.
- <sup>25</sup> Oberdorfer, "Baker Implies U.S. Would Back East-Bloc Military Aid to Rebels," p. A40.

- <sup>26</sup> For a detailed hour-by-hour chronology of the Timisoara events, based on eyewitness reports and contemporary documents, see Florin Medeleet and Mihai Ziman, *O Cronica a Revolutiei Din Timisoara 16-22 Decembrie 1989* (Timisoara: Muzeul Banatului Timisoara, April 1990, 31 pp.).
- <sup>27</sup> R. Craig Nation, *Black Earth, Red Star*, p. 309.
- <sup>28</sup> Ed. note: Most of these documents were gathered in the Storage Center for Contemporary Documentation (TsKhSD) as *fond* 89. It is also available on microfilm from Chadwick-Healey.
- <sup>29</sup> For an incisive review of the Soviet archival situation, see Raymond Garthoff, "Some Observations on Using the Soviet Archives," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (Spring 1997), pp. 243-257.
- <sup>30</sup> For the best review in English of these events, see Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Reinventing Politics: Eastern Europe from Stalin to Havel* (New York: The Free Press, 1993 pb.), pp. 223-236. See also Martyn Rady, *Romania in Turmoil* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co., 1992), pp. 91-144; and for a literary view, Andrei Codrescu, "Romania Today: A Bad Novel," in *The Muse Is Always Half-Dressed In New Orleans and other essays* (New York: Picador USA, 1995).

---

## To Comrade GORBACHEV M.S.

Mikhail Sergeevich:

On the events in Romania in the last few days we can still only judge on the basis of information that comes from news agencies, primarily Western ones. This information is often contradictory and does not allow one to construct a true picture.

Our attempts to obtain the official version via Bucharest produced no results. Today, 20 December the Romanian ambassador will be invited to the MFA USSR [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics] in order to obtain from him information on this issue.

Until we have complete and objective information, we should not, in our opinion, be in haste to make a statement of the USSR Congress of People's Deputies, at best we could go not further than instructing the Commission on Foreign Affairs [of the Congress' Supreme Soviet] to prepare a draft proposal on our possible reaction with all circumstances in mind.

## E. SHEVARDNADZE

**20 December 1989**

[Source: *Diplomaticheskii vestnik*, no. 21/22, November 1994, pp. 74-79. Translated by Vladislav Zubok.]

.....

**From the diary of  
ABOIMOV I.P.**

**21 December 1989**

**Memorandum of conversation  
with the Ambassador of the SRR [Socialist Republic of  
Romania] in the USSR**

**I. BUKUR**

**21 December 1989**

I received I. Bukur, fulfilling his request.

The Ambassador recounted the address of N. Ceausescu on Romanian radio and television on 20 December and handed over its complete text.

When I asked if the events in Timisoara involved human casualties and what the present situation was in that region, the Ambassador responded that he possesses no information on this issue. He referred to the fact that the address of N. Ceausescu also says nothing on this score.

I told the Ambassador that during the meeting of N. Ceausescu with the Soviet charge d'affaires in the SRR on 20 December [the former] expressed surprise that Soviet representatives made declarations on the events in Timisoara. Besides, during the meeting it was asserted [by Ceausescu] that the Romanian side possesses information that the action in Timisoara was allegedly prepared and organized with the consent of countries [that are] members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. Moreover, the actions against Romania were allegedly plotted within the framework of the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

According to our information, officials in Bucharest in conversation with ambassadors of allied socialist states expressed an idea about some kind of action of interference into the internal affairs of the SRR allegedly under preparation in the Soviet Union.

I must declare on behalf of our side that such assertions can only puzzle us, have no foundation and do not correspond with reality [until this part Aboimov probably read the instructions.]

Answering the Ambassador's question as to whether my words reflected the official viewpoint of the Soviet government, I told him that so far I have no instruction to make any declarations on behalf of the Soviet government, but my words certainly reflect our official position which postulates that the Soviet Union builds its relations with allied socialist states on the basis of equality, mutual respect and strict non-interference into domestic affairs. Considering the grave character of the statements of Romanian officials I cannot help expressing in preliminary order our attitude to these statements....

[Source: *Diplomaticeskii vestnik*, no. 21/22, November 1994, pp. 74-79. Translated by Vladislav Zubok.]

**From the diary of  
I.P. ABOIMOV**

**23 December 1989**

**Record of conversation with the Ambassador  
of the SFRY [Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia]  
in the USSR, MILAN VERES  
22 December 1989**

I received M. Veres on his request.

He referred to the instruction of the Union Secretariat on Foreign Affairs of the SFRY and shared the available information on the events in Romania, corroborated by the General Consulate of the SFRY in Timisoara and by numerous Yugoslav citizens who returned from the SRR. He also reported on the Yugoslav evaluations of the developments in Romania.

The beginning of the dramatic development could be traced to the events of 15-16 December in Timisoara where a large group of people protested against the action of the authorities with regard to the priest L. Tokes. This process grew into a huge demonstration of the population of the city against the existing order. According to the estimates of officials of the General Consulate of the SFRY, there were up to 100,000 people, including workers, university and school students, who participated in the demonstration. Protest actions took place also in Arad, Brasov and Cluj. Large contingents of militia and military were used against demonstrators in Timisoara. According to the Yugoslavs, during those clashes several hundred people died, and according to some unchecked data the number of casualties exceeded 2,000. In the downtown area shops, restaurants, cafes were destroyed, many streetcars and automobiles were also burnt down. Timisoara is surrounded by troops, but protest actions continue in the city. Workers seized factories and are threatening to blow them up if the authorities do not satisfy the people's demands. Officials of the General Consulate of the SFRY, the Ambassador remarked, noticed that a number of soldiers and militiamen expressed their sympathies with demonstrators. There were also slogans "The Army will not shoot at students and school children."

The Yugoslav-Romanian border is practically sealed; its defenses are fortified by troops along its whole length, including check-points. So far the Romanian side authorized only the passing of people with diplomatic and other service passports. The Ambassador informed us that the Yugoslavs had evacuated members of the families of officials of their General Consulate. He disavowed reports of a number of Western news agencies that participants of the demonstration [in Timisoara] found refuge on the territory of the Yugoslav compound, whose premises allegedly were penetrated by Romanian militia.

According to Yugoslav estimates, stressed M. Veres, the main reason for disorders in Timisoara and their spread subsequently around a number of other cities, including the capital of the SRR, is rooted in profound popular dissatisfaction with the economic situation in the country

accumulated over [many] years, with low living standards, the lack of basic food and consumer goods, and with the unwillingness of the leadership to undertake at least some measures to democratize the political system.

The Ambassador pointed out that the Yugoslav public is very concerned about the situation in the neighboring country. The mass media of the SFRY are informing the population in detail about the events, including many reports about reactions abroad. On 19 December the Union Executive Vece [executive branch of the Yugoslav state] came out with an appropriate declaration, expressing profound concern and regret with regard to casualties during the crack-down on the demonstrations. On 20 December the Presidium of the CC CPY [Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia] denounced the actions of the Romanian authorities and laid political responsibility at the door of the leadership of the RCP [Romanian Communist Party]. It declared a temporary suspension of all contacts with the RCP and repealed an earlier invitation [to the RCP] to send a delegation to the 14th Congress of the CPY (January 1990). All public organizations of Yugoslavia, as well as both chambers of the Skupcina [parliament] made sharp protests. Late on 21 December the Presidium of the SFRY adopted a resolution denouncing reprisals against the demonstrators, that led to a large loss of human life.

M. Veres stressed that of particular cause for concern in Belgrade is the situation with Yugoslav ethnic minorities in the SRR. He said that the SFRY supports a peaceful resolution of the situation in Romania and is against any foreign interference into Romanian affairs....

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR  
I. ABOIMOV

[Source: *Diplomaticeskii vestnik*, no. 21/22, November 1994, pp. 74-79. Translated by Vladislav Zubok.]

.....

**From the diary of ABOIMOV I.P.**

**25 December 1989**

**Record of conversation  
with U.S. Ambassador to the USSR, J. MATLOCK  
24 December 1989**

I received U.S. Ambassador J. Matlock at his request. Referring to instructions received from Washington, the Ambassador said that, in the opinion of the American leadership, the Soviet Union and the United States should continue the exchange of opinions with regard to the events in Romania. The situation in Romania still is very uncertain. The American side is very concerned by the fact that warfare between the forces of state security and army units continues, and casualties among the civilian population are mounting. In this regard Matlock referred

to the positive significance of the fact that the opinions of the Soviet Union and the United States coincided to the effect that there should be support given to the group that is trying to govern Romania and to fulfill the will of the Romanian people.

Then the American presented the following thought. The United States paid attention to the conviction expressed by the Soviet Union that military intervention is out of question. With equal interest the United States regarded the declaration of the Soviet government about its readiness to give immediate humanitarian assistance to the Romanian people. The American side would be greatly interested to hear the Soviet assessment of the developments in Romania, as well as the opinion of the Soviet side with regard to the most effective ways of supporting the Romanian people and the new leadership of Romania....

I informed the Ambassador that earlier, in addition to the Declaration of the Soviet government, a TASS Declaration was published. This step by our side was necessitated by grave concern over the very tense situation around the house populated by officials of the Soviet trade mission in Bucharest. It turned out to be in the epicenter of combat and for some time was partially seized by the terrorist forces. Only by the end of the day were they dispersed and we could evacuate the inhabitants from the house. I drew the attention of the American to the fact that among them two people were lightly wounded, and not one—as it was earlier reported. Now these people are located on the territory of the Soviet Embassy.

At the present moment the main task is to carry out the evacuation of Soviet citizens from Romania, first of all women and children. I informed the U.S. Ambassador of those options that are under consideration....

We maintain contact with representatives of the new Romanian leadership, if only via telephone. We informed them about our steps directed at giving humanitarian assistance to the Romanian population. Several times we inquired of the new leadership of Romania about what urgent needs they have. We received no clear answer to our question. It looks like the Front's Council still lacks clear ideas on this score.

With regard to the question raised by the American about the most effective approaches to the organization of humanitarian assistance to Romania, I repeated that there is no full clarity about it. The Soviet Union is carrying out measures to prepare such assistance, and its practical implementation, according to its own understanding of Romania's needs.

We informed the new Romanian leadership and also informed the International Red Cross Committee and the International Health Organization that we had set up hospitals in the frontier cities of the Soviet Union to receive wounded from Romania. In Moldavia they are already expecting the first group of 600 wounded.



About the means of assistance. The first load valued at a half million rubles (11 rail-cars) will be sent by rail. Trains in Romania still function. In addition, we gave instruction to the leadership of Moldavia to get in touch with border districts in Romania and clarify two issues. First, what do they need most. Second, to ask for their advice as to the best way to transport the loads.

To finish the exposition of our thoughts on the situation in Romania, I remarked that we are in close contact on these questions with our Warsaw Treaty allies as well as with all other states that approach us. So we take as a positive sign the desire of the American side to exchange opinions. We consider contacts of this kind very useful.

Reacting to our words, Matlock thought that now the United States is seeking optimal ways of cooperation in order to give assistance to Romania. According to Matlock, the United States would be ready to give assistance in medicine and food, as well as in logistics of transporting this assistance. In this context the American ambassador made the following request. If the Soviet side develops some ideas on this score, the American side is very interested in being kept up to date.

I responded that naturally we would be ready at any moment to share our considerations with the American side.

Then Matlock touched on the issue that, apparently, he wanted to raise from the very beginning of the conversation. The Administration, he said, is very interested in knowing if the possibility of military assistance by the Soviet Union to the Romanian National Salvation Front is totally out of question. Matlock suggested the following option: what would the Soviet Union do if an appropriate appeal came from the Front? Simultaneously, the Ambassador hinted at the idea, apparently on instructions from Washington. He let us know that under the present circumstances the military involvement of the Soviet Union in Romanian affairs might not be regarded in the context of "the Brezhnev doctrine."

To this sounding out by the American I gave the entirely clear and unequivocal answer, presenting our principled position. I declared that we did not visualize, even theoretically, such a scenario. We stand against any interference in the domestic affairs of other states and we intend to pursue this line firmly and without deviations. Thus, the American side may consider that "the Brezhnev doctrine" is now theirs as our gift.

Developing this thesis further, as a clarification, I drew the interlocutor's attention to the fact that it was on the basis of these considerations that the Soviet Union was and still is against convening the Security Council (SC) to consider the situation in Romania.

The American, however, immediately inquired what would be the Soviet reaction if the National Salvation Front itself appeals to convene the SC.

I said that we are still not ready to contemplate such a hypothetical possibility.

In the end both sides confirmed the positive evaluation of the exchange of opinions that took place. They expressed support of continuing contacts with regard to the rapidly changing situation in Romania.

Participants of the meeting included deputy head of the Directorate of the USA and Canada I.N. Podrazhanets, third secretary of the DUSAandC [Directorate of USA and Canada in the Soviet Foreign Ministry] N.N. Spassky and first secretary of the U.S. embassy in Moscow J. Shoemaker.

Deputy minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR  
I. ABOIMOV

[Source: *Diplomaticheskii vestnik*, no. 21/22, November 1994, pp. 74-79. Translated by Vladislav Zubok.]

.....

# Stalemate in an Era of Change: New Sources and Questions on Gorbachev, Yeltsin, and Soviet/Russian-Japanese Relations

by *Tsuyoshi Hasegawa*

New archival materials from the Soviet Union, China, and Eastern Europe have significantly altered previous conceptions of the Cold War. Soviet-Japanese relations, however, have made little progress. Not a single article focusing on Soviet-Japanese relations has, until now, been published in the *CWIHP Bulletin*.<sup>1</sup> Nor has Cold War coverage in *Diplomatic History* or the H-Diplo internet discussion group extended to Soviet-Japanese relations. The most recent monograph by Vojtech Mastny that cast a wide net over archival materials in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe reveals no new materials on the rivalry of the two giants on the remote shores of the Pacific.<sup>2</sup> Although Michael Schaller's monograph and Marc Gallichio's article shed light on important aspects of American foreign policy toward Soviet-Japanese relations, especially during the last stage of the Pacific War, their sources come exclusively from United States archives.<sup>3</sup> Many monographs published in English in recent years have illuminated very little of the fundamental questions that have vexed Soviet-Japanese relations during the Cold War.<sup>4</sup>

Needless to say, the most serious stumbling block that has prevented rapprochement between the Soviet Union and Japan has been the Northern Territories dispute, and precisely on this issue there has been what might be called a "conspiracy of silence" with regard to government archival sources.<sup>5</sup> Archival materials related to the Northern Territories question have been systematically excluded from the Japanese foreign policy archives that have been declassified by the Gaimusho (Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The Soviet/Russian government has been equally protective in guarding the secrecy of its policy on the territorial question, although there have been attempts to publish archival sources on some aspects of Soviet-Japanese relations, notably the Neutrality Pact negotiations of 1941, the Malik-Hirota negotiations in June 1945, and the Moscow negotiations for normalization of relations in October 1956.<sup>6</sup> To make matters worse, some of the most important U.S. documents that should illuminate the background of this dispute are still classified "due to the request of a friendly country [i.e., Japan]."<sup>7</sup> The recent valiant attempt by a trilateral project headed by Graham Allison, Kimura Hiroshi, and Konstantin Sarkisov, to overcome this obstacle has not been successful.<sup>8</sup> Interestingly, two of the most valuable recent works on this subject rely heavily on British archives.<sup>9</sup>

The only scholar, who has had systematic access to Soviet archives is Boris N. Slavinskii of Moscow's Institute of World Economy and International Relations.

In a series of articles and monographs, he has succeeded in revising the traditional official views on the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact, Stalin's Kurile operation, and Soviet policy toward the San Francisco Peace Conference.<sup>10</sup> Those archives that Slavinskii has examined remain, however, inaccessible to foreign scholars.

Because of the inaccessibility of archives, we still do not know answers to crucial questions about Soviet/Russian-Japanese relations. What was the major motivation of the Soviet government when it was approached by the Japanese government to mediate the termination of war in April 1945? What was the relationship between the U.S. decision to drop the atomic bombs and Stalin's Kurile operation in the summer of 1945? Did Stalin expect the United States to occupy all or at least some of the southern Kuriles during the last stage of the Pacific War? Why did it take two years after the occupation of the southern Kuriles for Stalin to annex the Kuriles to the Soviet territory? Why did the Soviet government decide to participate in the San Francisco Peace Conference and in the end not to sign the treaty? How did the power struggle within the CPSU affect its negotiations for normalization of relations with Japan? How did the Gaimusho and the U.S. State Department exchange information during the Soviet-Japanese negotiations for normalization of relations in 1955-56? Why did the Japanese government reject Andrei Gromyko's overtures in 1972 to settle the territorial question on the basis of the 1956 Joint Declaration? Why did the Soviet leadership fail to display a more flexible attitude toward Japan on the territorial question during the second half of the 1970s, when it took the Chinese threat seriously? Why did the Japanese government fail to appreciate the domestic difficulties that challenged Gorbachev and Yeltsin? Why did Gorbachev refuse to make any concessions on the Northern Territories question? Why did Yeltsin cancel his planned trip to Tokyo in September 1992? To answer these questions, we must push forward research in Japanese, Russian, and US archives, and pressure those governments to release those materials which remain classified.

The publication of the documents in this issue is a small step toward opening substantial archival evidence on Soviet-Japanese relations. These documents shed light on some important aspects of Soviet-Japanese relations under Gorbachev and of Russian-Japanese relations after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Soviet-Japanese relations in the Gorbachev era represented an anomaly in international relations. While all major powers in the world drastically improved their

relations with the Soviet Union, Japanese relations remained stalemated because of the long-standing territorial dispute preventing the conclusion of a World War II peace treaty. Gorbachev's historic visit to Japan in April 1991 did not produce a major breakthrough. How can we account for this failure?

Soviet-Japanese relations under Gorbachev experienced a pendulum movement: a positive movement was always pulled back by a negative one. In the end, neither side was willing to make a leap to settle the territorial dispute. As soon as Gorbachev assumed power in March 1985, he met Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro at Konstantin Chernenko's funeral, and signaled his intention to end the frozen state of Soviet-Japanese relations. Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's visit to Japan in January 1986 was an important turning point. The mechanism of bilateral dialogue that had been disrupted under Brezhnev was restored. Later, in his 1986 Vladivostok speech, Gorbachev declared his intention to seek a more conciliatory Asian policy and to join the Asia-Pacific region as a constructive partner. Both sides began preparations for Gorbachev's visit to Japan in late 1986 or in the beginning of 1987.

This trip never materialized. Instead, after the Japanese government tightened up the COCOM regulations under U.S. pressure as a result of the 1987 Toshiba incident—in which the Toshiba Machine Company admitted selling highly sensitive technology to the Soviet Union—the Soviet government expelled a Japanese diplomat, prompting the Japanese government to retaliate with a similar action. Soviet-Japanese relations returned to the deep-freeze again.

It was not until mid-1988 that both sides began gingerly to mend fences again. Former Prime Minister Nakasone met Gorbachev in July, and the frank exchange of opinions between Gorbachev and Nakasone created a momentum for improvement. In September, Gorbachev delivered his Krasnoiarsk speech in which he declared his intention to improve relations with Japan. In December, Shevardnadze made his second trip to Tokyo. One of the major achievements at the ministerial conference was the creation of the Working Group for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty. For the first time since the end of World War II both sides established a mechanism through which to create a favorable environment for the conclusion of a peace treaty.

Nevertheless, the creation of the Working Group did not lead to a settlement of the territorial dispute. On the contrary, the negotiations revealed irreconcilable differences. During the crucial two years of 1989-90, when the revolutions swept away the East European Communist regimes and reunification of Germany was realized, the Soviet Union and Japan stood at a standstill unable to resolve the territorial dispute. By the time Gorbachev finally came to Japan in April 1991, his authority within the Soviet Union had deteriorated to such an extent that he was not in a position to offer any compromise that would

have satisfied Japan, even had he ever been inclined to do so.

Why were the Soviet Union and Japan unable to exploit the opportunity developed at the 1988 foreign ministerial conference? The documents introduced here illuminate the problems in Soviet-Japanese relations at this critical stage. The first set of documents are the minutes of the first two meetings of the Working Group as recorded by the Soviet foreign ministry officials. A careful examination of what was discussed reveals a number of important facts.

First, although we have a number of documents stating the official positions of both governments, rarely do we see a document in which both the Russian and Japanese sides confront each other behind closed doors. Here, we read, for the first time, how both sides presented their views at the negotiating table. In other words, we have the most direct positions that each government presented to the other. Although there are few surprises in both positions, there are some important revelations. For instance, in the first meeting, the Japanese side officially renounced its claim over Southern Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands north of Uruppu. Furthermore, at the second meeting, despite its militant tone, Soviet chief negotiator Igor Rogachev tacitly conceded that Stalin's failure to sign the San Francisco Peace Treaty was a mistake.

Second, there are some discrepancies between what was reported in the Japanese media and what actually happened at these meetings. The Japanese news coverage of these meetings was usually based on the official statements and briefings conducted by the Japanese Foreign Ministry (Gaimusho) officials; and therefore, it reflected, intentionally or unintentionally, the Gaimusho's bias. In both meetings, for instance, the Gaimusho kept silent about Rogachev's disagreement with the Japanese geographical definition of the "Kurile" islands, an official position that has been challenged by some Japanese scholars as well.<sup>11</sup> Likewise, from what was reported in Japanese newspapers, it is difficult to discern the atmosphere of the negotiations, but a reading of the second meeting clearly indicates that Rogachev's disposition, buttressed by well-researched legal and historical arguments, put the Japanese on the defensive. These documents remind us, therefore, that one has to treat the Japanese press coverage critically, particularly when it is filtered through the Gaimusho's briefings. In the March 1989 meeting, Rogachev himself offers some harsh criticisms of this aspect, claiming:

We had the impression that yesterday we consulted, although, judging by the Japanese newspapers, the results of our conversation were unexpected...I do not know by whose recommendation the message that the Soviet delegation was bargaining appeared: six agreements for a high-level visit. That will never be. That is a risible thesis.

Third, the exchange of arguments and counter-arguments at the Working Group indicates how widely respective positions on the territorial issue differed. The Working Group meetings were used, not to seek a mutually acceptable compromise, but rather for the two sides to present ultimatums to each other. Each time one side made a point, it was rejected by the other side at the following meeting, citing legal and historical justifications.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the Working Group meetings served only to harden disagreements and hostility rather than formulate concessions and compromises. As of spring 1989, there were no grounds to expect a major breakthrough from a Gorbachev visit to Japan.

This brings us to the fourth point. One is puzzled, as were the Gaimusho officials at the time, by the contradictory signals that came from the Soviet side. If the Soviet government agreed to establish a Working Group designed to produce a peace treaty, thus implying flexibility, then why did it take a rigid stance on the territorial issue? In fact, Rogachev's position did not even consider adopting any of the compromise solutions advocated by more reform-minded Russian Japanologists, who took advantage of glasnost to voice views divergent from the official position. Did the Foreign Ministry simply not consider these compromise solutions? Was there internal disagreement? Or was the tough position presented here a tactical ploy, a necessary step toward future concessions? Where did Gorbachev stand on this matter at the time? All these questions cannot be answered definitively by analyzing these documents alone.

As for Gorbachev's position, one is struck with the consistency with which he held his view on the territorial question throughout his tenure of office. From his meeting with Foreign Minister Abe Shintaro in May 1986 through his meeting with Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki in Tokyo in April 1992, he steadfastly maintained that the Soviet Union was not in a position to make *any* territorial concessions to Japan's irredentist demand. It was not that Gorbachev could not accept a compromise solution during his visit to Japan because of the domestic pressure, as is often believed, but that Gorbachev himself was the major stumbling block to such a compromise. One important source describing Gorbachev's view on Soviet-Japanese relations in general and on the territorial question in particular is the supplement made by Anatolii Cherniaev to the Japanese version of his memoirs, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym* (Moscow: Kul'tura, 1993), which was published under the Japanese title, *Gorubachofu to unmei o tomonishita 2000 nichi* (Tokyo: Uchio shuppan, 1994). Excerpts from this additional chapter, previously unavailable in English, are provided below.

Finally, a question can be raised about the relationship between the Soviet position enunciated by Rogachev here and the official position adopted by the Russian government after the collapse of the Soviet Union. As the Russian Foreign Ministry document introduced in the second group indicates, Moscow accepted almost all the

arguments that the Japanese government had presented at the Working Group meetings during the Gorbachev period. This was, however, an internal paper. It is doubtful that the Russian government conceded all these points to the Japanese government during the official negotiations with Japan. Since we have no access to the minutes of the Working Group meetings after the collapse of the Soviet Union, we do not have a definitive answer as to where the Russian government currently stands on these questions.

The second group of documents includes various position papers prepared by different organizations and experts for the parliamentary hearings on the "Kurile question" prior to Boris Yeltsin's scheduled trip to Japan to meet Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi in September 1992.

If Gorbachev failed to achieve rapprochement with Japan, Yeltsin has been equally unsuccessful in dealing with Japan. Despite initial euphoria following the collapse of the Soviet Union, rapprochement on the territorial question proved elusive. Contrary to the expectations of Yeltsin and Deputy Foreign Minister Georgii Kunadze, who spearheaded Russia's negotiations with Japan, there emerged strong domestic opposition to any putative compromise on the territorial issue with Japan. In fact, the "Kurile issue" became a hotly debated issue in the summer of 1992, a few months prior to Yeltsin's scheduled September visit to Japan. Eventually this stumbling block derailed Yeltsin's scheduled trip to Japan, which was ultimately cancelled.

On 28 July 1992, a powerful opposition group within the Parliament organized parliamentary hearings on Yeltsin's forthcoming visit to Japan. Prior to these hearings, Oleg Rumiantsev, the Secretary of the Constitutional Commission, who masterminded the hearings, requested various organizations to submit their position papers on the "Kurile" issue. The documents in the second group are translations of some of these positions papers.<sup>13</sup>

One can see from these documents that the views expressed by various organizations and individuals varied widely. While the Second Department of the Asia-Pacific Region of the Russian Foreign Ministry took a most sympathetic view of the Japanese official position, Kiril Cherevko (Institute of History), a noted historian on Soviet-Japanese relations, and V. K. Zilanov, who represented the State Committee of Fisheries, took the opposite view, recommending that no concessions be made to Japan's irredentist demands.<sup>14</sup> The Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), headed by Vladlen Martynov, organized a team of specialists on Soviet-Japanese relations, and submitted a position paper. Its recommendation fell somewhere between these two extremes, but stood for the acceptance of the 1956 Joint Declaration. The resolution of the Sakhalin Supreme Soviet also indicated that the local voice increasingly asserted its influence. It is likely that these recommendations were also sent to Yeltsin. When Yeltsin said that he had fourteen options with regard to the territorial question, perhaps his statement reflected the truth.

Eventually, Yeltsin canceled his trip to Japan, thus, forfeiting the opportunity to create the foundation for gradual improvement of relations, if not for a quick resolution to the territorial question. Five years later, we are still waiting. The documents introduced here illustrate the complexities of the political dynamics under which Gorbachev, and then Yeltsin, had to operate. They also show how unrealistic it was for the Japanese government to press hard on Yeltsin to accept Japan's sovereignty, residual or otherwise, over the entire four islands.

Needless to say, these documents expose merely a tip of the gigantic iceberg of information which is still hidden under the sea of secrecy. They illuminate only a few tiny spots in recent Soviet/Russian-Japanese relations. Also the manner in which these documents have fallen into my hands—not through the open, systematic, institutional approach, but through coincidence and accident—is not reassuring. Of course, having only one side's account leaves many doubts that can only be fully answered by comparable openness on the Japanese side. Even the Russian materials lose much of their importance, unless they are placed in the appropriate archival context. Nevertheless, I hope that the publication of these sources will stimulate further openness, research and collaboration among scholars and governments in order to move the historical study of Soviet/Russian-Japanese relations further into the mainstream of scholarly inquiry.

---

*Tsuyoshi Hasegawa is Professor of Russian History at the University of California at Santa Barbara. He is the author of The February Revolution: Petrograd, 1917 (Seattle, 1981) and co-editor of Russia and Japan: An Unresolved Dilemma Between Distant Neighbors (Berkeley, CA, 1993).*

<sup>1</sup> *Cold War International History Bulletin*, 1-9. [Ed. note: On the other hand, several articles and documents have touched on Japan and its place in the Cold War. For an example in this issue, *Bulletin 10*, see Zhai Qiang's article on the second Chinese nuclear test.]

<sup>2</sup> Vojtech Mastny, *The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity: The Stalin Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

<sup>3</sup> Michael Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan: The Origins of the Cold War in Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Marc Gallichio, "The Kurile Controversy: U.S. Diplomacy in the Soviet-Japanese Border Dispute, 1941-1956," *Pacific Historical Review*, LX, No. 1 (February 1991).

<sup>4</sup> Myles I. C. Robertson, *Soviet Policy toward Japan: An Analysis of Trends in the 1970s and 1980s* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Harry Gelman, *Russo-Japanese Relations and the Future of the U.S.-Japanese Alliance* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 1993); Charles E. Ziegler, *Foreign Policy and East Asia: Learning and Adaptation in the Gorbachev Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); William Nimmo, *Japan and Russia: a Reevaluation in the Post-Soviet Era*

(Westport: Greenwood Press, 1994); and Joachim Glaubitz, *Between Tokyo and Moscow: the History of an Uneasy Relationship, 1972 to the 1990s* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995). Two excellent monographs dealing with specific aspects of Soviet-Japanese relations are: Gilbert Rozman, *Japan's Response to the Gorbachev Era, 1985-1991: A Rising Superpower Views a Declining One* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) and John J. Stephan, *The Russian Far East: A History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), but because of the specific aspects to which they are devoted, new archival evidence on Soviet-Japanese relations does not emerge in these books.

<sup>5</sup> In Japanese, there exist collections of documents: Shigeta Shigeru and Suezawa Shoji, *Nisso kihonbunsho shiryoshu [Soviet-Japanese Basic Documents Sourcebook]* (Tokyo: Sekai no ugoki sha, 1988); Hopporyodo mondai taisaku kyokai, *Zoho kaitei: Hopporyodo mondai shiryoshu [Northern Territories Question Sourcebook: Revised and Enlarged]*. (Tokyo: Hopporyodo mondai taisaku kyokai, 1972). See also the joint publication by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation, *Nichirokan ryodomondai no rekishi ni kansuru kyodo sakusei shiryoshu: Sovmestnyi sbornik dokumentov po istorii territorial'nogo razmezhevaniiia mezhdru Rossiei i Iaponiei [Joint documentary compendium on the Russo-Japanese territorial issue's history]* (Tokyo and Moscow: Nihonkoku Gaimusho and Ministerstvo inostrannykh del Rossiiskoi Federatsii, 1993). In Russian, *Sbornik not i zaiavlenii pravitel'stv SSSR, SSha, Kitaia, Anglii i drugikh stran po voprosu mirnogo uregulirovaniia dlia Iaponii: iul' 1947 g. - iul' 1951 g* (Moscow, 1951); *Sbornik osnovnykh dokumentov po Iaponii, 1951-1954* (Moscow: Ministerstvo inostrannykh del, 1954); *Sbornik osnovnykh dokumentov po voprosam sovetsko-iaponskikh otnoshenii, 1954-1972* (Moscow: Ministerstvo inostrannykh del SSSR, 1973), but the first collection was published in only 100 copies, and the second and the third volume 300. All collections are classified, and inaccessible to outside scholars, although I have had access to the third volume.

<sup>6</sup> "Za kulisami Tikhookeanskoi bitvy: (Iapono-sovetskie kontakty v 1945 g.): Stranitsy istorii," *Vestnik MIDa SSSR*, October, 1990; "K politike SSSR na Dal'nem Vostoke v preddverii nachala Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny: Kontakty I.V. Stalina s politikami Kitaia i Iaponii," *Diplomatičeskii vestnik* No. 23-24 (1994): 71-78; "Soglasheaetsia na peredachu Iaponii ostrovov Khabomai i Sikotan," *Staraiia ploshchad': vestnik arkhiva Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, No. 6 (1996): 107-137.

<sup>7</sup> For instance, the Japanese government sent seven volumes of documents dealing with territorial questions to the U.S. government during the occupation period. Of these the volume dealing with the Northern Territories has not been declassified.

<sup>8</sup> Graham Allison, Hiroshi Kimura, and Konstantin Sarkisov, *Beyond Cold War to Trilateral Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region: Scenarios for New Relationships between Japan, Russia, and the United States* (Cambridge, Mass.: Strengthening Democratic Institutions Project, Harvard University, 1992), Appendix D, and F-N; Peter Berton, *The Japanese-Russian Territorial Dilemma: Historical Background, Dispute, Issue, Questions, Solutions, Scenarios: White Paper* (Cambridge, Mass.: Strengthening Democratic Institutions Project, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 1992).

<sup>9</sup> Tanaka Takahiko, *Nisso kokko kaiku no shiteki kenkyu: sengo nissokankei no kiten: 1945-1956 [Historical Studies of the Development of Japanese-Soviet Diplomatic Relations: The*

*Starting Point of Post-War Japanese-Soviet Relations, 1945-56*] (Tokyo: Yuhikaku, 1993); Fiona Hill, "A Disagreement between Allies: the United Kingdom, the United States, and the Soviet-Japanese Territorial Dispute," *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies*, 14, No. 3 (Fall 1995).

<sup>10</sup> Boris Slavinskii, *Sovetskaia okkupatsiia Kuril'skikh ostrovov, avgust-sentiabr' 1945 goda: dokumental'noe issledovanie* (Moscow, 1993); *Pakt o neitralitete mezhdu SSSR i Iaponiei: diplomaticheskaia istoriia, 1941-1945 gg* (Moscow: BBK, 1995)—Japanese translation, *Kosho: nisso churitsu joyaku* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1996); "San Frantsiskii mirnyi dogovor," *Znakomites' Iaponiia*, No. 5 (1994): 53-59; No. 6 (1994): 50-58; No. 7 (1995): 74-81; and No. 8 (1995): 56-61.

<sup>11</sup> Notably Wada Haruki and Murayama Shichiro. See Wada Haruki, *Hopporyodo mondai o kangaeru [Considering the Northern Territories Question]* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1990); Murayama Shichiro, *Kuriru shoto no bunkengakuteki kenkyu [Documentological Research on the Kurile Archipelago]* (Tokyo: Sanichi Shobo, 1987).

<sup>12</sup> The Japanese side rebutted Rogachev's argument at the third Working Group meeting held on 29 April 1989, in Moscow. Although the minutes prepared by the Soviet Foreign Ministry

are not available to me, the Japanese argument was reported in detail in *Hopporyodo*, No. 234 (20 May 1989). But the coverage in *Hopporyodo* does not say a word about the Soviet reaction to Kuriyama's presentation.

<sup>13</sup> In addition to the documents translated here, the documents I obtained included other interesting materials from various experts and organizations. I should add, however, that I did not receive position papers prepared by the General Staff and the Pacific Fleet. The General Staff's view was later publicized in a Russian newspaper. See "Glavnyi shtab VMF soglasen s genshtabom," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 30 July 1992.

<sup>14</sup> Cherevko's view in the classified document differs vastly from the view he expressed in an open publication. He and Konstantin Sarkisov were responsible for publishing a hitherto unknown archival document demonstrating that Nicholas I's instruction to the Russian chief negotiator, Artem Putiatin, clearly took the position that Etorofu was under Japan's sovereignty. Konstantin Sarkisov and Kiril Cherevko, "Putiatinu bylo legche provesti granitsu mezhdu Rossiei i Iaponiei," *Izvestiia*, 4 October 1991.

## The Last Official Foreign Visit by M.S. Gorbachev as President of the USSR: The Road to Tokyo<sup>1</sup>

by A.S. Cherniaev

Not counting a visit to Spain (already after the [August 1991] putsch) to the opening of the [October 1991] International Conference on the Near East, M.S. [Gorbachev's] visit as head of state to Japan in April 1991 was his last. He had planned to do this throughout almost all the years of *perestroika*: [Japanese Prime Minister] Nakasone, meeting with him in Moscow in 1985,<sup>2</sup> extended an official invitation, which afterwards was confirmed by all of the Japanese political figures with whom M.S. met.

Although at the moment of this visit, Gorbachev had the huge "capital" of his policy of new thinking at his back, it [the trip] turned out to be almost the least effective in a practical sense. Overcoming the "main obstacle" in Soviet-Japanese relations was, so to speak, within arm's reach. But... objective circumstances, as well as subjective ones, prevented this.

But everything [should be told] in order.

I was not yet serving "under Gorbachev" when his first contacts with the Japanese took place—in 1985. Then, after all of his meetings with people from "capitalist countries" came under my supervision, I soon began to note that he was showing definite preference toward the Japanese.

Delegations from Japan continued to arrive, and almost every one of them requested an audience with Gorbachev. I noted that he refused almost none of the Japanese, no matter what their level. And he spoke more

and more frankly with them. But just as soon as things got to the main point which had frozen our relations for decades, Gorbachev clammed up. For him from the first—he spoke both to me and in the Politburo about this—the issue of the islands had been resolved. In general terms, the post-war settlement of state borders was considered to be axiomatic. And Gorbachev took this entirely from his predecessors (although with the Japanese islands, the issue was more complicated; the demarcation [of borders] had not been formulated according to international-legal procedure)....

[There follows a discussion of V.I. Dunaev's role in drawing Gorbachev's attention to the Japanese issue.]

Thereafter, I drew Dunaev into the preparation of the majority of the materials connected with our policy on Japanese affairs. Later, he played a large role in establishing the first contacts between Gorbachev and Roh Taewoo, the President of South Korea.

Beginning in 1986, when I [Cherniaev] became an assistant to Gorbachev, I was present at practically all of his contacts with the Japanese and took notes.

My first impression from his entirely well-wishing conversations with them was not very reassuring. The first two conversations recorded in my notebooks are discussions with one of the leaders of the Japanese Communist party. I do not want to say that Gorbachev in some way

used this channel in order to acquaint himself more indirectly with the Japanese problem and was somehow influenced by the information which he received from the communists. He knew beforehand that this information would not be objective; the CPSU's relations with the Japanese communist party had been poor for decades. The conversations with Fuwa<sup>3</sup> to a significant degree were devoted to clearing up inter-party difficulties. Outside of this framework, a significant part of these conversations was devoted to the struggle against the nuclear threat. Although on this issue too, their positions did not coincide. The anti-American aspect of the problem was very strongly present on both sides.

Of course, Soviet-Japanese relations were also discussed. And Gorbachev genuinely tried to improve them. But, as yet, we had no policy aimed at this end. Therefore an emotional approach predominated which was obviously insufficient to "draw a line under the present and begin everything from scratch" (Gorbachev used these words more than once).

He had not yet felt the significance—governmental, political, emotional, traditional, psychological, of every sort—that the Japanese invested in the problem of the islands seized from them by Stalin after their capitulation, after the end of the Second World War. In reality, they had never belonged to Russia. Knowing this, but being driven by the inertia of the Soviet superpower, the very possibility of returning these territories had been ruled out. Sometimes, [Gorbachev] expressed himself quite definitely and sarcastically as to the hopelessness of the Japanese efforts in this regard; at the first meetings he did not even want to discuss this issue, considering the post-war territorial division to be final and irreversible everywhere. He did not recognize the problem itself which supposedly had to be resolved. According to the Gromyko formula, it had been resolved "as a result of the war." And that was the only explanation for why in actuality the four islands should belong to the Soviet Union, which, as it was said, although big, "had no excess land." Sometimes he used those words to forestall the efforts of the Japanese interlocutors to begin a discussion. There was a certain [sense of playing a negotiating] game in such a statement of the issue.

The evolution of his views on this score was slow, and took almost five years to complete. I will try to illustrate this evolution with concrete examples, relying on my records of Gorbachev's conversations with figures from the Japanese state and society....

Back in 1985 in his first meeting with Nakasone, who was then prime minister, the issue of a visit by Gorbachev to Japan came up. Afterwards, this theme arose in practically all of his conversations with the Japanese. In reply to the latest invitation to him in the conversation with Fuwa to which I have already referred, M.S. [Gorbachev] said: "I am not being evasive, I think, [in saying that], we must have the widest possible ties with our neighbor Japan along state, party and social lines. All

the more with those who are attached to the cause of strengthening relations with the Soviet Union. You can assume that we are ready to develop relations with Japan. If she [i.e. Japan] does not present us with ultimatums, then there is great potential for that. I would like to ask the question: why is Japan presenting the Soviet Union with an ultimatum, since, after all, we did not lose the war to her?"

To this Fuwa reacted curiously: "I am not Nakasone's deputy." "I will take that under advisement," M.S. countered.

Incidentally, Fuwa demanded of Gorbachev very firmly and insistently in Japanese, using a variety of different approaches, that the CPSU cut off relations with the Socialist Party of Japan, and when doing so always tried to play on the anti-imperialist ideology of the CPSU and to put forward examples proving that the Japanese socialists were actually playing into the hands of American imperialism, not to mention into the hands of [Japan's] own bourgeoisie. But Gorbachev was entirely unmoved by this. He politely explained that the CPSU would henceforward associate with all of Japan's "peace-loving forces" "in the name of their common interests."

It seems to me that there was something of a turning point in the evolution of Gorbachev's approaches to the Japanese theme in his conversation with the Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Socialist Party of Japan, Doi Takako, on 6 May 1988. A broad review of the entire circle of Soviet-Japanese relations was made. Moreover, I must say, this was done by both sides in the most delicate way, in the most benevolent spirit, with an effort to understand one another, and somehow to get closer to a realistic evaluation of Japan's place in the development of the policy of "new thinking." Every element was present in the conversation: the emotional, the psychological, and the deeply political. Concisely put, for Gorbachev, his conversation with this very kind, very intelligent, interesting, spiritually rich woman was a sort of turning-point in his understanding of the scale of the Japanese problem as a whole and the difficulty of our relations with this nation, with this state. Of course, Doi also placed emphasis on the fact that Gorbachev should come to Japan, and that this would help resolve everything more easily. She told him that if the Japanese were asked what they wanted from Soviet-Japanese relations, the majority would answer with the question: when will General Secretary Gorbachev come to Japan?

"When the time comes," Gorbachev answered, provoking general laughter. "I am ready. But is Japan ready?"

Henceforward I will cite what they said according to the stenographic record:

**Doi.** Japan is ready.

**Gorbachev.** That is unlikely.

**Doi.** No, it is ready. Are you hinting that if you were told clearly by the Japanese side that they want a visit from you, you would be ready to go?

**Gorbachev.** If as a result of that visit we could come out with something concrete.

**Doi.** Do you have some concrete conditions?

**Gorbachev.** I have in mind some conditions, but most importantly, there must be an impulse, and not only a symbolic visit. It should really move the relations of the two countries ahead. There is not enough time simply to travel around.

**Doi.** I understand that. But you talked about Mrs. Thatcher, that you have a sharp dialogue with her, and that you are also conducting a dialogue with other countries. But why is there no dialogue with Japan? Perhaps you think that you can find out about Japanese affairs from the USA?

**Gorbachev.** No, we do not want to hear about Japanese problems in English translation. To us, Japan is an independent, great figure.

**Doi.** That has great significance from the point of view of the improvement of relations between the two countries.

**Gorbachev.** My conversation with you makes the problem of a visit an immediate issue. We will think over the issue. But we need also to know the government's point of view.

**Doi.** When I return, I will tell the premier about this.

**Gorbachev.** Good.

It must be said that, in contrast to the Communist leaders, other Japanese, starting with Doi, were very delicate in their posing of the "key," the most acute, issue—that of the islands. This word itself was not pronounced in the first conversations; it was covered in the following terms: "a series of unresolved problems,"<sup>4</sup> "the 1956 Declaration," [Ed. note: The 1956 Joint Declaration is discussed at length by Deputy Foreign Ministers Rogachev and Kuriyama below] and so on. Naturally, Doi could not get around this issue and asked Gorbachev what his attitude was to the diplomatic document which was ratified in 1956 and on the basis of which diplomatic relations were restored? He answered verbosely, and this position was then maintained for a long time in different forms.

**Gorbachev.** First of all, let us come to an understanding that we both agree that it is impossible to approach the existing realities in any other way. The 1956 Declaration was conceived in concrete conditions, in concrete political circumstances. Concrete issues were discussed. But this discussion did not end in an agreement.

**Doi.** Nevertheless, Paragraph 9 [Trans. Note: Paragraph 9 stated that upon conclusion of a peace treaty between Japan and the USSR, the Habomai and Shikotan Islands would be returned to Japan] was agreed upon and was included in the Declaration.

**Gorbachev.** I am saying that this was not arrived at through a real process. A lot of time has passed, and all of that remains in history. We have only one thing today: the post-war realities. We must start from that basis.

**Doi.** On what basis in particular?

**Gorbachev.** On the basis of the existing post-war realities. What there was in different years has not come to pass, has not been formalized. What is more, this is not our fault. I do not see any need to re-animate issues which have already passed into history. Let us operate on the basis of realities and develop our relations.

**Doi.** Reality consists of the fact that you consider that the issue has been resolved and does not exist. But we consider that it has not been resolved. That is how we understand reality.

**Gorbachev.** You are placing in doubt the results of the Second World War. In West Germany there are also such forces. We will consider that this is also a reality. And all the same, there, opinion in favor of abiding by the political results of the Second World War is prevailing.

**Doi.** But the people's feelings have deep historical roots. Those feelings tell us that those are our lands there, that our ancestors lived there. And these feelings are very strong in Japan.

**Gorbachev.** We also have nationalistic feeling. The Russians have not forgotten that they discovered the Kuriles. You refer often to the agreements of 1855 and 1875. But, after all, there was the Portsmouth treaty of 1904 [Ed. Note: 1905] after that, which canceled them and made them null and void. As a whole, an approach which does not recognize the post-war realities runs into a dead-end.

**Doi.** But, after all, the 1956 Declaration is also a post-war act.

**Gorbachev.** But then our points of view did not coincide. Now that is already history. There were efforts, solutions were sought for, but nonetheless things remained as they were after the war.

**Doi.** But, after all, this Declaration is effectively a [legally] valid document. How can that be considered an issue of history?

**Gorbachev.** The Japanese side did not take advantage of its opportunity. For that reason, everything returned to the post-war results."<sup>5</sup>

[Gorbachev met with Nakasone Yasuhiro in Moscow in July 1988.]

**Nakasone.** I want to state my opinion. You must activate the links between your Pacific regions and the countries of the Japanese sea. Then friendly relations really will develop in the region. Up to six million people from Japan travel to foreign countries every year. But practically no one goes to the Eastern regions of the USSR. Here hotels must be built, some thought must be given to organizing skiing centers, and so on. After all, there are a whole lot of interesting places here. It will be better and much cheaper than going to Canada, which is very popular in Japan.

To this day, Japanese think of Vladivostok as some sort of dangerous military base. Things should be changed so that instead they think about it as an economic and



cultural center, a center of tourism. Then the view of the region as a whole will radically change, and joint enterprises will arise. Famous collectives like the orchestra of the Leningrad Philharmonic and the Bolshoi Theater should perform in Vladivostok. Then Japanese [visitors] will also go there.

Processes in the Soviet Union and the course of perestroika were also “subjected” to fundamental “joint” analysis. Gorbachev frankly and in detail informed Nakasone of his assessment of the situation at that moment. In reply, Nakasone demonstrated a fairly detailed knowledge of events in our country. At the end of the conversation, Nakasone politely, but firmly and concretely, approached the most difficult theme—the “obstacles in Soviet-Japanese relations.”

“I want very much to improve them,” said Nakasone. “For that reason, I came to Moscow. First, there is a territorial problem in our relations. When this territorial problem comes up in negotiations, the Soviet side right away gets angry and does not want to discuss it. I think that after 1956, when diplomatic relations were restored, too many statements which were political bluffs were made on both sides. Mr. Gorbachev, you are a jurist who graduated from Moscow University. I am also a jurist and graduate from Tokyo University. Let us talk about these problems cold-bloodedly, like jurists.”

He set out the history of the islands after the Second World War carefully and in detail, and ended with the following words: we do not think that our northern territories will be returned right away, but it is very important to act on the basis of the existing understandings which were fixed in international agreements between our two countries. That would be a great contribution to the development of relations. I am asking you, Mr. General Secretary, to approach this seriously and study the issue. We must ensure that the feelings of our two peoples in this issue be freed of emotion, and that the problem be resolved calmly.

How did Gorbachev react? His words were: “I can repeat our principled approach. We are interested in good relations with Japan. They must encompass a political dialogue, economic, scientific-technical, and cultural cooperation, and exchanges of people. We are for the broadest ties. In 1985, when I first met you, I also talked about this. What has happened over the three years since? With many countries, our relations have expanded and have become productive. But with Japan, they not only have not moved forward, but have frozen up. And in some ways, they have fallen back. We regret this. You should know that. It seems to us that in Japan an opinion has formed to the effect that the Soviet Union is more interested than Japan in an improvement in relations. I have been informed that the Japanese are concluding: the Soviet Union needs new technology. It will have to come hat in hand to Japan. That is a big mistake. If such an approach lies at the basis of Japanese policy, we will not be able to get anywhere. To one of my Japanese interlocutors I said:

We did not lose the war to you, but you are trying to dictate [terms] to us. A sort of stalemate has appeared in our relations.” And [he] continued: “We approach the post-war realities differently, and assess them differently. But they are what they are. They are based on the outcome of the war, and have been consolidated in documents. Japanese representatives, when they speak about Soviet-Japanese relations, begin with 1956. But they should begin with the post-war situation. Then 1956 also looks different.

Then, in the context of that period, in order to restore relations with Japan, to normalize them, the Soviet Union decided to make a noble step—to give away two islands. [Ed. note: According to the Russian scholar and former diplomat S. Tikhvinskii (*Problemy dal'nego vostoka*, 4-5(1995)), but as yet uncorroborated by documentation, the offer was made on 9 August 1955, the tenth anniversary of the Nagasaki atomic attack.] This was good will on the part of the Soviet Union. But from Japan’s side, a demand was immediately made for four islands. And it all came to nothing, although diplomatic relations were re-established in 1956. Japan embarked on a rapprochement with the US. The presence of the US in this region grew and took on its current dimensions. That required the Soviet Union to take steps in response.”

Further discussion between Gorbachev and Nakasone at that time came to nothing; they were both working from fixed positions; each considered himself in the right, and they really did assess the realities [of the situation] differently.

Nakasone recalled that when he was prime minister, he had invited Gorbachev to visit Japan, and Gorbachev had received [the invitation] with satisfaction. Now he, Nakasone, was confirming the invitation on behalf of all Japan.

On 5 May 1989, Gorbachev met with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Uno Sosuke. At the beginning of the conversation, he immediately observed that since beginning his work as General Secretary, he, Gorbachev, had met with prominent Japanese ten times. But progress in relations was not very noticeable; relations with other countries were outstripping what the USSR had with Japan both in dynamism and in scale.

Gorbachev and Uno positively assessed the official dialogue at the level of the ministers of foreign affairs which had begun in December 1988. Uno also affirmed the invitation to Gorbachev to visit Japan. And he handed him “five points” on which the Japanese side considered it desirable to develop the dialogue:

- To continue work on the conclusion of a peace treaty.
- To strengthen trust in relations.
- To advance economic trade ties.
- To promote the expansion of contacts between people.
- To ensure a visit by Gorbachev to Japan.

Uno informed Gorbachev that, in his discussion with Shevardnadze the day before, he had again announced on

behalf of his government that Japan could not recognize the Soviet side's reasoning to the effect that from a legal and historical point of view, the four islands belonged to the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev observed that the atmosphere of relations was changing. The dialogue was becoming constructive, and a mechanism of working groups to conclude a peace treaty had been created. [Ed. note: Excerpts from two of these meetings in 1988 and 1989 can be found below in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.] He said, I am for strengthening the shoots of trust and turning cooperation into friendly relations. I am for advancing the process of mutual understanding without excluding [from consideration] any issues. In this context, he stated, I consider my visit to Japan to be crucial.

As can be seen, a nuance, a new note, appeared in this conversation: not to back off from any issues; any of them could be the subject of discussion, (and, of course, this implied!) they could not be considered to be definitively closed.

[The role of the Japanese Ambassador Edamura is discussed.]

In the evolution of the relations between the two countries, two episodes were significant, and I cannot omit them. They were different in their character, but they both signified an "approach" by Gorbachev to solving the Soviet-Japanese problem.

The first was his meeting with Ikeda<sup>6</sup> in July 1990. He is a person who is famous not only in Japan. For many years, he has headed the religious-enlightenment organization "Soka Gakkai," which has a far-flung network of cultural, academic, and university centers on every continent. It devotes huge resources to the task of spiritual renewal and moral self-affirmation for thousands and thousands of people of different nationalities and creeds. It is, in its own way, a unique system which, it would seem, could have been created only by the Japanese and which embodies all of the characteristic particularities of that nation.

Ikeda for a long time had wanted to contact Gorbachev, seeing in him a "new beginning" in world politics which introduced goodness and moral principles into it. V.I. Dunaev once again helped to "bring them together."

The meeting took place in the Kremlin in one of the reception halls which was next to Gorbachev's office.

Ikeda brought a whole "team" of people with him, twelve in all. Mikhail Sergeevich had some of his close advisers and Vladislav Ivanovich [Dunaev] with him. The very ceremony of greeting was unusually warm and somehow merry. The interlocutors right away took up an "intimate," frank discussion which had, it would seem, no practical business goals.

Gorbachev talked in detail, without hiding anything, about the situation in the country at that moment—it was

already very difficult—about the motives behind his actions from the very beginning of *perestroika*, about his evident and "hidden" intentions, and as it were, "confessed" to failures and miscalculations, to the fact that what he had counted on in a number of cases had not turned out right.

[The second episode is the Gulf War.]

When the time for Gorbachev's visit was finally settled, there took place very energetic, somewhat nervous and not entirely successful diplomatic moves by both sides, especially by certain Japanese circles which had factored the visit into their domestic political game. In this sense, the visit of the General Secretary of the Liberal-Democratic Party of Japan, Ozawa Ichiro, at the end of March 1991, is curious. Gorbachev knew of this party's role in defining and carrying out state policy in Japan. He even once joked that the LDP ruled Japan even more than the CPSU in its time did the Soviet Union.

When they met in the Kremlin in the presidential office, Gorbachev defined the format of their conversation as follows: we will talk as "the leaders of the ruling parties about what we will do in the future, about how to build our inter-state relations." I hope, he went on, that we will conduct the conversation so as to prepare the visit of the president of the USSR to Japan to make it a success both for you and for us, as well as for the entire world. We must not lose touch with the domestic component of policy in each of our countries, nor with the worldwide context. For a long time everything was simple and clear: we presented each other with ultimatums - and that was all. And what became of it? We proved that we can live without one another and have managed to do so. But what is the sense of such an approach? If we seriously think over the entire path that has been taken, there can be only one conclusion: it would be better if we had cooperated during the whole period of time that has now been lost.

Gorbachev drew some comparisons. The USSR's relations with other neighboring countries in the East have moved forward. Relations with China, he said, were developing happily. We have begun diplomatic relations and a new level of contacts with South Korea, not to mention India, the ASEAN countries, and Indonesia. [Relations] with the United States have progressed so far that changes have become possible throughout the entire world.

My term in office will soon run out, he went on. However, so far I have not done anything for Soviet-Japanese relations. But it is not I who is at issue here. After all, the USSR and Japan are two great neighboring states, two great peoples. And that obliges me and us to do something together.

Ozawa in reply emphasized, incidentally, that, if it really were possible to establish new mutual relations between Japan and the USSR, it would truly be a huge contribution not only to the improvement of the political

and economic situation in the world, but also to strengthening and assuring a stable peace for the whole planet.

It was clear that Ozawa's appearance in Moscow was not accidental. It was the result of serious forethought in Japanese ruling circles. Both in the government and in the political parties, evidently, they wanted to know in advance what Gorbachev would come with. And, naturally, Ozawa wanted to be the first to bring back something fundamentally new. Being present along with V.M. Falin (he was the leader of the International Division of the CC CPSU, and the meeting was conducted, as it were, along party lines) at this meeting—which was very diplomatic in form but substantial and fairly frank, I would argue that Gorbachev's position distinctly showed more movement on this occasion than in previous negotiations with highly placed Japanese figures. I will try to illustrate this, relying on my record of the conversation.

Gorbachev again—this had become a rule [with him]—appealed to the experience garnered by the USSR and Germany. We went by the path of increasing our cooperation, Gorbachev told Ozawa. It could hardly be thought that the Soviet Union would have come to such an understanding of the issue of relations with Germany at some other time and without what we had gone through together with Europe and with the Germans. Both we and the Germans said: let history take care of itself. As a result, a solution appeared. [Ed. note: It is interesting to compare the paucity of documented literature on Russian/Soviet-Japanese postwar relations, compared to that on the German question.]

I interpreted these words as a confirmation of my inner conviction that Gorbachev was inclined to resolve the issue. To resolve it—granted, through compromise,—but in any case in such a way that it would also satisfy the Japanese. Already there was no suggestion that the issue itself did not exist, as had been the assertion in Gromyko's time, and as it was at first under Gorbachev. The problem was recognized and, this meant, it would have to be resolved. Gorbachev also proposed to resolve it within the framework of his "philosophy" of gradual movement along the lines of an all-around improvement of relations, while ever more closely including in the process everything that was connected with the islands....

In the end, after a long and roundabout discussion from both sides, Gorbachev posed the question directly: you advocate cooperation and expect courageous steps. What do you have in mind? That was the very question Ozawa was waiting for. He said the following: the entire Japanese people expects a visit from the President of the USSR. We hope that he will turn a new historical page in our relations and will lend them a new, close character. But there are problems. I think that you understand that I am talking about the four islands—Kunashir, Iturup, Habomai, and Shikotan. We are waiting for a recognition in principle from you of our country's sovereignty over these islands. I want to assure you that from the point of view of material, practical gain, these islands mean little to

Japan. This problem is a matter of principle which touches the entire people, the foundation of the entire nation.

Gorbachev once again returned to his conception: the problem was born of a historical process. And history in one way or another will resolve it. I always say: let's get away from the old position. Let's meet each other halfway. I don't see any other way. I am revealing to you our approaches on the ways to move forward.

And he went on: in recent years, the attitude toward the Japanese in our society has significantly changed. It has become very positive. But at the same time, the [public opinion] surveys both on Sakhalin and in the Khabarovsk region do mean something. Everything is interconnected, and everything cannot be changed at once. I understand: the Japanese people do not feel any better for this, and you cannot discard the problem of the islands. For that reason, we must agree to cooperate and at the same time to conduct negotiations on a peace treaty. Both processes will cross-fertilize one another and bring about a positive result. Here history must take care of itself. Perhaps it is very close, and perhaps far away. Look at how rapidly everything happened in Germany.

Taking heart from these hints, Ozawa once again went on the attack and wanted to get a more definite [response], if not a final revelation of Gorbachev's intentions. The matter was concluded in the following passages.

**Ozawa.** Well then, are we to wait 50 to 100 years?

**Gorbachev.** I think that life will make that clear. But if [our] alienation continues, then the resolution of any issues is problematic. I am proposing what will help to resolve all the issues. And life changes the times. If we want to ennoble our relations in the future, to deepen trust, then this is just what is needed. I am convinced that this is a realistic prospect.

**Ozawa.** I do not fully understand what you just said. What concretely stands behind that?

**Gorbachev.** I have told you the most important thing. Of course, that will have to take some sort of political form. It will also take into account the problems which you are bringing up. What I am saying does not remove those problems. In Tokyo we will discuss the entire complex of issues without exceptions. As for what we will be able to agree on and what solutions we will come up with, we shall see.

Ozawa left the conversation, judging by everything, both inspired and puzzled. Because very soon thereafter, there began a flurry of activity. Calls came in from [Ozawa] himself and from his entourage with the request for a repeat conversation with Gorbachev. It was unheard of for Gorbachev, once he had concluded a conversation and said all that he wanted to, right away to return to what had been gone over. But this time he made an exception, once again considering and respecting the "specifics of the Japanese case."

Ozawa made a lengthy apology and explained that he had not had time to say everything he had come with from Japan, and that he thought that he had not been able to

articulate his position in full.

But, obviously, something else was at issue. Having contacted Tokyo or consulted with his entourage, he came to the conclusion that he had not fulfilled the task which he had set himself, or which had been set for him before his departure for Moscow: he absolutely had to bring back some sort of definite answer. Evidently, this was important for some sort of internal configuration of political or party forces in Japan. That is my guess. Ozawa began by making an exposition of a concept which, it seemed to me, had been agreed on in Japan before his conversation with Gorbachev. There were three points in it: “We agreed that the conversations with the President will touch on the following three points in the framework of the issue of the “northern territories.”

- To recognize the validity of the joint declaration of 1956 and to take it as the basis for beginning new negotiations on a peace treaty.
- To confirm that in the future, what is meant by the territorial issue between the USSR and Japan is a resolution of the fate of the other two islands—Kunashir and Iturup.
- The negotiations which will begin after the visit will touch on, along with all of the other issues, a definition of the status of Kunashir and Iturup. Although it is difficult to specify the precise period of time during which the negotiations will take place, both sides are assuming the necessity of completing them before the end of this year, and, more precisely, in the fall. It was assumed that I would give you an explanation for the reasons for setting such time constraints during the meeting with you.”

At this point, Ozawa suddenly hinted that in the case of such a resolution, Japanese firms would be ready to render substantial economic aid to the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev reacted first and foremost to this hint, saying that he was not inclined to and could not conduct a discussion according to such a plan: you give us something and in turn we will give you what you want. That is not a conversation which we can have with you. You are a politician. You are an energetic person and I understand that you want a concrete result. But the approach: “you give—I give” is entirely unacceptable not only between Japan and the Soviet Union, but in general terms as well.

Gorbachev reacted as follows to Ozawa’s three-point formula.

Unfortunately, he said, I cannot give a concrete answer to all of these points. I consider that we are not yet ready for concrete solutions. The general course of events and the situation itself have not yet brought us to that point. I consider that the main task both of your visit here and of my visit to Japan is to prepare the conditions for moving our relations onto a new level, to give a powerful impulse to their development. On that new basis, we can begin a discussion of the entire complex of issues, including a peace treaty and, in this context,—the location of the border.

By saying this—and this is also worth establishing—Gorbachev recognized that there was as yet no final internationally recognized boundary between the USSR and Japan. I well understand, he added, the temper of public opinion in Japan and the link between it and your position. But in the Soviet Union, the authorities must also take public opinion into consideration now.

However, this did not satisfy his interlocutor. Ozawa moved the conversation onto the following plane: he said in so many words, we will not announce your concrete decision. That will remain between us. But let us already agree on what you will be willing to agree to during your visit to Japan.

Gorbachev rejected such an approach. I once again advocate—he said,—beginning to move and moving forward consistently. We will still think about it and work out formulations. I hope that you have grasped and have correctly understood our stance. There will be no surprises; of course, some sort of formulations will be worked out. Nuances are possible.

At that point, I—and not only I, but everyone who participated from our side in Ozawa’s visit—came to the conclusion that in the second conversation which [Ozawa] had insisted on, he had “spoilt Gorbachev’s mood” before the visit [to Japan]. M.S. had been put on his guard. If his other official partners during the visit to Japan were also going to act in this way, he would end up in a very awkward position. They were putting pressure on him. And his “forward movement” on the “main issue” would be judged from this point of view, both in the USSR and in the world as a whole.

And so, we approached Gorbachev’s visit to Japan, which began on 16 April 1991....

---

[Source: *Excerpted from Anatolii Cherniaev, Gorubachofu to unmei o tomonishita 2000 nichii (Tokyo: Uchio shuppan, 1994), the translation of Shest’ let s Gorbachevym, and supplemented by the original Russian manuscript kindly provided by the author. Translated by Benjamin Aldrich-Moodie and Mie Nakachi.*]

<sup>1</sup> Chapter Ten, “The Japan Visit” (*Nihon homon*), was written especially for the Japanese edition of A.S. Cherniaev, *Six Years with Gorbachev*.

<sup>2</sup> Ed. note: Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro was in Moscow to attend Konstantin Chernenko’s funeral.

<sup>3</sup> Ed. note: In 1986, Fuwa Tetsuzo was Chairman of the Presidium of the Japan Communist Party.

<sup>4</sup> Ed. Note: Nakasone in a meeting with Gorbachev two months later used the exact same phrase.

<sup>5</sup> Ed. Note: In April 1991, during Gorbachev’s visit to Japan, Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki referred to this “lost opportunity” and Gorbachev snapped back: “I am afraid the second chance will also be missed.” It was. For more information on the Tokyo visit, please visit our website: [cwihp.si.edu](http://cwihp.si.edu).

<sup>6</sup> Ed. note: Ikeda Daisaku—the head of the Soka Gakkai, the largest of Japan’s post-war “new religions.” With close ties to the Komeito (“Clean Government”) Party and six million adherents, it is a political, as well as spiritual, force.

**Basic Contents  
of the meeting of the working group  
on peace treaty issues.**

Tokyo, 20 December 1988

At the beginning of the session I.A. Rogachev and T. Kuriyama [both Deputy Foreign Ministers] exchanged greetings.

**Kuriyama.** I understand the meeting of this group in the following manner: on the instructions of our [Foreign] Ministers, we have formed a working group with the aim of opening a new page in Japanese-Soviet relations through the efforts of both sides. I would like us, in the course of the group's work, to have a frank discussion in friendly circumstances, as we did at yesterday's meeting of the ministers.

I would like to propose the following order of work for the group. We have approximately 1.5 hours of time before 12 noon, and we would like to use it with maximum effectiveness. In the first half of our meeting, based on the conversation between the ministers yesterday, I would like to make a series of additions to what Mr. Uno said, as well as some elucidations of our position on the territorial issue. If you do not object, I would also like to hear your opinion on the given issue.

Yesterday Mr. Shevardnadze put forward a very interesting proposal on the creation of a continuously active group on the issues of the peace treaty which will study the issue of the conclusion of a peace treaty, and in the second half of our meeting we would like to exchange opinions on this issue.

**Rogachev.** I would like to note that the atmosphere at yesterday's consultations of ministers and at today's meeting of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR with Prime Minister Takeshita was peaceful and benevolent [and], one could even say, friendly, and to express my confidence that our discussion today will proceed in the same circumstances. Moreover, we have experience conducting such discussions with you [personally], and I always recall our previous meetings with satisfaction.

We are ready to hear out your additional comments (*raz'iasneniia*) on the issue which interests you, and afterward we will make some comments from our side.

In short, we agree to the order of work which the Japanese side is proposing to us.

**Kuriyama.** Then permit me briefly to make an exposition of our comments, which are based on what Mr. Uno said at the second round of negotiations, and also take into account what was said yesterday by the Soviet side. Above all I would like to bring the principled position of our side to your attention.

In Mr. Gorbachev's speech in the UN, he mentions the possibility of developing Japanese-Soviet relations on the basis of mutual advantage and friendship, and emphasizes that such a development of Japanese-Soviet relations will benefit not only the cause of peace, stability and prosperity

of the countries in the Asian-Pacific region, but also throughout the entire world. In order to take advantage of such an opportunity, we consider that it is crucial for us to resolve the territorial issue, to conclude a peace treaty, to normalize in full our relations and thereby to approach the achievement of those potentialities as much as possible.

In light of previous experience we do not think that it will be easy to come to agreement on a resolution of the territorial issue, which constitutes the single obstacle on the way to the conclusion of a peace treaty. However, the constructive changes which have been observed of late in the USSR's foreign policy give us hope that a fruitful dialogue on this issue will be conducted between our countries.

In connection with this, permit me to touch on some more concrete points. First, I would like to dwell on a couple of antebellum realities about which Minister Uno spoke yesterday. The historical facts of the 90-year period from the 1855 treaty to 1945 convincingly show that the four islands whose return our country is demanding differ from the southern [part of] Sakhalin and the Kurile islands, which Japan renounced in the San Francisco treaty. They also convincingly show that these islands were never under the control of your country and that it never had pretensions towards them. In this way, these four islands have received, through a peaceful process, recognition by the international community as a part of Japanese territory.

In order that the Soviet side understands us correctly, I would like to note that our frequent mentions of and references to the treaties of 1855 and 1875 are made not to dispute the period during which they are in effect, but with the aim of reminding you that, beginning from the 1875 treaty, there were a succession of disputes between Japan and your country on the issue of the geographical composition of the Kurile islands and to show what the historical understanding of and relationship toward the four islands was. Precisely for these reasons, both the government and the people of our country are convinced that we have just grounds for demanding the return of the four northern islands from your country.

Secondly, the occupation of the four islands by Soviet troops, which was accomplished over the course of the month after 15 August 1945, when Japan had accepted the Potsdam declaration, is nothing other than a territorial expansion through the use of armed force, and in conditions when Japan had unequivocally denied any intention to continue the war. At the same time, I cannot but note that as a consequence there have been no signs that the Soviet Union's occupation of the four northern islands might be recognized in the international arena.

As for the issue of post-war realities, we, as the side which suffered defeat in the Second World War, have accepted and accept these realities, but [do so] within the confines of the agreed norms of international law.

In my opinion, the post-war realities consist of the following facts.

First is the San Francisco peace treaty. As Minister

Uno stated yesterday, the Japanese government's principal position consists of the fact that Japan will not demand the return of the southern part of Sakhalin and the Kurile islands, which it renounced in that peace treaty.

Secondly, the Japanese-Soviet Joint declaration of 1956. The contents of the 9th article of the Joint Declaration is well known to all present, and I think there is no need to set it out again.

Thirdly, the Japanese-American security treaty.

The security treaty, which was concluded by Japan to guarantee its security, has a deeply defensive character, and the fact that the USSR, referring to this treaty, in a unilateral fashion changed its attitude toward the territorial issue as expressed in the 9th article of the Joint Declaration, and, figuratively (*obrazno*) speaking, "took the four islands hostage," in our view is not compatible with the principle of leadership by [doing] right (*verkhovenstvo prava*), towards which the USSR has of late been striving.

I would like to draw your attention to the fact the presence of NATO does not pose an obstacle to normal relations between the Soviet Union and European countries which are members of that bloc. I think that the security treaty should have the same influence on Japanese-Soviet relations that the treaty on the creation of NATO has on the relations between the USSR and European states.

Yesterday Mr. Shevardnadze referred to the letters which were exchanged between the plenipotentiary of the government of Japan S. Matsumoto, and the first deputy minister of foreign affairs of the USSR, A.A. Gromyko on 29 September 1956. In regard to this, I would like to say that it is difficult for us to understand what was said yesterday by the minister of foreign affairs of the USSR.

In the course of the whole period of Japanese-Soviet negotiations at that time, the Soviet side insisted that it would resolve the territorial issue by transferring the islands of Habomai and Shikotan to Japan, although the Japanese side insisted on the return of all four islands, including the islands of Kunashir and Iturup. Because of this very issue, an agreement was not reached and it was not possible to conclude a peace treaty. That is a well-known fact, which no one can deny.

The principled position of our side is that the negotiations on the conclusion of a peace treaty should be conducted on the basis of a recognition of the Japanese-American security treaty and the confirmation of the understanding of 1973 between the leaders of our two countries on the fact that the problems left unresolved from the Second World War include the issue of the four islands [and should be conducted] in keeping with the ninth article of the Joint Declaration of 1956.

On that I would like to conclude the statement of our position and am ready to hear out your opinion on the Soviet side.

**Rogachev.** Thank you, Mr. Kuriyama. We have listened to your thoughts and comments with great attentiveness....

The USSR's position on the issue of a peace treaty with your country has been stated by us more than once. We considered and [still] consider that it is important to conclude a peace treaty that would make our relations stronger and more stable.

In connection with this there arises the issue of the contents of a treaty. Many issues which are usually the subject of such a treaty have already been resolved and fixed in a whole series of Soviet-Japanese agreements and in other documents, including the Joint Declaration of 1956. Besides this, it is necessary to keep in mind another factor as well, that much time has passed since the restoration of diplomatic relations between our countries.

In view of the aforementioned particularities, it seems to us that the peace treaty should first generalize and sum up the post-war development of Soviet-Japanese ties, and secondly, should define the basic principles underlying mutual relations between the two countries, the main directions and reference points for their further forward movement.

In other words, we see this document as being all-embracing, complex, and encompassing all spheres of relations between our countries. And namely the political, economic-trade, scientific-technical, fishing, and other spheres, and, of course, one of the composite parts of the treaty would be the location of the border.

I want to emphasize that the peace treaty is a complex of issues and not some single, separable issue.

Yesterday the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR made an exposition of our thoughts in connection with the historical points which you mentioned today. We consider that the excursion into history which Mr. Uno made yesterday and which we heard from you today, is useful.

A comparison of your and our evaluations of the events of the distant and recent past show that you and we differently interpret these historical events.

It is very important that neither side become emotional about this, but instead try to comprehend historical lessons and take them into account in building our future relations.

You believe that the historical facts bear witness in favor of the correctness of your position, but we have another point of view—we believe that an historical approach bears witness to the justice of our position.

You say that in the treaties of 1855 and 1875 it was made clear that the islands of Habomai, Shikotan, Kunashir and Iturup are not included in the Kurile islands, but we consider that in the aforementioned treaties there are no articles which geographically define a concept of the "Kurile islands" and for that reason your understanding of these treaties is insufficient (*ne sostoiatel'no*).

Although the USSR Minister of Foreign Affairs spoke about this yesterday, for my part I want again to draw your attention to the fact that there is a whole series of works by Russian and Japanese scholars which bear witness to the fact that priority in the discovery, study and integration [*osvoenii*] of the Kurile islands, including their southern

part, belongs to Russia.

We do not deny the fact that, according to the Russo-Japanese Treaty of 1855, the border between Russia and Japan went between the islands of Iturup and Urup, and that in the 1875 treaty Russia ceded the northern part of the Kurile islands in exchange for the cession by Japan of a part of Sakhalin island to Russia.

We also paid attention to the fact that the Japanese side, referring to these agreements, at the same time prefers not to recall the Russo-Japanese war and the Portsmouth treaty. Meanwhile, it is well known that Japan, having seized the southern part of Sakhalin and torn it away from Russia, itself ignored and violated the agreements of 1855 and 1875.

Japan's treacherous attack on Russia in 1904 and the seizure of the southern part of Sakhalin through the Portsmouth treaty of 1905 deprives the Japanese side of the right to refer to the treaties of 1855 and 1875.

I can also repeat that your assertion that the Kurile islands, which Japan renounced in the San Francisco peace treaty, extend only to the northern part of this archipelago, clearly contradicts all scholarly geographical understandings. Besides this, it is generally known that in documents which treat the Kurile islands issue (the Yalta agreement, the San Francisco peace treaty and other international agreements), these islands are in no way divided.

You speak about the fact that the USSR completed a territorial expansion only after Japan had capitulated in the Second World War. However, I would like to remind you that the liberation of the Kurile islands by Soviet troops was accomplished in keeping with preliminary understandings between the allies, and that the issue of time periods here cannot have principled significance. At the same time, it can be pointed out that even after 15 August 1945, Japanese troops continued military actions, as a result of which the Act of Capitulation by Japan was signed only on 2 September 1945.

And I want once again to note that your denial of the applicability (*deistvennost'*) of the Yalta agreement to Japan is entirely incomprehensible to us. Of course, Japan did not participate and could not participate in the Crimean [Yalta] agreement, insofar as it was concluded between countries which were at war against Japan; however, having signed an act of unconditional capitulation, it accepted all of the conditions which were determined by the allied powers, based on the relevant existing agreements among them, including the Crimean [agreement].

Today in international practice a precedent is being created whereby the side which has suffered defeat, having signed an act of unconditional surrender subsequently begins to put forward conditions. Where is the unconditionality here? We call upon the Japanese side to think seriously about this fact.

Yesterday you and I already discussed the issue of how we understand the contents of the Joint Declaration of 1956. The agreement by the USSR, as fixed in the Declaration, to transfer the islands of Habomai and

Shikotan to Japan was a gesture of good will (*zhest dobroivolii*) by our country toward Japan, but was not our obligation toward your country. In the Declaration the agreement by the sides to "continue negotiations on concluding a peace treaty after the restoration of normal diplomatic relations" is also talked about, and the concept of the "territorial issue" does not figure in the Declaration. I want to remind you that, as is mentioned in the Declaration, the actual transfer of the islands Habomai and Shikotan "will be carried out after the conclusion of a peace treaty between the USSR and Japan." However, the Japanese side refused to conclude a peace treaty on the basis of the Joint Declaration. As for the islands Kunashir and Iturup, they are not mentioned either in the Declaration or in the letters which were exchanged on 29 September of this year. For this reason the Japanese side's assertions that according to the Joint Declaration the sides agreed to put aside the territorial issue for future discussion are arbitrary and the Soviet side declines them. In the memorandum from the government of the USSR to the government of Japan of 22 April 1960, it is said that the territorial issue between the USSR and Japan has been resolved and confirmed by appropriate international agreements, which should be observed.

Some words on the subject of the exchange of letters between A.A. Gromyko and S. Matsumoto on 29 September 1956. Yesterday we already spoke about this issue. I want to remind [you] that these letters were signed at the moment when the sides had agreed that they would not broach the territorial issue in the Joint Declaration and would discuss it after it had been signed. However, at the final stage of the negotiations the Japanese side again brought up in a categorical form the issue of making an obligatory reference to this theme in the text of the Joint Declaration. By way of accommodating the Japanese side, the Soviet side gave its agreement to including the known formulation in the text of the Joint Declaration, having in mind that this was our final position, on the basis of which the USSR was ready to conclude a peace treaty. However, the Japanese side did not take advantage of the opportunity that presented itself, and declined to conclude a peace treaty on the terms of the Joint Declaration of 1956. And in January of 1960 a new Security Treaty was signed between Japan and the USA. You again repeated that this treaty has an exclusively defensive character. However, we have full reason to believe that that is absolutely not the case. We have already explained to you our position on this issue. I want to remind you that the effective sphere of the 1960 treaty, unlike the previous 1951 treaty, was spread beyond the limits of Japanese territory. Japan's role changed after this treaty; that is, it took different obligations upon itself in terms of its augmentation (*narashchivanie*) of military might. The contents of the treaty, as well as the development of events after the conclusion of the treaty, confirm that it led to a substantive change in the situation (*obstanovka*) in the region.

Just now you drew a parallel between the Japanese-

American Security Treaty and NATO, noting that the presence of NATO does not hinder the USSR from developing relations with the European member-countries of that bloc. However, here we have an entirely different understanding. We believe that the existence of blocs poses an obstacle to the development of normal relations, and over the course of many years our country has consequently advocated the dissolution of military blocs. Both in the East and the West we have a single approach to this issue.

Another few words about the Soviet-Japanese announcement of 1973, in which “unresolved issues” are referred to. We have more than once pointed to the fact that our Japanese colleagues here are making a one-sided and false interpretation of the contents of the formulation there. We did not recognize the “unresolvedness” (*nereshennost*) of the so-called “territorial issue.” The issue of a peace treaty is another matter. We were then and remain now advocates of underpinning Soviet-Japanese relations with a stable base of agreement by concluding a peace treaty.

**Kuriyama.** We have listened to the comments of Deputy Minister Rogachev on the Soviet side’s position on the territorial issue with great attentiveness.

We understand your comments in the following way: that the Soviet side has made an exposition to us in a complex form of its position, which we have earlier heard in parts. Frankly speaking, while listening to your comments it did not seem to me that a broadening of understanding and a convergence of both sides’ positions on this issue have occurred. At the same time, just now we received from you a frank, detailed, and composite explanation of the Soviet side’s position on the territorial issue.

We agree with what you have said about the necessity for us to leave aside emotion and to approach the resolution of this issue calmly.

We would like to state our thoughts and comments on the explanations of the Soviet position which you have made today, although, unfortunately, the time which has been allotted for today’s meeting does not permit us to do this.

For this reason I want to propose that we prolong the meeting of our working group and, using the additional time, consult with you about the proposals Mr. Shevardnadze made yesterday.

**Rogachev.** We agree with your proposal to extend the time of our group’s meeting and I would like to say several words right away on the issue you have touched upon.

On a general level of principle, we see this working group as a working organ which would also function between the consultative meetings of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of our countries. If you recall, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR said yesterday that we make use of such a practice with a whole series of countries, especially when resolving complex issues.

For instance, we have two such [joint] institutions

with the PRC [People’s Republic of China] [for] political consultations and territorial negotiations. Incidentally, during his last visit the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs said that the political consultations had fulfilled their functions and that there was no longer a need to continue the negotiations in that form. At present, this organ has fulfilled its goals and it is possible to move to other forms. We agreed with that. Another mechanism—the mechanism of territorial negotiations—continues to operate at present.

We will return to our bilateral issues.

We have differences of opinion on the issue being discussed and, in order that our positions be brought together and that the points on which we disagree be reduced, the creation of a working group in the capacity of a standing organ is being proposed, at the level, let’s say, of deputy ministers. The group could conduct its meetings successively in Tokyo and in Moscow. The leaders of the groups could report to the ministers on the work that had been completed during their successive meetings and continue working in keeping with whatever understandings might be achieved on the given issue at the ministers’ meetings.

This is how we conceive of this working mechanism, and, of course, we are ready to hear out your proposals and thoughts on the given issue.

**Kuriyama.** I thank you for your comments in this regard. We have listened to yesterday’s proposal by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, as well as to your elaborations on this proposal today with great interest.

We, in principle, regard the idea of creating such a group at a working level in the interests of assisting the progress of the negotiations on the issue of concluding a peace treaty between the regular meetings of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of our countries as positive (*polozhitel’no*).

At the same time I believe that at the current meeting of our groups we should decide how it would be best to express in the joint communiqué the understandings that have been arrived at here, based on Mr. Shevardnadze’s proposals from yesterday as well as on additional elaborations you have made today on this issue.

In this connection, I would like to propose for your attention the Japanese side’s draft text on the issues which have been discussed in our working group, taking into account the results of the meeting of our group today, which could be included in a joint communiqué.

“The Ministers, in keeping with the understanding fixed in the Joint Japanese-Soviet statement of 10 October 1973, conducted negotiations related to the conclusion of a Japanese-Soviet peace treaty, including the issues which could constitute its contents. The sides agreed to assist the continuation of negotiations bearing on the conclusion of a peace treaty.

In this connection, the Ministers, noting the fact that the territorial issue, which, returning to historical facts, is a real obstacle to the development of bilateral relations, was



also discussed in the working group on the peace treaty, and recognizing that the settlement of the given issue and the conclusion of a peace treaty benefits the establishment of genuinely good-neighborly and friendly relations between both of our countries, agreed to continue the negotiations in the given working group in the interests of assisting the further progress of negotiations bearing on the conclusion of a peace treaty between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of both countries.

**Rogachev.** I would ask you to give us that text [to take] with us so that we can discuss it, and I think, we will be able to work out a mutually acceptable version.

**Kuriyama.** We have significantly extended our working time, and I would like to express our thanks to you that we have been able to exchange opinions so frankly and work seriously.

**Rogachev.** We have been in session with you for more than two hours already, but unfortunately, we have not yet been able to move our positions closer together. We will hearken to the saying that a journey of 1000 miles begins with a single step. Our conversation today was useful; we have learned more about each other's position. Thank you for your cooperation.

.....

**Transcript of the Basic Contents  
of the meeting of the working group  
on the peace treaty**

Tokyo, 21 March 1989

The following persons took part in the negotiations:  
for the Soviet side: coms. I.A. Rogachev, deputy minister of foreign affairs of the USSR...  
for the Japanese side: T. Kuriyama, deputy minister of foreign affairs of Japan ...

Evening session

**Kuriyama.** We will begin the evening session. According to our agreement, we will listen to Mr. Rogachev.

**Rogachev.** I would like to touch on the international-legal aspects of the ownership of the Kurile islands.

Our position and arguments about the Soviet Union's ownership of the islands of Iturup, Kunashir and Lesser Kurile chain (Habomai and Shikotan), just as with all of the Kurile islands, as well as the southern part of Sakhalin island, have been put forward by us already more than once. Nevertheless, today again I would like, more broadly than before, to touch on some of the aspects which, in our view, bear principal importance....

[Rogachev then expatiates on the following issues: the Yalta agreement, the San Francisco peace treaty, the

Russian discovery and annexation of the Kuriles reaching back into the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and the definition of "Kurile islands." This monologue is reproduced in full on the CWIHP website: [cwihip.si.edu](http://cwihip.si.edu).]

Now permit me to move on to the next issue.

Today you referred to the Joint Declaration of 1956 and the letters which were exchanged between Gromyko and Matsumoto. It seems to us that there arises a need to dwell on the contents of these documents, and also on their interconnections. It is well known that they were composed at different times and reflected the level of understanding between the sides of problems connected with the normalization of Soviet-Japanese relations and with the conclusion of a peace treaty. In December of last year we already spoke about this, and I want once again to direct attention to the circumstance that the exchanged letters between A.A. Gromyko and S. Matsumoto were signed during the intermediate stage of Soviet-Japanese negotiations when the sides were operating on the understanding that bilateral relations would be normalized as of yet without signing the peace treaty and that in the concluding document of the negotiations—the Joint Declaration—the territorial issue would not be touched upon, but would be discussed in the framework of negotiations on concluding a peace agreement after the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

However at the last stage of the negotiations the Japanese side stated an insistent request that the territorial theme must be reflected in the text of the Joint Declaration. The Soviet side acceded to the request (*poshla navstrechu*) and gave its agreement to the inclusion in the Joint Declaration of the well-known point.

This, however, did not signify the recognition by the Soviet side of the justice of Japanese territorial claims. It was a gesture of good will, which the Soviet Union undertook, acceding to Japan's desires and taking into account the interests of the Japanese state. And by doing this it was meant that it was the final position on the territorial issue upon which the USSR was ready to conclude a peace treaty with Japan.

In other words, the "territorial issue" which was spoken about in the letters exchanged between Gromyko and Matsumoto, was actually the formulation in a final form in the Joint Declaration of the Soviet Union's agreement to transfer Habomai and Shikotan to Japan. This is confirmed in the text itself of Point 9 of the Declaration, in which it speaks only about the continuation of the negotiations relative to the conclusion of a peace treaty and does not at all mention the territorial issue.

This is tangentially confirmed in the clause contained in the given agreement about the fact that the actual transfer of the mentioned islands will take place after the conclusion of the peace treaty between the USSR and Japan.

It is impossible not to mention as well that the

expression “territorial issue” is not present in any of the subsequent Soviet-Japanese documents.

Afterwards, however, Japan did not make use of any of the available opportunities and refused to conclude a peace treaty on the terms of the 1956 Declaration, having put forward additional territorial claims toward the USSR. Moreover, the Japanese government began to conduct a policy toward the Soviet Union which contradicted the spirit of the Joint Declaration and the peaceful intentions expressed in the course of the negotiations on the normalization of Soviet-Japanese relations. The conclusion of the Japanese-American security treaty in 1960, directed essentially against the Soviet Union, changed the situation and confronted our country with the necessity of taking appropriate steps to defend its interests.

As is known, the law on international treaties (art. 44 of the Vienna convention on the law on international treaties of 1969) permits a unilateral refusal to observe a part of a treaty in case the treaty is violated by the other side or the situation fundamentally changes.

Now for several words on the character of the Japanese-American Treaty on mutual cooperation and security guarantees. Today, you, Mr. Kuriyama, tried to convince us that it has an exclusively defensive character....

[A short disquisition on the Japanese-American Treaty follows.]

It must be said that the destabilizing influence of the Treaty on the situation in this part of the world continues up until now and even into the future. The fact is that in keeping with the Treaty, more than 120 US military bases and establishments are located on Japanese territory, including means for delivering offensive nuclear weapons. We have in mind, in particular, F-16 fighter-bombers at the Misawa base, the cruiser “Bunker Hill” and the destroyer “Fife,” which are equipped with “Tomahawk” cruise missiles [and are] assigned to the port of Yokosuka. These are all realities which cannot be ignored.

I want once again to say that we recognize the right of each country to individual and collective self-defense, but we cannot but assess the Japanese-American “Security Treaty” as a military alliance having in addition an anti-Soviet direction....

[A presentation on the Portsmouth Treaty of 1905, its precedents and results, follows.]

Now one more thought in connection with today’s discussion.

The Japanese side asserts that the islands of Iturup, Kunashir, Habomai, and Shikotan were not seized by Japan “by force and as a result of avarice” and for that reason the relevant clause of the Cairo declaration does not apply to them.

It is well known that in the course of a long period of

time Japan used these islands as bases for aggression, including for the attack by a [naval] aviation formation on Pearl Harbor and attacks on peaceful Soviet vessels. For this reason, the confiscation of these islands from Japan after the war cannot be seen as a “territorial expansion” on the part of the victor, but should be seen as a measure taken in order to “halt and punish Japan’s aggression,” that is, in keeping with the principle of responsibility for aggression as was voiced in the very same Cairo declaration.

We have already explained our assessment of the environment in which the neutrality pact between the USSR and Japan was annulled. It is incontrovertible that responsibility for the outbreak of World War Two belongs to Hitlerist fascism together with Japanese militarism. Germany’s attack on the Soviet Union and Japan’s on the United States, as well as subsequent events, fundamentally changed the environment in which the neutrality pact between the USSR and Japan was made. The Soviet Union’s entrance into the war against Japan at the request of the Allies was a logical consequence of these changes and was dictated by the interests of ridding [all] peoples, including Japan’s, of death and suffering, [and of] restoring the foundations of peace throughout the whole world.

In your statement, you again refer to the Soviet-Japanese statement of 1973, in which unresolved issues are mentioned. I want once again to repeat that, as we have said more than once, the Japanese side is committing a one-sided, false interpretation of the sense of the formulas contained therein.

On that, permit me to finish my “short” statement.

**Kuriyama.** Today at the meetings of the working group on the peace treaty, the Soviet side in a comprehensive and detailed manner made an exposition of its position on each concrete aspect of the territorial issue which was raised by the Japanese side. I think that in the course of the negotiations which have taken place up until now, the Soviet side has never before given such a detailed exposition of its views. I express my sincere recognition for the comprehensive elucidation. At the same time I express a feeling of respect for the fact that the Soviet side in the process of preparation undertook very detailed research and study of the territorial issue in clarifying its position. I have materials on the table which have been prepared by my colleagues, which contain many points elucidating our position on the points you have put forward. However, insofar as today the Soviet side presented us with new arguments, I consider it expedient that we must make additional preparations for the discussion of the territorial issue and to clarify our position in the course of the following session of the working group on the peace treaty. In keeping with today’s explanations by the Soviet side of its position we again see that the positions of the Japanese and Soviet sides on this issue diverge widely, which I regret. But on the other hand, during the morning session, Mr. Rogachev touched on geographical aspects which should be included in the

contents of the peace treaty, and in doing so, if I am not mistaken, he said that the Soviet and Japanese sides have their views, but that it is necessary to apply effort to eliminating differences in our approaches, and that the Soviet side, in its turn, is ready to do so. I highly appreciate the given statement, and, making use of the opportunity, want to note that we share this opinion.

I think that the discussion which has taken place today is far from futile in the prospect for the continuation of the efforts of both sides. Today Mr. Rogachev stated the Soviet side's conception about the contents of the peace treaty. We would like to put forward our own thoughts on the contents of the peace treaty at the next meeting of the working group.

Mr. Rogachev said that the Soviet side does not adhere to a severe approach to the issues, but takes a businesslike and flexible position. At the same time the hope for an analogous approach from our side was stated. We are ready to display a similar approach within the framework of the working group on the peace treaty.

However, I want to dwell on one point connected with the statement which was made this morning by the Soviet side. You made reference to the islands of Takeshima, Senkaku and Okinawa as an example of Japan's flexible approach to other countries in cases when it wants to.

First, on the Senkaku islands. We received the impression that a definite misunderstanding exists on the Soviet side. The islands of Senkaku after the return of administrative rights over Okinawa were under the administrative control of Japan, as our original territory. We never agreed to a settlement of this issue by way of putting it on the "slow burner" (*putem otkladyvaniia ego v dolgii iashchik*).

Secondly, about Okinawa. The character of the given issue is essentially different from the character of the issue of the northern territories. After the conclusion of the San Francisco Treaty, administrative rights were recognized for the USA. The essence of the issue consisted in the return to Japan of the administrative rights on Okinawa.

And, finally, on Takeshima. In contacts with the Korean Republic we consistently speak out against putting this issue aside. According to the principle that the given issue should be resolved by peaceful means, Japan consistently states, even at the ministerial level, that the Korean side has no juridical basis for ruling these islands.

Your phrase about a flexible approach misses the mark. We would like the Soviet side to understand: from the political point of view there can not be the same approach to the northern territories which before the war were inhabited by 16 thousand Japanese, and which have an area of five thousand square kilometers, and to the Takeshima islands, which are uninhabited. If the Soviet Union considers it possible to adhere to the aforementioned approach, it thereby ignores political realities and the political significance of the issue of the northern territories, on the one side, and of the issue of the Takeshima islands, on the other hand.

Finally, one request. Mr. Rogachev, you said that you can give us a list of the sources which were referred to during the exposition of your position. We will probably make a request about this in the course of working procedure.

**Rogachev.** We will do so.

**Kuriyama.** If the Soviet side has no further questions, I would like to consult relative to the press briefing. Insofar as the attention of journalists is focused on the content of the discussion in the course of the meeting of the working group, I want to consult about the contents of the briefing with the goal of avoiding unnecessary misunderstandings. Up until now such a practice has existed.

**Rogachev.** We had the impression that yesterday we consulted, although, judging by the Japanese newspapers, the results of our conversation were unexpected. We showed our text, which we intended to publish, and you said that in principle you agreed [to it]. We sent the text to Moscow, but something entirely different appeared in the Japanese press. I do not know by whose recommendation the message that the Soviet delegation was bargaining (*vedet torg*) appeared: six agreements for a high-level visit. That will never be. That is a risible thesis. We will conduct no negotiations, if we see that the Japanese side shows no interest. And you have no interest. I do not object to a consultation on the briefing, but I have doubts as to the results.

**Kuriyama.** If there are no more questions, I want thereby to finish the work of our committee. Several words in conclusion. In the course of two days we have held consultations, and today there was a meeting of the working group on the peace treaty. Although difficult problems exist between Japan and the Soviet Union, we were able to conduct a more detailed discussion of the issues, and our work benefited from a deepening of mutual understanding. During Mr. Uno's visit to the Soviet Union in May of this year, we will have to exert even more efforts to move forward our bilateral relations in the direction of realizing M.S. Gorbachev's visit to Japan. In conclusion I thank you for the Soviet side's cooperation with us over the course of these three days. I also express our recognition of the translators. I wish you, Mr. Rogachev, pleasant travels in Japan.

**Rogachev.** Permit me to say a few words. We are finishing the meeting of the working group on a peace treaty. I want once again to emphasize that the Soviet Union is conducting an honest, principled, open policy in all areas of the world, in relation to all countries and, in particular, in relation to its close neighbor, Japan. At the end of last year, following the conception of new political thinking, we took on an active role in improving our relations with Japan. After the meeting of our Minister of Foreign Affairs with Japanese leaders in December of last year there were hopes that perhaps a new stage in the history of Soviet-Japanese relations was beginning. An understanding was reached between the ministers of foreign affairs on the creation of a working mechanism to

prepare a summit meeting and a working group on a peace treaty, and it was approved by the Prime Minister of Japan and the Soviet leadership. The Soviet side honestly fulfilled the obligations it had taken upon itself, seriously preparing for the meeting of the working group in Tokyo and made a statement on all of the issues which constitute the concept (*poniatie*) of a peace treaty. We counted on the same approach from the Japanese side.

Unfortunately, I am obliged to state that from you we heard only a statement on the so-called "territorial issue." I am left with the impression that you are avoiding the use of the term "peace treaty." We also did not hear what the Japanese conception is, [that is] your understanding of a peace treaty. We consider that this will be a serious study, and hope that the Japanese side will make its answer at the next session of the working group.

Of course, there still remains the meeting with Mr. Uno. This is the high point of our entire work here, I mean both the consultations and the meeting of the working group. So far we have nothing about which to inform Moscow, aside from the fact that we heard the old Japanese theses on the "territorial issue." The question arises: how has the preparation for the meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs benefited, let alone a summit meeting? It seems to me that our Japanese colleagues themselves will

make their own assessment of the scale of this benefit.

[Ed. note: The May 1989 Uno-Gorbachev meeting is covered in A.S. Cherniaev's memoirs, excerpted elsewhere in this *Bulletin*.]

I want to assure you that the Soviet side will make efforts toward normalizing relations with Japan. I agree that as a result of the meetings we have begun to understand each other's positions better and in this sense have deepened our mutual understanding.

Deep differences remain on the issue which you call "territorial." We will await your thoughts on the subject of our statement today after you study it.

On behalf of my comrades I want to thank you sincerely for your attention, for your hospitality, for organizing our trip around the country, and finally, for creating [good] work conditions. And on the subject of when I will meet with you, Mr. Kuriyama, we will agree separately. I mean the next meeting of the working group on the peace treaty.

**Kuriyama.** I agree.

[Source: Obtained by Tsuyoshi Hasegawa. Translated by Benjamin Aldrich-Moodie.]

### COLD WAR INTERNATIONAL HISTORY PROJECT WORKING PAPERS

- #1 Chen Jian, "*The Sino-Soviet Alliance and China's Entry into the Korean War*"
- #2 P.J. Simmons, "*Archival Research on the Cold War Era: A Report from Budapest, Prague and Warsaw*"
- #3 James Richter, "*Reexamining Soviet Policy Towards Germany during the Beria Interregnum*"
- #4 Vladislav M. Zubok, "*Soviet Intelligence and the Cold War: The 'Small' Committee of Information, 1952-53*"
- #5 Hope M. Harrison, "*Ulbricht and the Concrete 'Rose': New Archival Evidence on the Dynamics of Soviet-East German Relations and the Berlin Crisis, 1958-61*"
- #6 Vladislav M. Zubok, "*Khrushchev and the Berlin Crisis (1958-62)*"
- #7 Mark Bradley and Robert K. Brigham, "*Vietnamese Archives and Scholarship on the Cold War Period: Two Reports*"
- #8 Kathryn Weathersby, "*Soviet Aims in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War, 1945-50: New Evidence From Russian Archives*"
- #9 Scott D. Parrish and Mikhail M. Narinsky, "*New Evidence on the Soviet Rejection of the Marshall Plan, 1947: Two Reports*"
- #10 Norman M. Naimark, "*'To Know Everything and To Report Everything Worth Knowing': Building the East German Police State, 1945-49*"
- #11 Christian F. Ostermann, "*The United States, the East German Uprising of 1953, and the Limits of Rollback*"
- #12 Brian Murray, "*Stalin, the Cold War, and the Division of China: A Multi-Archival Mystery*"
- #13 Vladimir O. Pechatnov, "*The Big Three After World War II: New Documents on Soviet Thinking about Post-War Relations with the United States and Great Britain*"
- #14 Ruud van Dijk, "*The 1952 Stalin Note Debate: Myth or Missed Opportunity for German Unification?*"
- #15 Natalia I. Yegorova, "*The 'Iran Crisis' of 1945-46: A View from the Russian Archives*"
- #16 Csaba Bekes, "*The 1956 Hungarian Revolution and World Politics*"
- #17 Leszek W. Gluchowski, "*The Soviet-Polish Confrontation of October 1956: The Situation in the Polish Internal Security Corps*"
- #18 Qiang Zhai, "*Beijing and the Vietnam Peace Talks, 1965-68: New Evidence from Chinese Sources*"
- #19 Matthew Evangelista, "*'Why Keep Such An Army?': Khrushchev's Troop Reductions*"