

With Compliments

The attached articles by the author of the 'Totalitarian Temptation' sums up exactly what many people on the so-called Right think in Britain and the United States about the current Soviet programme. Whether you agree or no, I think you ought to know of it. The comments on the new head of Chatham House are to my mind appropriate*: *

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Never Fear to Negotiate — but Avoid 'Dialogue'

By JEAN-FRANCOIS REVEL
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PARIS—The moment Ronald Reagan was reelected, the key word among the pundits immediately became "dialogue"—with the Soviet Union, of course. The same commentators who had warned that Reagan's reelection would make impossible any kind of talks are again busy with their advice.

These are the people who just one year ago—during the great Euromissile

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deployment debate—strongly recommended that the deployment be canceled or postponed because, they said, the Soviets would never come back to the negotiating table. Well, the Soviets have come back to the table, showing that yielding to Soviet intimidation, disinformation and destabilization was not necessary for the resumption of dialogue. Firmness has paid off, and the West is now asked to resume the talks, with more bargaining power than before.

But there has been no vindication for Mr. Reagan, because the voices now worry that he may not be conciliatory enough to Moscow. These warnings develop along two main lines, which get louder each time a new summit approaches. The first line goes like this: Since a negotiation is going to take place, criticizing the U.S.S.R. becomes a sin. It follows that just to list the many technical reasons the U.S. and its allies have to be cautious is to want to wreck the summit.

This leads into the second line of argument. The West must go to the summit with but one purpose: to prove Reagan's good faith. Konstantin Chernenko's good faith is of course taken for granted. It would be hawkish to doubt it. But Mr. Reagan must prove, preferably by way of unilateral and before-hand concessions, that he is honest. If you think this is an exaggeration, let me cite a sample, taken from a Washington Post story reprinted last month in the International Herald Tribune:

"Many Europeans hope he [Reagan] will now be prepared to take action, unilaterally if necessary, that would help President Chernenko to understand that Mr. Reagan's offer to resume a dialogue with the Soviet Union is more than a tactical move." So speaks Sir James Eberle, director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London.

Sir James' position highlights the great distinction between dialogue and negotiation. A negotiation is a professional job by which you try to get at least as much as you give away and where you ask for guarantees. A dialogue, by contrast, is a display of good will, a public admission of your own indignity by which you try to convince Soviet leaders that you deserve to meet them.

Look, for instance, at the feud inside and

outside the administration over whether it is wise to release the evidence about Soviet violations of existing treaties. In an old-fashioned negotiation, it would seem sensible for the U.S. to study closely such violations to make cheating less easy in any future arms-control treaty. Also, it would seem normal to use the issue of Soviet compliance in order to expose the Kremlin and to put pressure on Mr. Chernenko.

But in the dialogue culture, what was supposed to be an asset becomes a liability for the West. To render a guilty verdict on the issue of compliance would infuriate the Soviets and make future talks and agreements more difficult. But some vital questions go unmentioned, to wit: Did previous arms control treaties work? Was the 1972 ABM treaty—the jewel of arms control—useful? On what points did it fail to do so? These are serious questions that ought to be scrutinized closely if we are to have serious talks about future arms control treaties.

Unfortunately, dialogue seems to be a permanent feature of the human spirit. In 1929, the French intelligence community had reached the conviction that the German army was widely cheating with the Treaty of Versailles. They drafted a detailed report, establishing numerous clandestine violations, and they sent it to the other allies. But the British government adamantly opposed the disclosure of the report, arguing that . . . it would jeopardize the disarmament conference due in 1930.

In a recent article in the New York Times, Paul Warnke, former director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency under Jimmy Carter, asks: "Does the evident Soviet eagerness to go back to the bargaining table constitute a victory for President Reagan's policy of talking tough?" It may, answers Mr. Warnke, "if Reagan knows how to be a good winner." And what does it mean to be a good winner? Says Mr. Warnke: "We can legitimately expect major Soviet concessions if we are prepared to refrain from going ahead with certain programs that Moscow would like to see abandoned" (our italics).

In other words, instead of negotiating by way of balanced, mutual and simultaneous concessions, the U.S. should throw away its bargaining power before initiating the talks. Then it should wait and hope. Such a display of unilateral generosity may put the Soviets in a mood for making voluntary concessions.

How strange that so few pundits pay attention to the Soviet conception of diplomacy, its substance and its background. Some vague pronouncements of Mr. Chernenko, an occasional quotation from Pravda (taken of course at face value), hardly qualify as serious knowledge of the Soviet mind and how it operates. History did not begin last week, and Soviet diplomacy follows a few principles that have always been explicitly stated and closely implemented:

First, lies and deception are normal tools in international relations, since international relations are essentially war.

Second, compromise is often inevitable, but, as Lenin said, there are several kinds of compromise. Examples of "good" compromises: the two treaties about Vietnam, in 1954 and in 1973; which, step by step, delivered to communism the whole of Indochina, plus Cambodia and Laos.

Third, violations of treaties are normal behavior in diplomatic activity. Between 1925 and 1941, the U.S.S.R. signed 15 nonaggression or neutrality treaties. It broke, denounced or violated 11. Germany and Italy violated two, and two others were abrogated. Between 1950 and 1980, Moscow signed 18 alliances, violated 15, among them the Helsinki agreements.

Fourth, "feel" out the resolve of the West. The Soviets want to test the men they are going to deal with. The classic example is the Khrushchev-Kennedy meeting in Vienna, May 31 to June 5, 1961. John Kennedy was submitted to a tough ordeal and the outcome was that he was rated "weak." The upshot was on Aug. 13, the Berlin Wall, a complete success for the Soviet Union, and later, in 1962, the Cuban missile crisis, about which we don't yet know what side was the real winner.

Fifth, at the opening stage of any new "peace offensive," the Kremlin seeks to allay suspicion. The striking example of how successfully they can do it is Richard Nixon, who, from a strong anti-communist, was turned into the champion of a "generation of peace." Under the detente and arms control process, in fact, there was on the American side this assumption: "Let's let the Soviets achieve parity so they will feel less insecure and therefore more conciliatory."

If there is any conclusion to be drawn from this, what the West needs now is less dialogue and more negotiation.

Mr. Revel's most recent book is "How Democracies Perish" (New York, Doubleday). Mr. Lazitch is director of the Institut d'Histoire Sociale.