

---

peace, but war. "Countries do not become democracies overnight," and in the typically rocky transition period, the authors say, states tend to become "more aggressive and war-prone, not less."

Analyzing the same statistical data for 1811-1980 that other scholars have used to support the "peaceable democracies" thesis, Mansfield and Snyder find that, on average, *democratizing* states were about two-thirds more likely to go to war than were states that did not experience any change in their form of government.

Why should this be? After the breakup of an autocratic regime, note the authors, nascent democratic institutions are weak, and groups that had done well under the old regime "vie for power and survival" with one another and with new groups "representing rising democratic forces." Struggling to win mass support, the rivals often resort to nationalistic appeals, unleashing forces that are hard to control.

Virtually every great power, the authors say, "has gone on the warpath during the initial phase of its entry into the era of mass politics." Mid-Victorian Britain, for example, in transition from the partial democracy of the First Reform Bill of 1832 to the full-fledged democracy of the later Gladstone era, "was carried into the Crimean War by a groundswell of belligerent public opinion." Similarly, the leaders of Emperor Wilhelm II's Germany, facing universal suffrage but only limited governmental accountability, were pushed toward World War I by their "escalating competition with middle-class mass groups for the mantle of German nationalism."

Similar forces are at work today in Russia and the former Yugoslavia, Mansfield and Snyder note. "Russia's poorly institutionalized, partial democracy has tense relationships with many of its neighbors and has used military force brutally to reassert control in Chechnya; its electorate cast nearly a quarter of its votes [in 1993] for the party of radical nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy." The "return to imperial thinking" in Moscow results from President Boris Yeltsin's "weakness, not his strength."

Instead of "a naive enthusiasm for spreading peace by promoting democratization," Mansfield and Snyder maintain, the United States and its allies need a strategy for minimizing the risks that accompany liberalization. Experience in Latin America, they point out, suggests that giving the military and others threatened by change a "golden parachute," including guarantees that they will not end up in jail, helps smooth transitions. In the postcommunist states, the authors conclude, "finding benign, productive employment for the erstwhile Communist *nomenklatura*, military officer corps, nuclear scientists, and smoke-stack industrialists" ought to be a top priority.

### *The CIA Got It Right*

"The CIA Vindicated" by Bruce D. Berkowitz and Jeffrey T. Richelson, in *The National Interest* (Fall 1995), 1112 16th St. N.W., Ste. 540, Washington, D.C. 20036.

As if the Aldrich Ames disaster were not enough, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has been harshly criticized by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D.-N.Y.), *New York Times* columnist William Safire, and others for failing to anticipate the collapse of the Soviet Union. Berkowitz, a former CIA analyst, and Richelson, author of the forthcoming *A Century of Spies*, beg to differ with these eminent critics.

That the Soviet economy was faltering was evident to CIA and defense intelligence analysts by the late 1970s, the authors say; by 1985, when Mikhail Gorbachev came to power, its "stultified, stalled-out condition" was a given. Analysts asked two main questions: was Gorbachev serious about economic reform? Could he carry it out "without losing control and releasing forces that would bring down the Soviet system"? In 1985, they agreed that Gorbachev was serious, but they doubted that the reforms would work or that the system was at risk. Two years later, however, the CIA issued a more pessimistic assessment, stating: "If it suspects that [liberalization] is getting out of control, the Party could well

---

execute an abrupt about-face, discarding Gorbachev along the way." The agency's "main message," the authors say, was "that the Soviet economy was stagnating" and there was no visible means of reviving it.

Critics claim that the intelligence organizations should have warned U.S. leaders during the late 1980s that Gorbachev was in trouble. The documentary record, Berkowitz and Richelson contend, shows that, in essence, they did. "In the extreme," an April 1989 assessment stated, "his policies and political

power could be undermined and the political stability of the Soviet system could be fundamentally threatened." A coup or an assassination were definite possibilities. "The Bush administration chose to stand by Gorbachev in spite of the intelligence that argued his future was limited," the authors say.

In 1989, the agency disagreed with the consensus view in the intelligence community that the regime would be able to tough it out. The Berlin Wall fell that November, and in February 1990, the Soviet Communist Party agreed to give

---

### *A Soviet Spy, After All*

In the *Nation* (Aug. 14–21, 1995), where the innocence of convicted Soviet spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg has long been an article of faith, veteran Rosenberg defenders Walter and Miriam Schneir come to a conclusion they say "will be painful news for many people, as it is for us."

*The 49 decoded Soviet intelligence messages [from the 1940s] released on July 11 by the National Security Agency contain so much amazing, sad, disturbing material, one hardly knows where to begin. . . .*

*What these messages show, briefly, is that Julius Rosenberg was the head of a spy ring gathering and passing nonatomic defense information. But the messages [intercepted by the U.S. Army in a secret program called Verona] do not confirm key elements of the atomic spying charges against him. They indicate that Ethel Rosenberg was not a Soviet agent. And they implicate the American Communist Party in recruitment of party members for espionage.*

*But are the Verona intercepts authentic? Thirty years ago we published Invitation to an Inquest, a book that concluded that the Rosen-*

*bergs were "unjustly convicted" and "punished for a crime that never occurred." We maintained this point of view in three subsequent editions, the last, in 1983, written after we had an opportunity to study FBI documents released under the Freedom of Information Act. Since the end of the Cold War, we have broadened our knowledge by means of research in Prague with members of the Czech secret police and others, and in Moscow with the Russian foreign intelligence services; we have*

*conducted interviews with Soviet intelligence agents Anatoli Yakovlev and Morris and Lona Cohen (alias Kroger), and also with Joel Barr and the widow of Alfred Sarant (both men accused participants in a Rosenberg spy ring). Based on our knowledge of the case, it is our judgment that the Verona intercepts are authentic.*



---

up its monopoly on political power.

Between 1989 and '91, Berkowitz and Richelson write, the CIA not only said that the communist order was finished, but repeatedly mentioned a coup as a serious possibility. In addition, the agency said that nationalism, disillusion with the communist regime, and economic failure were so extensive that "even if hard-liners did manage to seize power temporarily, they would not be able to consolidate control." An April 1991 memorandum detailed steps that Soviet hard-liners had taken that suggested a coup was in the works. When the coup, from which Boris Yeltsin emerged the dominant figure, took place four months later, "the intelligence community quickly determined that . . . the plotters had little chance of success. This analysis enabled the United States to adjust its position quickly as the crisis evolved."

## Operation Public Relations

"The Art of Naming Operations" by Gregory C. Sieminski, in *Parameters* (Autumn 1995), U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, Pa. 17013-5050.

Just before the 1989 invasion of Panama, an American general phoned another officer with a complaint: "Do you want your grandchildren to say you were in Blue Spoon?" The invasion quickly got a new name: Operation Just Cause. This righteous appellation struck some critics as, in the words of a *New York Times* editorial headline, "Operation High Hokum." Nevertheless, a trend was born, recounts Sieminski, an army lieutenant colonel. From the Persian Gulf War (Desert Shield and Desert Storm) to the humanitarian mission in Somalia (Operation Restore Hope) to the occupation of Haiti (Operation Uphold Democracy), major military operations since 1989 have been given nicknames intended to shape domestic and international perceptions.

It was not always so, Sieminski notes. The code names of World War II operations were classified until after the war and much care was taken to pick ones that did *not* suggest an operation's purpose or location. (Hitler was

not so careful. From Operation Sealion, the name for his planned invasion of Britain, British intelligence was able to divine the target.) The American-led invasion of Normandy in 1944 was originally named Roundhammer, but the British sneered at that "revolting neologism," and British prime minister Winston Churchill changed it to Overlord. It was to become the war's most famous code name.

During the Korean War, the American military continued to use code names to protect operational security, but let them be made public once the operation had begun. Taking command of the badly demoralized Eighth Army as it was being pushed southward by Chinese forces, Sieminski notes, Lieutenant General Matthew Ridgway gave "decidedly aggressive" names to his counteroffensives: Thunderbolt, Roundup, Killer, Ripper, Courageous, Audacious, and Dauntless. Thus inspired, presumably, the Eighth Army pushed the Chinese back to the 38th parallel. The names stirred some objections, however. The army chief of staff told Ridgway that "the word 'killer' . . . struck an unpleasant note as far as public relations was concerned." Ridgway was unrepentant, but operations after Killer and Ripper were given less violent names.

The PR lesson had to be learned again during the Vietnam War. In 1966, when a First Cavalry Division operation was dubbed Masher, Sieminski says, President Lyndon B. Johnson angrily objected. Masher swiftly gave way to the pacific White Wing. Thereafter, Vietnam operations were named after American cities (Junction City) or historic battles (Bastogne) or figures (Nathan Hale). Defense Department regulations adopted toward the end of the war (and still in force today) specify that nicknames must not "express a degree of bellicosity inconsistent with traditional American ideals or current foreign policy." Only with Operation Just Cause, however, did the military grasp the full PR potential of nicknames.

"But there is a point at which aggressive marketing turns public relations into propaganda [and] breeds cynicism rather than support," Sieminski cautions. "Precisely where this point is may be ill-defined, but the nickname Just Cause probably came close to it."