Transparency and Security Competition:

Open Skies and America's Cold War Statecraft, 1948–1960

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During the Cold War, the United States pushed for greater transparency and openness in international politics. In 1955 the Eisenhower administration initiated an unsuccessful bid to establish a comprehensive system of mutual aerial observation—dubbed "Open Skies" at the time—between itself and the Soviet Union as a way to reduce mutual fears of a surprise attack. In 1989, as relations with the USSR were rapidly improving, the U.S. government revived Open Skies. (The Open Skies Treaty was signed in 1992 and came into force in 2002.) What does the original Open Skies proposal suggest about the role of military transparency as a confidence-building measure in U.S. Cold War national security policy?

Bernard Finel and Kristin Lord define transparency as "a condition in which information about governmental preferences, intentions, and capabilities is made available either to the public or to other outsiders. It is a condition of openness that is enhanced by any mechanism that leads to public disclosure of information."[1] Transparency is rooted in U.S. liberal democratic ideals. At home, transparency is seen as contributing to good governance and public accountability. In foreign policy, transparency is deemed valuable for promoting "open" government and dispelling misperceptions. But U.S. efforts to foster greater transparency in Cold War relations with the Soviet Union had little in common with good governance. U.S. proposals for transparency during the 1950s obscured the workings of power politics in U.S. statecraft and the competition for security with the Soviet Union. The Eisenhower administration's efforts to institutionalize transparency were designed in part to reassure West European allies that the United States would use its

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1. Bernard I. Finel and Kristin M. Lord, "Transparency and World Politics," in Bernard I. Finel and Kristin M. Lord, eds., *Power and Conflict in the Age of Transparency* (New York: Palgrave, 2000), p. 3.

preponderance of power responsibly. Contrary to public U.S. declarations, however, the call for "greater openness" with the Soviet Union through the exchange of military information had little to do with reassurance. Unlike U.S. allies, the Soviet Union was widely perceived as a rising, hostile power and a serious threat to the emerging, U.S.-dominated postwar order. The Eisenhower administration's espousal of transparency was intended to contain Soviet power and lead over time to the demise of the Soviet system. Far from being a mechanism to abate international tensions and improve East-West relations, Open Skies was part and parcel of the U.S. strategy to prosecute and win the Cold War.

This argument about transparency and U.S. national security policy is borne out by a close analysis of the original Open Skies proposal.[2] Open Skies was the culmination of a long series of U.S. proposals beginning in the late 1940s to achieve greater openness in Soviet foreign and defense policy. At the U.S.-Soviet summit meeting in Geneva in July 1955, President Dwight Eisenhower argued that immediate, unfettered, mutual aerial observation would reduce tensions and build trust between the United States and the Soviet Union. On a political level, the Eisenhower administration used Open Skies to discredit Soviet peace initiatives for "general and complete disarmament" without full verification. The U.S. administration also believed that Open Skies, regardless of its fate, would be useful in laying the groundwork for an

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2. Scholars offer a variety of explanations for the original Open Skies talks. Some identify the U.S. proposal as a well-intended but unrealistic effort by the Eisenhower administration to reduce international tensions and avoid an inadvertent war. See McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival: Choices about the Bomb in the First Fifty Years* (New York: Random House, 1988), pp. 296–305; W. W. Rostow, *Open Skies: Eisenhower's Proposal of July 21, 1955* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982); W. W. Rostow, "Introductory Remarks," in Thomas J. Hirschfeld, *Intelligence and Arms Control* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), pp. 1–5; Thomas C. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 207; and Jeremi Suri, "America's Search for a Technical Solution to the Arms Race: The Surprise Attack Conference of 1958 and the Challenge for 'Eisenhower Revisionists,'" *Diplomatic History,* Vol. 21, No. 3 (Summer 1997), pp. 417–451. Others argue that the administration had no real interest in security cooperation and that Open Skies was a ruse to embarrass and manipulate the Soviet Union. For different versions of this line of argument, see Matthew Evangelista, "Cooperation Theory and Disarmament Negotiations in the 1950s," *World Politics,* Vol. 42, No. 4 (July 1990), pp. 502–528; Deborah Welch Larson, *Anatomy of Mistrust: U.S.-Soviet Relations during the Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 11–38, 63–71; Deborah Welch Larson, "Crisis Prevention and the Austrian State Treaty," *International Organization,* Vol. 41, No. 1 (Winter 1987), pp. 27–60; John Prados, "Open Skies and Closed Minds," in Günter Bischof and Saki Dockrill, eds., *Cold War Respite: The Geneva Summit of 1955* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), pp. 215–233; and David Tal, "Eisenhower's Disarmament Dilemma: From Chance for Peace to Open Skies Proposal," *Diplomacy and Statecraft,* Vol. 12, No. 2 (June 2001), pp. 175–196. John Lewis Gaddis takes an intermediate view. He maintains that Eisenhower's concern about surprise attacks was genuine but that Open Skies, which supposedly would help reduce the mutual fear of an attack, was actually part of a U.S. propaganda campaign to discredit Soviet peace overtures. See John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 156–157. For a recent elaboration of this thesis, see Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Proposal Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2006), pp. 181–213.

ambitious program of clandestine reconnaissance flights deep into the interior of the USSR, a program that began in 1956. On a strategic level, U.S. officials saw Open Skies as possibly yielding a windfall of intelligence about Soviet military capabilities and activities—if the Soviet Union unexpectedly agreed to it—without the risk of compromising U.S. military secrets.

The Open Skies saga demonstrates how the image of being an "open society" could influence U.S. foreign policymaking. The United States sought to enhance its security by placing the burden of openness on the Soviet Union, and the ambitious U.S. plan for an aerial observation regime signaled a determination to meet the rising Soviet threat. It is no coincidence that U.S. calls for greater transparency and openness came at a time when the Soviet Union, which was far more closed and secretive than the United States, was increasingly challenging the preponderant American role in the international system. Although the intensity of the competition for security between the two countries had abated considerably by the late 1980s, the U.S. government's revival of Open Skies in the final year of the Cold War also conformed to the logic of containment.[3]

This article begins with a survey of recent conceptual discussion of transparency and international cooperation, especially as a confidence-building measure, and borrows from realist theory in demonstrating the limits of this form of cooperation. The article then highlights how transparency in a democratic society can prevent abuses of power and bolster public confidence in government and other powerful actors. This domestic function is a notable contrast to the coercive role of transparency in U.S. Cold War relations with the Soviet Union. The article draws on primary sources to corroborate this ar-

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3. In 1989, the George H. W. Bush administration introduced a new Open Skies proposal as a way of testing Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost* (official openness). U.S. officials reasoned that if the Soviet Union was indeed serious about fundamental change and greater openness, it should welcome close outside scrutiny of its military capabilities and activities in the form of routine, intrusive observation flights. The Bush administration envisioned a new Europe in which Open Skies and other forms of institutionalized openness would reduce tensions, foster lasting peace and security, and fundamentally transform the USSR from a "closed society" to a "normal country." The treaty that was signed in March 1992 resulted from several major international conferences and from informal and formal U.S.-Soviet talks as well as many other diplomatic initiatives starting in February 1990. For accounts of the negotiations and early implementation of the treaty, see Ernst Britting and Hartwig Spitzer, "The Open Skies Treaty," in Trevor Findlay and Oliver Meier, eds., *Verification Yearbook 2002* (London: Vertic, 2002), pp. 223–238; Ann M. Florini, "The Open Skies Negotiations," in Richard Dean Burns, ed., *Encyclopedia of Arms Control and Disarmament,* Vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993), pp. 1113–1120; Mark David Gabriele, "The Treaty on Open Skies and Its Practical Applications and Implications for the United States" Ph.D. Diss., RAND Graduate School, 1998; Peter Jones, "Open Skies: A New Era of Transparency," *Arms Control Today,* Vol. 22, No. 4 (May 1992), pp. 10–15; James J. Marquardt, "Open Skies: Not a Moment Too Soon," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists,* Vol. 58, No.1 (January/February 2002), pp. 18–20; and Jonathan B. Tucker, "Back to the Future: The Open Skies Talks," *Arms Control Today,* Vol. 20, No. 8 (October 1990), pp. 20–24. This treaty is not the only one since the end of the Cold War to provide for mutual aerial observation. Hungary and Romania reached a bilateral "open skies" agreement in the early 1990s.

gument by tracing the origins and evolution of U.S. policy on military transparency in the late 1940s and early 1950s. It recounts the diplomatic history of the original Open Skies proposal, focusing on the crucial period of 1955–1957 when the United States (with Great Britain, Canada, and France) and the Soviet Union exchanged and debated a number of options. The article concludes by discussing how this argument applies to the U.S. revival of Open Skies in 1989.

The account here probes more deeply than others have into the nature and politics of the original Open Skies proposal. It takes a comprehensive look at what I call the U.S. Cold War transparency policy in the confidence-building context. The essay identifies the origins of this policy in the late-1940s and traces its evolution through the 1950s. It stresses the political and strategic rationale for Open Skies that is spelled out in NSC 112 of 1950. Also, unlike other essays on this topic, it extends the diplomatic history on Open Skies beyond the 1955 Geneva summit to include meetings of foreign ministers and debates and policy proposals introduced in the United Nations (UN) Disarmament Commission through 1958. It also is one of the few studies to explore Soviet thinking and proposals for aerial observation and inspection. Much of the Open Skies literature essentially ignores Soviet initiatives altogether, and little of it cites Soviet sources.

Transparency and International Relations

Transparency is widely recognized as essential to international cooperation.[4] Institutionalism (or regime theory) explores how states, acting as rational egoists, exchange information to facilitate cooperation under anarchy. The systems of transparency built into international agreements help states monitor each other's compliance and protect themselves should others defect.[5] Collective security theory maintains that peaceful cooperation is possible when states move from the "self-help" world of power politics by banding together to form security communities. Collective security organizations enhance transparency and promote peace because the extensive consultations they produce enable status-quo states to signal their peaceful intentions. Transparency

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4. For a diverse set of studies of transparency and international relations, see Finel and Lord, eds., *Power and Conflict in the Age of Transparency.*

5. A fine example of institutionalist thinking about transparency is Abram Chayes and Antonia Handler Chayes, *The New Sovereignty: Compliance with International Regulatory Agreements* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), esp. pp. 135–153. Robert Mitchell's scholarship in this tradition is unique because transparency itself is his subject. See Robert Mitchell, "Sources of Transparency: Information Systems in International Regimes," *International Studies Quarterly,* Vol. 42, No. 1 (March 1998), pp. 109–130.

also strengthens collective security because technological innovations in information-gathering make it difficult for revisionist states to conceal their aggressive aims.[6] The democratic peace literature, which points out that liberal democratic states do not go to war with one another, explains this phenomenon in part by highlighting the openness of foreign policymaking in liberal democracies, especially the United States.[7] Constructivism considers how social or non-material factors in international relations affect the goals and interactions of states. Constructivists argue that norms such as transparency help to shape the national security interests and identities of states independent of the material power they bring to bear in their relations with one another.[8] Even "optimists" among contemporary realists have some positive things to say about transparency. Some maintain that when the military balance favors the defense, states are generally secure and therefore more open about foreign policy matters.[9] Others argue that transparency reduces uncertainty about motives and enables security-seeking states to avoid conflict with one another and check the aggressive ambitions of revisionist states.[10]

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6. The role of transparency in collective security regimes is best illustrated in Charles A. Kupchan and Clifford Kupchan, "Concerts, Collective Security, and the Future of Europe," *International Security,* Vol. 16, No.1 (Summer 1991), pp. 114–151, esp. 125–137. Robert Jervis applies transparency to the operation of the Concert of Europe in Robert Jervis, "From Balance to Concert: A Study of International Security Cooperation," in Kenneth A. Oye, ed., *Cooperation under Anarchy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 58–79.

7. Charles Lipson attributes the democratic peace to "secure contracting" between democracies. He theorizes that democratic states enjoy distinct advantages in extending and carrying through on their commitments. Among the internal attributes of democracies that make them "reliable partners" in the pursuit of mutually beneficial relationships is their "high transparency." See Charles Lipson, *Reliable Partners: How Democracies Have Made a Separate Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), esp. chs. 1, 4. For a similar argument using game theory, see Jeffrey M. Ritter, "Know Thine Enemy," in Finel and Lord, eds., *Power and Conflict in the Age of Transparency,* pp. 83–113.

8. Ann M. Florini considers transparency an emerging and consequential norm of international relations. She attributes its prevalence and social power in the international system to the presence of "norm entrepreneurs," namely, individuals or organizations that draw the attention of national policy elites to certain ideas and in a sense exercise the power of persuasion to affect policy change. The success of norms like transparency also depends on the "normative climate" of the international system, by which Florini means how a particular norm fits into the existing normative structure or the social relationships between states at any given time. Transparency, she asserts, is replacing sovereignty as a dominant norm in international politics. See Ann M. Florini, "Transparency: A New Norm of International Relations" Ph.D. Diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1996; Ann M. Florini, "The Evolution of International Norms," *International Studies Quarterly,* Vol. 40, No.3 (September 1996), pp. 381–386; Ann M. Florini, "The End of Secrecy," *Foreign Policy,* No. 111 (Summer 1998), pp. 50–63; and Ann M. Florini, *The Coming Democracy: New Rules for Running a New World* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2003), esp. pp. 32–40.

9. See Stephen Van Evera, *The Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), ch. 6.

10. Andrew Kydd, "Sheep in Sheep's Clothing: Why Security Seekers Do Not Fight Each Other," *Security Studies,* Vol. 7, No. 1 (Autumn 1997), pp. 114–154, esp. 128–139. According to Kydd, democratic states have special advantages over dictatorships insofar as their foreign policy-making processes are sufficiently open to provide a wealth of information to other states about their motives. Also, to the

Though influential, this literature has its shortcomings. It leaves us with the impression that the widespread sharing of information is common in world politics. In reality, institutionalized transparency is in limited supply, despite its oft-proclaimed virtues. Ronald Mitchell captures this paradox nicely: "[R]egimes can increase transparency by enhancing the incentives and capacity actors have to contribute to a particular regime's transparency, [but] the necessity for transparency has not been the mother of invention."[11] The notion that a "mutual veil dropping" among states has been under way since the end of the Cold War is also prominent in this literature. Transparency may be "the word of the moment," but the notion that it is a defining characteristic of post–Cold War world politics is debatable.[12] Furthermore, this literature almost uniformly views transparency as helping states to manage—and transcend—power politics under anarchy. The literature is largely silent about the relationship between transparency and the competition for security—and becoming a victim of it. This article explores transparency's "darker side."

Confidence-Building

The conventional wisdom about transparency as a confidence-building measure is that building trust through the exchange of information is like climbing the rungs of a ladder.[13] Information exchanges at low rungs produce a degree of confidence between states about each other's intentions, enabling them to progress to higher rungs of the ladder and gain greater confidence. This process may continue until each side is convinced that the other means

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extent that democracies are security-seekers and disinclined to engage in militarized disputes, transparency enables them to communicate their peaceful preferences.

11. He continues: "[F]or all its nominal importance to regime success, many regimes fail to induce adequate transparency. . . . [G]overnments regularly fail to provide the timely and accurate reports mandated by most security, human rights, and environmental treaties. Nor do governments usually allow international organizations or other actors to collect independent information on treaty-relevant behavior." Mitchell, "Sources of Transparency," pp. 109–110.

12. See William Safire, "On Language: Transparency, Totally," *The New York Times,* 4 January 1998, Sec. 6, p. 4.

13. Although the literature is vast, confidence-building theory is a work in progress—three decades after the first agreement on confidence-building measures (CBMs) was reached between East and West in Helsinki, Finland. CBM theory is practically non-existent. Moreover, proponents of CBMs disagree about key issues. Some assert that CBMs made an important contribution in reducing East-West tensions during the Cold War. Others are considerably more cautious, asserting only a causal relationship between CBMs and improved East-West relations. A comprehensive assessment of CBMs—in theory and practice—is found in Michael Krepon, Michael Newbill, Khurshid Khoja, and Jenny S. Drezin, eds., *Global Confidence Building: New Tools for Troubled Regions* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999). For a thoughtful critique of CBMs, see Marie-France Desjardins, *Rethinking Confidence-Building Measures,* Adelphi Paper No. 307 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1996).

no harm. Because this form of security cooperation proceeds in stages, it helps to protect each side in the event of cheating by the other. Over time, as states move away from competitive military policies, they can more easily regulate the levels of their armaments. Confidence-building is often referred to as "pre-arms control" because it fosters the mutual trust needed for far-reaching arms control agreements.

Confidence-building theory is derived from the spiral model of international conflict that depicts arms races and war as consequences of the anarchic structure of the international system.[14] The lack of a supranational authority generates a security dilemma, as one state's efforts to enhance its security have the effect of jeopardizing the security of rival states, whose subsequent efforts to regain security undermine the security of the first state.[15] This dilemma sets in motion a "spiral of hostility," as each state assumes the worst about the other's intentions. Misperceptions can complicate the spiral by causing each state's leaders to develop hostile images of the other state and interpret the other's actions as intentional rather than structural (i.e., the result of anarchy). The spiral model suggests that if states want to reduce the risk of war, they should refrain from pursuing military superiority over their neighbors and take concrete measures to signal their benign intentions.

Confidence-building measures (CBMs) are often seen as an important if modest first step toward the spiral model's call for policies of restraint and reconciliation. In the words of Jonathan Alford, a pioneer thinker in this area, CBMs constitute a "small crack of light [that] is allowed to penetrate the curtain of secrecy" surrounding the security policies of states.[16] CBMs fall into several categories. Informational or general transparency measures require states to publicize information about their military capabilities, defense budgets, and arms imports and exports. Consultative measures are meant to facilitate dialogue between states to prevent conflicts or to reduce the risk of armed hostilities in the event of a crisis. Notification measures oblige states to inform others about their plans to conduct certain military activities. Constraint measures discourage or prohibit states from engaging in certain kinds of activities, such as large troop maneuvers in border areas. Access measures give states the opportunity to monitor each other's activities and verify compliance with constraint CBMs or to visit each other's military installations. Confidence-building measures—whatever form they take—are "intended in the

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14. For an explanation of the spiral model, see Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), ch. 3.

15. On the logic of the security dilemma, see Robert Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics,* Vol. 30 , No. 2 (January 1978), pp. 167–214.

16. Jonathan Alford*, The Future of Arms Control, Part 3: Confidence Building Measures,* Adelphi Paper No. 149 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1979), p. 7.

first instance to contribute to the flow of information about the armed forces of participating countries, increasing visibility and diminishing secrecy of routine military activities, thus providing participants with assurance that preparations for attack are not under way."[17] Transparency is integral to confidence-building.

Realism and the Limits of Transparency

Realist theory helps to fill some serious gaps in our thinking about transparency and CBMs as a form of security cooperation. Realists see world politics as inherently conflict-ridden. They claim that the anarchic structure of the international system has a profound effect on state interactions.[18] In the absence of a supranational authority that can enforce international rules and punish transgressions, states must rely on their own capabilities to ensure their survival. In this self-help world, states provide for their security through external balancing (the formation of alliances) and internal balancing (the buildup of military forces), or some combination. Because military forces can be used for aggressive as well as defensive purposes, states view each other with considerable fear and suspicion. They normally dismiss each other's declarations of peaceful intent and focus instead on the ability of others to inflict serious harm. The mutual distrust spawned by this uncertainty exacerbates the security dilemma and sometimes leads to war.

Structural realists highlight the impediments to security cooperation under anarchy—impediments that have important implications for transparency and arms control.[19] One such impediment is relative-gains considerations. States' willingness to cooperate will be affected by their judgments about the likely distribution of gains from cooperation. Efforts to control weaponry are highly unlikely if one state expects that the limits will result in a negative shift in the balance, leaving it relatively worse off than its adversary.[20] A second impediment is the concern states have about each other's compli-

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17. Quoted in Chayes and Chayes, *The New Sovereignty*, pp. 146–147.

18. On the structural realist paradigm, see Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

19. For a jaundiced view of international institutions and cooperation, see John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Winter 1994–1995), pp. 5–49.

20. Structural realism's focus on relative gains is at odds with the logic of absolute gains implicit in institutionalism. A thorough debate on the relative-gains question is found in David A. Baldwin, ed., *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993). Institutionalists do not reject relative-gains considerations. Their optimism about cooperation stems from their assertion that many instances of cooperation, including security cooperation, are governed by absolute-gains considerations.

ance with international agreements. That cheating is possible and, more importantly, may go undetected, limits the scope of cooperation to situations in which compliance can be easily and closely monitored and defection can be quickly identified. The problem with cooperation is that gains considerations and the transparency necessary for effective compliance with agreements work at cross-purposes. Each state seeks to maximize the amount of information it obtains about its potential adversaries and minimize the information it reveals about itself, placing the onus of transparency on its rivals. States' willingness to open themselves to outside scrutiny rarely satisfies the compliance demands placed on them by others.

Moreover, because states in an anarchic world are wont to assume the worst about each other's intentions, they must carefully take account of their rivals' military forces. Hence, structural realists are skeptical about transparency CBMs as a worthwhile form of security cooperation.[21] The exchange of information about military matters may help states safely navigate crisis situations and avoid war, but it does not change the fundamental assessments each makes of the external threat environment. Furthermore, even if states are interested in promoting transparency, they do so with an eye toward obtaining strategic advantages over their adversaries. But because other states fear that they will be taken advantage of in this way, they resist their rivals' self-serving transparency initiatives. Structural realists therefore expect that transparency and CBMs, if agreed to at all, will permit only a very limited degree of outside scrutiny of military matters and will do little if anything to reduce tensions and build trust. Moreover, by producing "winners and losers" in the exchange of information, transparency has implications for the distribution of power.[22] Consequently, institutionalized transparency is bound to be limited by states' caution about the security implications of the disclosure of military information.

Structural realism focuses on the system-level forces that limit transparency in international politics, but it does not claim to account for the particularities of state behavior, such as why some states promote international transparency while others do not. Neoclassical realism, in contrast, does take account of factors at the "unit" level (i.e., the level of a state) to explain a

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21. To the extent that the security dilemma can be managed at the system level, however, some theorists influenced by structural realism assert that international politics is not as competitive as it is generally made out to be. Charles L. Glaser, a "security optimist," is an offense-defense theorist in the realist tradition. He does not look favorably on the role of international institutions in promoting cooperation, but he says that states selectively employ transparency as a mechanism to signal their commitment to the status quo. See Charles L. Glaser, "Realists as Optimists: Cooperation as Self-Help," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Winter 1994–1995), pp. 50–90.

22. For an overview of transparency's relationship to power politics and international conflict, see Finel and Lord, "Transparency and World Politics," pp. 339–365.

state's foreign policy behavior. Neoclassical realists such as Gideon Rose accept structural realism's claim that relative material power "establishes the basic parameters of a country's foreign policy," but they contend that power capabilities "must be translated through intervening variables at the unit level."[23] Unit-level analysis makes it possible to distinguish between power and threat. Neoclassical realists agree with the structural realists that power is important, but they believe that states' intentions and preferences also matter. This strand of realist scholarship helps explain why liberal democratic states like the United States value transparency in their internal affairs and why this preference plays itself out differently on the international scene. Working in the realist tradition, I trace the origins of U.S. transparency policy, describe the purpose of this policy in U.S. Cold War statecraft, and show how calls for greater openness were affected by the U.S.-Soviet security competition. This episode demonstrates that transparency as a confidence-building measure is of limited use as a model of security cooperation between rival states.

Transparency at Home: Securing Public Confidence

Transparency is an American value. It is embedded in the liberal principle of checks and balances limiting the power exercised by the government. With power divided among various institutions, the government's actions are subject to public scrutiny, and the potential for abuse of power is mitigated. Transparency is also a reflection of the democratic principle of popular sovereignty—the notion that the people have the right to know what their government is doing and why.

The American system of government is designed to prevent the abuse of power. The "invitation to struggle" among various centers of power, especially the legislative and executive branches of government, is the core of James Madison's "republican realism." Madison and other Framers regarded checks and balances and the First Amendment right to a free press as prerequisites for open government. Not until the twentieth century, however, did transparency emerge in the United States as a deliberate means of securing public confidence in government and private enterprise. President Woodrow Wilson advanced his "New Freedom" program while condemning the widespread corruption of public officials. Describing publicity as "one of the purifying elements of politics," Wilson called for party primaries to replace backroom deals among party bosses as the means of selecting candidates for public

23. Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," *World Politics,* Vol. 51, No. 1 (October 1998), p. 146.

office.[24] He also demanded that congressional hearings be made public, and he sought to extend publicity to private enterprise. A series of scandals that resulted in heavy financial losses to investors prompted Wilson to unveil an ambitious legislative agenda for the public regulation of the securities industry. "When you offer the securities of a great country to anybody who wishes to purchase them, you must open that corporation to the inspection of everybody who wants to purchase," he declared. "If we believe that fraud lies in wait for us, we must have the means of determining whether our suspicions are well founded or not."[25] In the decades that followed, Louis Brandeis, who with Wilson's backing became a Supreme Court justice in 1916, distinguished himself through his advocacy of federal public disclosure laws for private enterprise. "Publicity is justly commended as a remedy for social and industrial diseases," he once wrote. "Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants; electric light the most efficient policeman."[26] His legal opinions helped establish the principle of corporate accountability.

Landmark legislation in the twentieth century was inspired by this notion of transparency. The Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 vastly improved congressional oversight of the executive branch. A bill in 1970 with the same name encouraged open committee meetings and mandated the publication of roll-call votes. The original Freedom of Information Act of 1966 (and subsequent revisions of it over the years) gave citizens the right to petition the government for the release of classified information and led to the establishment of non-profit organizations dedicated to making freedom of information requests. Most recently, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, inspired in part by fraudulent reporting of corporate profits by Enron, Adelphia, and other firms, is meant to protect equities investors by requiring corporations to disclose greater information. Transparency in the United States has its limits, but government efforts to conceal information often undermine public confidence.[27] The philosopher Jeremy Bentham long ago pointed out that publicity gives democracies "a strength, a hardihood, and a reputation which . . . render [them] superior to all the dissimulations of [governments that operate by

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24. Woodrow Wilson, *The New Freedom: A Call for the Emancipation of the Generous Energies of a People* (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1918), p. 115.

25. Ibid., p. 22.

26. Quoted in Mary Graham, *Democracy by Disclosure: The Rise of Technopopulism* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2002), p. 1.

27. Executive privilege is one example of government secrecy. The president may have compelling reasons to invoke executive privilege, argues Mark J. Rozell, but it undermines popular sovereignty by shielding the activities of the president and his administration from legitimate public scrutiny. See Mark J. Rozell, *Executive Privilege: The Dilemma of Secrecy and Democratic Accountability* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994).

'secret policy'].”[28] Bentham also argued that democracies are inclined to promote publicity in their foreign relations.

Transparency in Reassuring Allies and Coercing Adversaries

The role of transparency in U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union was strikingly different from its role at home. The geostrategic situation after World War II was unprecedented. At no other time in modern history had a single country emerged from a major war with such a preponderance of military and economic power.[29] The United States had an interest in preserving its dominant position in the world. Although U.S. policymakers sought to advance this goal, they did not forcibly impose a *Pax Americana* on the world. Instead, they sought to preserve power by “lock[ing] in a set of institutions that would serve [U.S.] interests well into the future.”[30] This strategy was influenced by core values that reflected the American polity and mirrored what G. John Ikenberry describes as the “decentralized and pluralistic character of the United States government—which rendered it relatively transparent and open.”[31]

This arrangement, however, met with mixed results. Within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), it institutionalized a new level of accountability and provided reassurance to the militarily weak democracies in Europe about the nature and purpose of American power. The United States agreed to exercise strategic restraint and commit itself to acting multilaterally—that is, through open international institutions—and, in return, the other NATO states accepted U.S. leadership. Because the Western democracies were already comfortable with open government, the promotion of greater transparency among NATO members was not in itself problematic.

U.S. transparency policy toward the Soviet Union took a different tack altogether. Initially, the United States made overtures to the USSR similar to those made to the Western powers. U.S. policymakers sought Moscow's support for an institutional arrangement that would forestall a nuclear arms race. The 1946 Baruch Plan, calling for the creation of an international Atomic Development Authority (ADA) to control resources and research related to

28. Cited in Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar and Robert J. McCarthy Jr., “Panopticism and Publicity: Bentham's Quest for Transparency,” *Public Culture,* Vol. 6, No. 3 (Spring 1994), p. 558.

29. G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 163.

30. Ibid., p. 164.

31. Ibid., p. 165.

nuclear explosives, would have compelled the Soviet Union to relinquish its sovereignty in this area to the ADA. The United States, which had already tested nuclear weapons and used them twice in the war against Japan, would have followed suit, but only after the ADA had certified that a potential Soviet nuclear weapons program had been eliminated. The Soviet Union objected to various aspects of this plan, not least the stringent and lopsided transparency provisions. Moscow's rejection of the proposal contributed to the growing sense among U.S. officials that the Soviet Union would challenge U.S. preponderance rather than coming to terms with it as the West Europeans had. In the years that followed, U.S. proposals for institutionalized transparency were largely subsumed by the logic of containment, not reassurance.

Different attitudes toward open government contributed to mutual suspicions between the United States and the Soviet Union. U.S. officials regarded the "veil of secrecy" around Soviet domestic and foreign affairs as a telltale sign of the duplicitous nature of the Soviet regime. U.S. leaders also speculated that the relatively open foreign policymaking process in the United States put it at a strategic disadvantage vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. The USSR, for its part, lacked any tradition of open government and was deeply suspicious of U.S. proposals for greater transparency.

The Rising Soviet Threat and the Origins of U.S. Cold War Transparency Policy

The origins of Open Skies can be traced to the late 1940s, when the U.S. national security community tried to specify the conditions under which the United States might cooperate with the Soviet Union on security matters. U.S. policymakers were not optimistic about the prospects for security cooperation. The now-famous appraisal of the Soviet threat by the National Security Council (NSC) in 1950, in a secret report known as NSC 68, concluded that the Soviet Union harbored hostile intentions and sought global hegemony through worldwide revolution and expansion. The authors of NSC 68 believed that Soviet leaders were aggressively developing military capabilities, including nuclear weapons, to carry out their plan for world domination: "[W]hen it calculates that it has sufficient atomic capability to make a surprise attack on [the United States], nullifying our atomic superiority and creating a military situation decisively in its favor, the Kremlin might be tempted to strike swiftly and with stealth," possibly as early as 1954.[32] NSC 68 warned

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32. "A Report to the President Pursuant to the President's Directive of January 31, 1950, NSC 68," in U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government

that the Soviet Union, even if it sought negotiations with the United States, would in all probability behave in bad faith and seek advantages. "For this reason," it declared, the United States "must take care that any agreements are enforceable or that they are not susceptible of violation without detection."[33] The document stressed that the "opening up of the Soviet Union [is not] compatible with the maintenance of the Soviet system in its present rigor" and that Soviet leaders therefore would eschew any proposal to subject Soviet territory to international inspection.[34] To meet the rising Soviet threat, NSC 68 called on the United States to enhance its military capabilities and readiness. From a position of strength, the United States could stand ready to negotiate agreements with the Soviet Union that would yield strategically advantageous outcomes, frustrate Moscow's worldwide ambitions, and promote fundamental change in the Soviet system. NSC 68 thus regarded Soviet secrecy as a threat to U.S. security, and it viewed openness as a means of countering the Soviet threat.

NSC 112 and the Control of Armaments

U.S. policy on military transparency was detailed in NSC 112.[35] A derivative of NSC 68, NSC 112 stipulated that mutual disclosure of military information and independent verification of the accuracy of that information were prerequisites for arms control agreements with the Soviet Union. It outlined a multi-stage observation and verification scheme, beginning with the exchange of "less sensitive" military information such as conventional force levels. In this early stage, the United States would obtain new information about Soviet military matters, whereas the Soviet Union would not acquire much new information about U.S. forces. The report attributed this discrepancy to the fundamental nature of each state's social system: Whereas routine military matters in the United States were already in the public domain, those same matters in the Soviet Union were kept secret. The document warned that the United States should resist the disclosure of "more sensitive information," especially regarding nuclear weapons technology and the designs of new conventional and nuclear weapons. In addition to preserving U.S. military ad-

Printing Office, 1976), 1950, Vol. I, p. 266 (hereinafter referred to as *FRUS,* with appropriate year and volume numbers).

33. Ibid., p. 274.

34. Ibid., p. 270.

35. "Report to the National Security Council by the Secretaries of State and Defense: Formulation of a United States Position with Respect to the Regulation, Limitation, and Balanced Reduction of Armed Forces and Armaments," 6 July 1951, in *FRUS,* 1951, Vol. I, pp. 477–497.

vantages, the proposed multi-stage disclosure and verification scheme would serve an important political goal: Calls for military transparency would demonstrate U.S. interest in arms control and discredit Soviet proposals for "general and complete" disarmament—proposals that in the late 1940s and early 1950s were at best vague about transparency.

In 1951, President Harry Truman unveiled an arms control plan drawn from NSC 112 that called for a multi-stage inventory of armed forces and armaments, including observation flights, prior to the initiation of arms control talks. "This is the first essential, on which all else depends," he said in a radio address to the American people. "Unless this first step is taken, no real progress can be made toward regulating and reducing armaments."[36] Soviet leaders were cool to Truman's plan, and the subsequent lack of progress on arms control in the Disarmament Subcommittee of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) convinced some U.S. officials to reevaluate their arms control policy. Benjamin Cohen, the U.S. ambassador to the UN, persuaded Truman to establish an independent panel that would recommend changes to NSC 112. Some panelists argued for greater U.S. flexibility. Assistant Secretary of State John Hickerson suggested that the Truman administration should modify its strategy along the lines proposed by the French, who wanted to pair disclosure and verification with arms reductions in three separate stages. By shifting to this approach, Hickerson said, the United States would be in a much better position to counter Soviet allegations that the U.S. objective was simply to obtain intelligence information, rather than build confidence and reduce armaments. J. Robert Oppenheimer, a special scientific adviser to the president, wanted the United States to disclose "certain less sensitive information" unilaterally in order to reassure Soviet leaders that they were not being exploited.[37] The confidence that might result, he argued, would pave the way for bold mutual information exchanges and eventually for deep arms reductions. Secretary of State Dean Acheson even proposed that the United States consider committing itself to the continuous, progressive disclosure and verification of information on nuclear energy prior to the negotiation of a general agreement on international control of nuclear weapons.[38]

The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) cautioned against greater flexibility

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36. "Radio and Television Report to the American People on International Arms Reduction, November 7, 1951," in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Harry S. Truman, 1951* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965), pp. 625–626.

37. "Minutes of Meeting of the Secretary of State with the Panel of Consultants on Disarmament," 28 April 1952, in *FRUS,* 1952–1954, Vol. II, p. 906.

38. "Memorandum by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense (Lovett)," 30 April 1952, in *FRUS,* 1952–1954, Vol. II, pp. 927–931.

and held fast to NSC 112. They especially objected to Acheson's plan, arguing that the disclosure of information about nuclear matters would have a negative impact on the U.S.-Soviet military balance. JCS Chairman Omar Bradley informed Secretary of Defense Robert Lovett in April 1952 that "from the military viewpoint, it would be most unwise for the United States to make a further addition to . . . growth in Soviet military knowledge by agreeing to exchange with the Soviet Union complete data on the design and fabrication of atomic weapons." By turning over this information, Bradley warned, the United States "would be giving up far more than it could hope to receive in return." The exchange "might well have the effect of advancing the date when the Soviet Union would be capable of approaching atomic parity with the United States."[39] Lovett reflected this same thinking in a memorandum to Acheson arguing that NSC 112 should be regarded as a "political expedient."[40] No change in U.S. transparency policy resulted from the review.

The Origins of Open Skies

Disarmament discussions in the early 1950s set the stage for Open Skies. A U.S. working paper presented in April 1952 to the UNDC,[41] one of the first policy documents drawn from NSC 112, declared "extensive aerial reconnaissance" a first step in the disarmament process and essential to verification.[42] Later that year, the United States submitted two disarmament proposals to the UNDC—one for conventional arms and one for nuclear arms.[43] Both plans envisaged international inspectors who would have at their disposal a variety of means, including aerial surveys, to verify that states had declared all of their military installations. The plans also called for a five-stage process of disclosure and verification, starting with exchanges of general information

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39. Ibid., p. 929.

40. "The Secretary of Defense (Lovett) to the Secretary of State," 21 May 1952, in *FRUS,* 1952–1954, Vol. II, p. 941.

41. For a brief overview of the origins and mandate of the Disarmament Commission, see United Nations, *Yearbook of the United Nations, 1952* (New York: Department of Public Information, 1953), p. 42.

42. "United States Working Paper Submitted to the Disarmament Commission: Proposals for Progressive and Continuing Disclosure and Verification of Armed Forces and Armaments," 5 April 1952, in U.S Department of State, *Documents on Disarmament, 1945–1959,* Vol. 1 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1960), p. 350.

43. See "Disclosure, Verification, and Inspection of Armaments: Proposal Submitted by the United States Delegation to the United Nations Disarmament Commission," 5 April 1952, in U.S. Department of State, *American Foreign Policy, 1950–55: Basic Documents,* Vol. 2 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1957), pp. 2750–2759.

about military establishments and moving toward "an effective system of pro-gressive and continuing disclosure and verification of all armed forces and ar-maments, including atomic." Only in an "open world," the document said, could peace-loving states be assured that they would not face immediate threats of external aggression.[44]

In May 1955 the foreign ministers of the Western powers—Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, and French Foreign Minister Antoine Pinay—met to consider British Prime Min-ister Harold Macmillan's call for a high-level multilateral summit to consider ways of reducing East-West tensions and to discuss key points of contention, notably the status of Germany and arms control. Britain and France had been calling for such a meeting for some time, and the decision to move forward with it followed the Soviet Union's transmission earlier that month of a new disarmament proposal to the UNDC's disarmament subcommittee.[45] The most significant aspect of the new plan was its call for a system of interna-tional inspection more comprehensive in scope than in earlier Soviet and Western arms control proposals. In the two stages of disarmament envisaged by the plan, the parties would begin by reducing their conventional military forces (to a total of 1.5 million men in arms for the United States, the Soviet Union, and China; and 650,000 for Britain and France), freeze military ex-penditures at current levels, and report to the UNDC complete figures on the sizes of armed forces and overall annual military expenditures. In the second stage, states would cease their production of nuclear weapons and take mea-sures to limit their use of nuclear materials for peaceful purposes. They would also complete the arms reductions agreed to in the first stage, close their mili-tary bases on the territory of other states, and set up an "international control organ" that would conduct ground inspections to verify each state's compli-ance with arms reduction agreements and to monitor the day-to-day military activities of states.

This Soviet plan came in response to a request by the Western powers for the Soviet delegation to clarify its government's positions on the control of conventional forces and international inspection. In June 1954 the British and French governments submitted a disarmament proposal to the subcom-mittee calling for the complete prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and

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44. "Essential Principles of a Disarmament Program: Proposal Submitted by the United States Dele-gation to the United Nations Disarmament Commission," 24 April 1952, in *American Foreign Policy, 1950–55,* Vol. 2, p. 2760.

45. "Soviet Proposal Introduced in the Disarmament Subcommittee: Reduction of Armaments, the Prohibition of Atomic Weapons, and the Elimination of the Threat of a New War," 10 May 1955, in *Documents on Disarmament, 1945–1959,* Vol. 1, pp. 456–467.

other weapons of mass destruction, deep reductions in conventional armaments, and the establishment of an inspection system to verify the compliance of states with agreed force levels. Over the next twelve months, the Soviet Union's support for the Anglo-French plan waxed and waned. After initially rejecting the plan, Soviet leaders in September 1954 authorized the chief Soviet delegate to the UN General Assembly, Andrei Vyshinskii, to express Moscow's willingness to negotiate a disarmament agreement with the West based on the Anglo-French memorandum. The Soviet Union backed away from the plan a second time in February 1955, only to embrace it again at the subcommittee's meeting on 10 May 1955. British and French officials responded quite favorably to the May proposal and persuaded a skeptical U.S. government to invite the Soviet Union to formal talks exploring the conditions for a possible settlement. Soviet leaders quickly accepted the offer, and the first postwar meeting of top leaders since Potsdam in 1945 was set for July 1955 in Geneva.

U.S. and Soviet Preparations for the Geneva Summit

Going into Geneva, the United States and the Soviet Union differed sharply in their views of military transparency and its place in East-West security cooperation. The U.S. approach reflected the basic guidelines set forth in NSC 112. The Truman and Eisenhower administrations believed that the exchange of military information should precede arms control negotiations and include an aerial observation regime as a CBM to reduce fears of surprise attack. The Truman administration believed that the Soviet Union's failure to embrace this approach had "lengthen[ed] the shadow of war"[46] by giving the impression that it had something to hide. Soviet leaders, for their part, argued that if transparency had any place in the larger context of security cooperation, it should follow the start of arms reductions and be limited to ground inspections. Soviet officials claimed that if observation flights began before the start of arms control talks, this would actually increase tensions and the danger of military conflict by allowing states to acquire information about the military vulnerabilities of their neighbors. The Soviet Union also maintained that the U.S. call for transparency and confidence-building was a "gigantic intelligence and espionage operation bearing no relation to disarmament" and a thinly-veiled effort to divert attention from Moscow's goal of the elimination of nu-

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46. "Address by the Secretary of State before the General Assembly (Excerpts)," 20 September 1950, in *American Foreign Policy, 1950–55: Basic Documents,* Vol. 1, p. 171.

clear weapons and deep reductions in conventional armaments.[47] The Geneva summit did little if anything to change these views.

Eisenhower asked the NSC staff to devise the U.S. delegation's position for Geneva.[48] But the NSC was divided on the question of security cooperation. The JCS questioned the Soviet Union's commitment to peace and doubted that the 10 May proposal would amount to anything. The Joint Chiefs urged Eisenhower to resist arms control talks and to undertake a sustained military build-up. Eisenhower expressed some sympathy with this view. He shared the Joint Chiefs' suspicions about Moscow's apparent change of heart on security cooperation. But because he believed that Soviet leaders did not want war, he maintained that the United States should be prepared to reach a settlement at Geneva, even if such an outcome seemed unlikely. Other senior officials, including Secretary of State Dulles, who initially had expressed serious reservations about a summit, backed the president. Although the NSC could not find common ground, it agreed on one point: "The 'Iron Curtain should be cracked.'"[49]

A proposal put forward for Geneva at Eisenhower's request by Harold E. Stassen, the president's adviser on arms control, called for the establishment of an "International Armaments Commission" to conduct inspections of suspected nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons sites, including by air.[50] But Eisenhower's most influential counsel proved to be the Quantico Vulnerabilities Panel. The president had established this group of experts several months earlier to assess U.S. vulnerability to surprise attack. Although the panel did not have a formal role in the administration's preparations for the Geneva summit, it decided to put forward its own proposal.[51] The panel recommended that Eisenhower call for mutual aerial observation of military installations as a precursor to arms control talks, describing this approach as a "win-win" proposition for the United States. If the Soviet Union agreed to it, the United States would obtain valuable information about Soviet military capabilities and activities, and the inspections would also demonstrate to the USSR the vast U.S. military arsenal, thereby deterring Soviet aggression. If, on the other hand, Soviet leaders rejected the proposal (as was expected), at

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47. "United States Efforts toward Disarmament," in *American Foreign Policy, 1950–55: Basic Documents,* Vol. 2, p. 2778.

48. "Discussion at the 254th Meeting of the National Security Council," 7 July 1955, Folder 2, Box 7, National Security Council Series, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Papers, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library (DDE Library).

49. Prados, "Open Skies and Closed Minds," p. 220.

50. Ibid., pp. 218–219.

51. For a detailed and illuminating account of the panel's backdoor role in devising the U.S. strategy for Geneva, see Cary Reich, *The Life of Nelson Rockefeller: Worlds to Conquer, 1908–58* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), pp. 577–608.

least the United States would achieve a propaganda victory and give credence to its charges that the Soviet Union was not serious about arms control, a result that would facilitate a U.S. build-up.[52] The failure of discussions and the subsequent onset of a major arms race, the panel concluded, "could create conditions for victory in the cold war" because the Soviet Union would eventually come to realize that it could not afford an all-out arms race and could not prevail in a general war.[53] This outcome, in the panel's view, would in turn produce fundamental change in Soviet foreign policy, thereby vindicating the U.S. containment strategy. The panel conceded that its characterization of Soviet ambitions might turn out to be incorrect, but it argued that, on grounds of prudence, the administration should proceed as though it were accurate. The president welcomed the report and embraced the panel's recommendations.[54] In public, however, Eisenhower denied that Open Skies had been proposed in order to discredit Soviet peace gestures.[55]

The Soviet Union entered the summit determined to drive a wedge between the Western allies. Domestic politics played a major role in Soviet diplomacy during this time. Vladislav Zubok describes Soviet leaders as caught in a dilemma between their desire to abandon Stalin-era policies and pursue new directions in domestic and foreign policy and their determination to preserve the gains achieved by Josif Stalin.[56] The tension between change and continuity in the spring of 1955 fueled a political struggle between hardliners like Vyacheslav Molotov and reformers like Nikita Khrushchev, who supported a more flexible approach to East-West relations. Having achieved the Austrian State Treaty and the rapprochement with Yugoslavia in May 1955, Khrushchev outflanked Molotov and emerged by the summer of 1955 as the dominant figure in Soviet foreign policy. He did not promote fundamentally new thinking in Soviet foreign policy but merely sought new approaches that might help reduce international tensions.

Deborah Welch Larson maintains that for several years after Stalin's death in March 1953, the Soviet Union intermittently sought ways to reduce East-

52. "Letter From the Chairman of the Quantico Vulnerabilities Panel (Rostow) to the President's Special Assistant (Rockefeller). Summary of Recommendations: Quantico Vulnerabilities Panel," in *FRUS,* 1955–1957, Vol. V, pp. 216–220.

53. "Letter from the Chairman of the Quantico Vulnerabilities Panel (Rostow) to the President's Special Assistant (Rockefeller)," 10 June 1955, in *FRUS,* 1955–1957, Vol. V, p. 217.

54. "Letter to Nelson Rockefeller from President Eisenhower," 5 August 1955, Folder 2, Box 1, Container 11, Dwight D. Eisenhower Series, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Papers, DDE Library.

55. "Reply Made by the President to a Question Asked at a News Conference," 30 April 1958, in U.S. Department of State, *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1958* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1962), p. 1382.

56. Vladislav M. Zubok, "Soviet Policy Aims at the Geneva Conference, 1955," in Bischof and Dockrill, eds., *Cold War Respite,* pp. 55–74.

West tensions, notably by signing the Austrian State Treaty and withdrawing Soviet forces from Austria.[57] In Larson's view, Soviet leaders were pursuing a strategy of conflict management later dubbed the Gradual Reduction in Tension (GRIT). GRIT, originally known as the Graduated and Reciprocated Initiatives in Tension Reduction, requires one side to take a set of publicized, moderately risky, unilateral actions in the hope of inducing the other side to take similar reciprocal steps. GRIT is intended to foster trust between rivals and provide the foundation for improved relations and more substantive forms of cooperation.

By all indications, however, the Soviet delegation was unprepared to take a dramatic step to break the deadlock on disarmament. The Soviet Union was emboldened by its recent diplomatic successes and by improvements in its nuclear forces, but it remained fearful of U.S. intentions, including the prospect of a preventive war. This concern colored Soviet perceptions of U.S. aims at Geneva. A Soviet Foreign Ministry report prepared for the Soviet delegation warned that the United States would seek to embarrass and take advantage of the Soviet Union.[58] Moreover, Khrushchev realized that the Soviet proposal to scale back conventional forces in Europe and allow international inspectors into the Soviet Union was a non-starter because it linked these measures to nuclear disarmament and limited inspections, which were unacceptable to the United States. Zubok dismisses the notion that the Soviet Union was pursuing GRIT and attributes the Soviet peace offensive of the early 1950s to domestic politics, not new thinking.[59]

Eisenhower's Proposal for Mutual Aerial Observation

The Geneva summit convened on 18 July 1955. Eisenhower focused his opening remarks on the urgent need to reduce international tensions. At the plenum on disarmament several days later, he declared the arms race both a cause and an effect of existing tensions and linked arms reductions with mili-

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57. See Larson, "Crisis Prevention and the Austrian State Treaty."

58. A memorandum prepared by the Soviet Foreign Ministry added, "On the possible positions of Western powers on the main international issues at the upcoming [Geneva] meeting . . . [the U.S. delegation] is not interested in the success of the conference. . . . It only wants that the representatives of the Western powers, having put forth at the conference proposals that would be unacceptable for the USSR but advantageous in the propagandist sense, would try to shift to the Soviet Union responsibility for the absence of settlement of the crucial international questions and for the continuation of the 'cold war,' thereby creating more propitious conditions for realization of American military political plans." Zubok, "Soviet Policy Aims at the Geneva Conference," pp. 70–71.

59. Vladislav M. Zubok, "Soviet Intelligence and the Cold War: The 'Small' Committee of Information, 1952–53," CWIHP Working Paper No. 4 (Washington, DC: Cold War International History Project, December 1992).

tary transparency. He argued that the prospects for arms control would be enhanced by dependable ways of supervising and inspecting military establishments. The problems facing the world, he declared, could not be solved "under conditions of fear, distrust, and . . . hostility, where every move [by one state] is weighed in terms of whether it will help or weaken a potential enemy." The president called on the two sides to "give each other a complete blueprint of our military establishments, from beginning to end, from one end of our countries to the other . . . to provide within our countries facilities for aerial photography to the other country, [and thereby] . . . convince the world that we are providing . . . against the possibility of great surprise attack, thus lessening danger and relaxing tension."[60] He deemed his plan a necessary first step on the road to disarmament and lasting peace. But in private correspondence after the speech, he asserted that the prospects for peace would remain dim so long as the Soviet Union remained hostile to the West and sought to advance its goal of world domination through military and nonmilitary means.[61]

Soviet Premier Nikolai Bulganin, the nominal head of the Soviet delegation, also addressed the importance of building trust on both sides. He repeated his government's 10 May proposal for deep arms reductions coupled with limited ground inspections and described Eisenhower's plan as intriguing, assuring him that it would be given close consideration.[62] Khrushchev was less cordial, arguing that Open Skies was a ruse and that U.S. insistence on unfettered observation flights without any link to arms reductions rendered the plan nothing more than an espionage plot against the USSR. He suggested other, less risky ways of building confidence, such as exchanges of military officers.[63] Table 1 and the accompanying map show the different aerial observation plans put forward during this time.

After the summit, Eisenhower publicly downplayed Khrushchev's reaction to Open Skies but privately voiced concern that the proposal might be of little value if it appeared to the rest of the world that the United States devised it as a mere "propaganda show."[64] At Dulles's initiative, the NSC staff drafted

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60. "Statement on Disarmament Presented at the Geneva Conference," 21 July 1955, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1955* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), p. 715. For the president's account of the Geneva Summit see Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change: The White House Years, 1953–1956* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1963), ch. 11.

61. "Letter to General Gruenther from President Eisenhower," 25 July 1955, Folder 2, Box 4, Dulles-Herter Series, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Papers, DDE Library.

62. "Telegram from the Delegation at the Foreign Ministers Meeting to the Department of State," 11 November 1955, in *FRUS,* 1955–1957, Vol. V, p. 744.

63. "Memorandum of the Conversation at the Buffet, Palais des Nations, Geneva," 22 July 1955, in *FRUS,* 1955–1957, Vol. V, p. 480.

Table 1. East-West Proposals for Aerial Photography, 1955–1958

| Date	Proponent(s)	Geographic Scope	Relationship to Disarmament
June 1955	USA	Entirety of USA and USSR	First step toward the improvement of East-West relations
March 1956	USA	Limited area of USA and USSR, including one naval installation and one military base on each side, in conjunction with ground inspections	First step toward the improvement of East-West relations
November 1956	USSR	800-mile zone in Central Europe, from the inter-German border, in conjunction with ground inspections	Experimental component of a general disarmament agreement
April 1957	USSR	Two inspection zones: (1) In Europe (as noted above) and portions of the western USSR, in conjunction with ground inspections (2) western USA including all of Alaska, and eastern USSR, in conjunction with ground inspections	Part of a general disarmament agreement, to be put into full operation in the latter part of the disarmament process
August 1957	USA, UK, France, Canada	Double Option: (1) all of USA, USSR, and Canada; *or* Arctic Circle, Alaska, and Siberia; (2) Europe, including European USSR	First step toward the improvement of East-West relations
April 1958	USA	Arctic, including Alaska and Siberia	First step toward the improvement of East-West relations
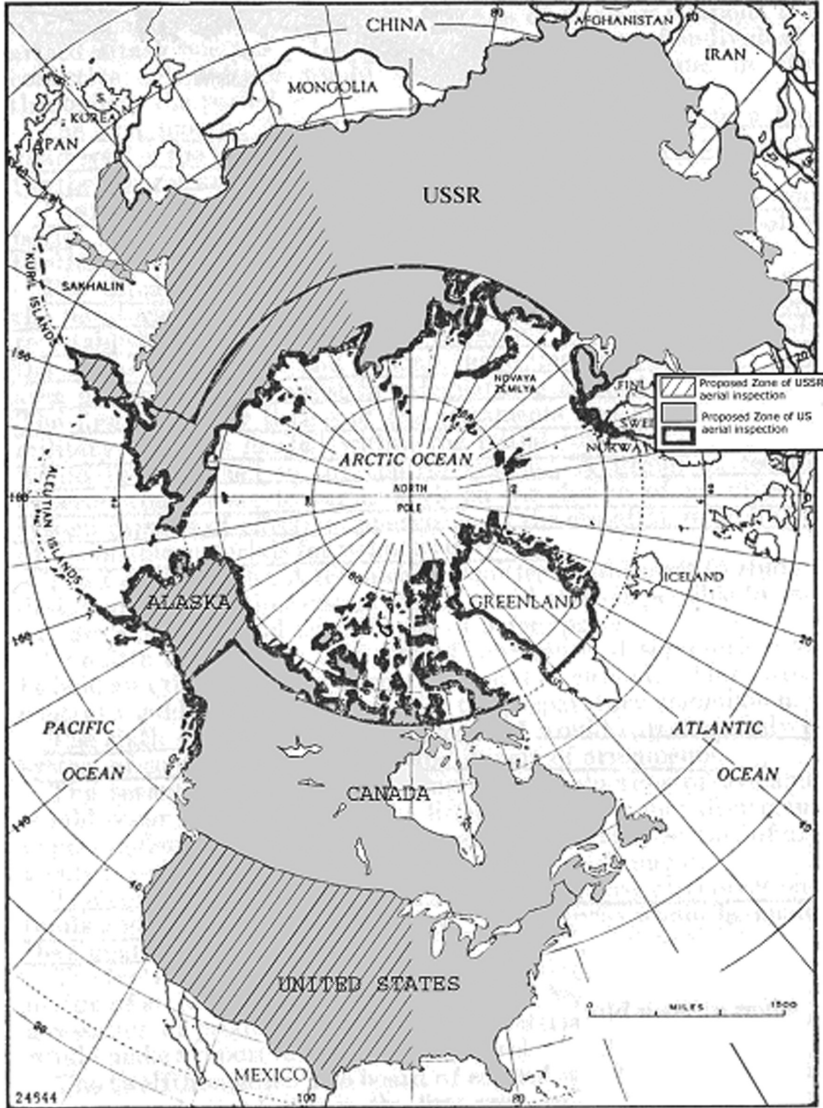
Fig. 1. Map of East-West Proposals for Aerial Photography, 1955–1958 Source: U.S. Department of State, Historical Office, Bureau of Public Affairs, *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1957* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 1323.

a letter to Soviet leaders elaborating Eisenhower's plan. Unlike Eisenhower's official remarks at Geneva, the letter explicitly stated that Open Skies would not include the exchange of information on nuclear weapons facilities.[65] According to Anatolii Dobrynin, who later served as Soviet ambassador to the United States, Khrushchev proposed calling Eisenhower's bluff on the matter, but other Soviet leaders warned against it.[66] "The Soviet reaction to Open Skies," Zubok observes, "was of course justified by the existing rules of the Cold War: The United States would have gained from aerial intelligence much more than the Soviet Union" would have.[67]

The Geneva summit revealed that both sides were interested in some form of cooperation to build trust, but the Open Skies proposal and the Soviet response to it underscored the barriers to meaningful cooperation. The U.S. and Soviet delegations arrived at Geneva expecting little by way of progress on tension reductions and intent on undermining the other's proposals.

The Aftermath of the Geneva Summit

In the fall of 1955 the four foreign ministers reconvened in Geneva to give further consideration to the issues raised at the July summit. Talks on disarmament made little headway. Dulles reiterated the U.S. position that progress on arms control required a thorough accounting of conventional military capabilities and activities. But in a bow to the Soviet position, he suggested that the Open Skies plan, together with Bulganin's proposal for ground inspections, was one way to achieve this goal.[68] This combined system, he said, would allay mutual suspicions and reduce tensions by denying a potential aggressor the opportunity to initiate a devastating surprise attack.[69]

Molotov rejected Open Skies, arguing that an aerial observation regime prior to serious arms control would increase rather than decrease tensions by

64. "Memorandum of Conversation with Governor Stassen," 13 October 1955, Box 1, Memos of Conversation (3), General Correspondence Memoranda Series, Secretary of State: Papers, 1951–59, John Foster Dulles, Eisenhower Papers, DDE Library.

65. "Memorandum of Discussion at the 256th Meeting of the National Security Council," 28 July 1955, in *FRUS,* 1955–57, Vol. V, p. 532.

66. Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence: Moscow's Ambassador to Six Cold War Presidents* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), pp. 37–38.

67. Zubok, "Soviet Policy Aims at the Geneva Conference, 1955," p. 73.

68. "Telegram from the Delegation at the Foreign Ministers Meetings to the Department of State," 12 November 1955, in *FRUS,* 1955–1957, Vol. V, p. 750.

69. "Reply Made by the President (Eisenhower) to a Question Asked at a News Conference," 12 August 1959, in U.S. Department of State, *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1959* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), p. 1379.

placing each side under "constant threat" of attack.[70] He maintained that the ground inspection plan announced on 10 May would build East-West trust and that Open Skies would be more appropriate in the final stages of disarmament—not as a precursor to it.[71]

UN Meetings of 1956

Sessions of the UN Disarmament Subcommittee in 1956 began where the two Geneva meetings left off.[72] Although the two sides still held contrasting views, they offered new proposals that kept discussions alive. The U.S. delegation called for the establishment of an Open Skies "demonstration test area" that would include aerial observation of one naval installation, one air field, and one military base, supplemented by ground inspections as suggested earlier by Dulles. U.S. delegates also proposed the immediate exchange of technical missions to study arms control verification, advanced notification of troop movements, and the implementation of a multi-step plan for comprehensive disarmament, including limits on nuclear weapons tests.[73] The U.S. ambassador to the UN, Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., pressed the Soviet delegation on military transparency, insisting, as Dulles had in 1955, that aerial observations must precede arms control talks. In early October 1956, U.S. planes conducted test flights in Italy to demonstrate the utility of Open Skies.

The Soviet Union responded with a seven-point disarmament plan that included the establishment of an international inspection system with ground and aerial components. Although the Soviet delegation continued to object to

70. "Statement by Foreign Minister Molotov," 10 November 1955, in U.S. Department of State, *Geneva Meetings of Foreign Ministers, November 1955* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), p. 181. Soviet leaders also speculated that U.S. interest in Open Skies reflected a desire to launch a surprise attack against the Soviet Union. As Marc Trachtenberg demonstrates, the Eisenhower administration gave serious consideration to a preventive war option but ultimately settled on an assertive containment strategy. See Marc Trachtenberg, *History and Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), ch. 3.

71. "Telegram from the Delegation at the Foreign Ministers Meetings to the Department of State," November 10, 1955, in *FRUS,* 1955–57, Vol. V, pp. 744–746.

72. *Yearbook of the United Nations, 1956* (New York: United Nations, 1957), pp. 96–105.

73. "Working Paper Submitted by the U.S. Representative to the Subcommittee of the U.N. Disarmament Commission," 21 March 1956, in U.S. Department of State, Historical Office, Bureau of Public Affairs, *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1956* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1957), pp. 883–884.

74. "Declaration of the Soviet Government Concerning the Question of Disarmament and Reduction of International Tension," 17 November 1956, *Department of State Bulletin,* Vol. 36, No. 917 (21 January 1957), pp. 90–93.

Open Skies, it proposed an experimental, 800-mile aerial observation zone in Europe—four hundred miles on either side of the inner-German border.[74] The U.S. delegation deemed the new Soviet plan inadequate because it neither accepted the idea of Open Skies as a first step toward arms reductions nor included Soviet territory. Eisenhower called the plan a "mirage," saying that it would not reduce fears of surprise attack.[75]

The 1957 London Meetings

A flurry of activity related to military transparency marked the UNDC Subcommittee's meetings in London in 1957, but an agreement remained elusive even though the distance between the two sides had diminished somewhat since Geneva. On 30 April 1957 the Soviet delegation presented a new disarmament plan that included mutual aerial photography and ground inspections.[76] The plan called for the opening of two inspection zones. One would include much of the area in Europe covered under the earlier proposal. The other zone would be considerably larger, covering areas in Alaska and the western half of the continental United States as well as the eastern third of Siberia from the 110th latitude (i.e., the Lake Baikal region just north of the Mongolian border) to the Bering Sea. The plan was new in accepting aerial observation of the Soviet Far East, but implementation was tied to progress on arms control. The Eisenhower administration rejected it, arguing that the size of the area proposed for aerial photography was not of "critical character." The administration downplayed the prospects of an agreement and stressed that great caution was needed when dealing with a country that had a "history of breaking treaties."[77] Dulles dismissed the Soviet plan as nothing more than a "diversionary exercise."[78]

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75. "Letter from President Eisenhower to Premier Bulganin," 21 October 1956, in *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1956,* p. 534–535.

76. "Memorandum Submitted by the Soviet Representative to the Subcommittee of the U.N. Disarmament Commission," 30 April 1957, in U.S. Department of State, Historical Office, Bureau of Public Affairs, *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1957* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1961), pp. 1241–1244.

77. "Replies Made by the President to Questions Asked at a News Conference," 8 May 1957, in *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1957,* p. 1248. U-2 flights, which had been underway for more than a year, had already yielded important information about the location and disposition of Soviet military installations in Central Asia and Western Siberia. These regions were not included in the Soviet Union's revised inspection plan.

78. "The Problems Involved in Establishing Inspection and Disarmament Zones as Part of a General Disarmament Agreement: Replies Made by the Secretary of State to Questions Asked at a News Conference (Excerpts)," 14 May 1957, in *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1957,* p. 1250.

In August 1957 the United States and its allies put forth a new plan of their own, a plan with several options.[79] One option was to permit aerial photography of the entirety of the United States, the Soviet Union, and Canada. Another option, if the Soviet Union continued to oppose the "broad plan," was to push for aerial photography of the lesser area comprising the Arctic Circle, Alaska, and much of the Soviet Far East. In either case, the Western allies would also agree to an aerial observation and ground inspection system in Europe, provided that this area included significant parts of the European USSR. The Soviet delegation rejected the Western proposal. "Given the gulf of mistrust and suspicions between the great powers," one Soviet delegate said, the Soviet Union would be "jeopardizing the vital interests of its national security" if it opened its territory to aerial photography prior to an arms deal.[80] Rejection of the proposal came a short time after the Soviet Union successfully conducted an intercontinental missile test, which prompted Eisenhower to label Soviet behavior as "deeply disappointing to all true lovers of peace."[81]

In April 1958 the United States offered yet another limited aerial observation plan—a plan involving aerial photography in the Arctic, including Alaska and the Kamchatka Peninsula and the Kurile Islands. These were the regions in which a surprise attack would likely originate.[82] This idea came in response to longstanding complaints by Soviet officials that their country was threatened by the U.S. bombers that regularly flew along its northern frontier. Dulles told the Soviet delegation that the United States kept its bombers in the air over the Arctic to prevent a surprise Soviet attack, not to initiate an attack against the USSR. An Arctic aerial observation zone, he declared, would "give assurance that there could not be any surprise attack or accidental attack."[83] He argued that if the U.S. plan were not accepted, fears of surprise attack would persist, and Western countries would conclude that Moscow's goal

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79. "System of Inspection to Safeguard against the Possibility of Surprise Attack: Working Paper of the Representatives of Canada, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States Read and Interpreted by the Secretary of State in His Capacity as Chairman of and U.S. Representative on the Subcommittee of the U.N. Disarmament Commission," 2 August 1957, in *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1957,* pp. 1296–1301.

80. "Statement Read by the Soviet Representative in the Subcommittee of the U.N. Disarmament Commission," 17 August 1957, in *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1957,* p. 1314.

81. "Statement by the President," 28 August 1957, in *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1957,* p. 1315.

82. "Letter to Nikita Khrushchev, Chairman, Council of Ministers, USSR," 28 April 1958, in *Public Papers of the Presidents: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1958,* pp. 350–351. For the text of the proposal, see "Draft Resolution Submitted by the U.S. Representative in the U.N. Security Council," 28 April 1958, in *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1958,* pp. 562–563.

83. "Address by the Secretary of State before the Atomic Power Institute, Sponsored by the New Hampshire Council on World Affairs," 2 May 1958, in *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1958,* pp. 30–31.

was to retain for itself the option of launching a surprise attack. The Soviet Union rejected the Arctic plan and reintroduced its April 1957 proposal for limited aerial observation, which the West again quickly rejected.[84]

Any remaining prospects for an aerial observation agreement were eliminated in May 1960 when, on the eve of a high-level summit in Paris, the Soviet Union shot down an American U-2 spy plane near Sverdlovsk. Khrushchev called the mission a "true bandit flight" meant to uncover Soviet military vulnerabilities and enable U.S. forces to launch a surprise attack.[85] After Eisenhower acknowledged that the U-2 was on a spy mission and not collecting weather data as initially claimed, he insisted that clandestine aerial reconnaissance of the USSR was essential to overcome Moscow's "fetish of secrecy and concealment"—the very thing that Open Skies was meant to alleviate. The president compared the closed nature of Soviet society to the openness of the United States: "We prefer and work for a different world. . . . Open societies, in the day of present weapons, are the only answer."[86] Eisenhower pledged yet again to raise Open Skies with Soviet leaders in Paris, but he never ended up getting that opportunity. Khrushchev stormed out of the news conference before the summit in protest over the U-2 incident. Not until the early 1970s did the two sides resume discussion of military transparency as a CBM—this time in the lead-up to the Helsinki accords.

Conclusion

U.S. proposals for the establishment of a system of mutual aerial observation with the Soviet Union were motivated in part by American democratic traditions. The principle that the people have the right to know what their government is doing has long been embedded in the American polity. U.S. foreign policymakers after World War II crafted a set of national security policy

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84. "Statement Made by the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs (Gromyko) at a News Conference, Moscow," 29 April 1958, in *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1958,* pp. 1380–1381; and "Letter from the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR (Khrushchev) to the President of the United States (Eisenhower)," 9 May 1958, in *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1958,* pp. 1386–1387.

85. "Address by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR before the Supreme Soviet of the USSR (Khrushchev)," 5 May 1960, in U.S. Department of State, Historical Office, Bureau of Public Affairs, *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1960* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1964), pp. 409–412.

86. "Presidential News Conference," 11 May 1960, in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1960* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 403–404. Ironically, a month before the Geneva Summit, a U.S. spy plane was shot down over Soviet airspace in the Bering Straits. The Eisenhower administration breathed a sign of relief when the Soviet government issued an apology and offered full reparations.

guidelines—as found in NSC 112—that emphasized transparency in international politics as a prerequisite for confidence-building. Yet calls for transparency in U.S. relations with the Soviet Union functioned quite differently from the principle of openness at home. U.S. transparency policy was aimed at discrediting Soviet peace overtures and possibly gaining a strategic advantage if the Soviet Union unexpectedly agreed to Open Skies. It had no relation whatsoever to reassurance.

Indeed, the fate of Open Skies was determined by the U.S.-Soviet security competition. The U.S. plan sought to place the onus of transparency on the Soviet Union. Although the Eisenhower administration's description of the United States as "open" and the Soviet Union as "closed" was correct, these labels were meant to suggest something more significant—that U.S. intentions were benign and the USSR was duplicitous and aggressive. The possibility that insecurity might induce Soviet leaders to reject U.S. proposals was largely ignored. Many U.S. officials believed that the United States, because of its relative openness, was at a strategic disadvantage vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. NSC 112 therefore proposed a transparency regime that would give the United States the lion's share of future military information from exchanges, an idea embodied in Open Skies.

A system of aerial observation had the potential to make important contributions to confidence-building between the two countries. Despite the political and strategic machinations, Open Skies did generate a dialogue on security cooperation, and both sides proved willing to compromise. The Soviet Union tentatively consented to aerial observation, and the United States accepted the Soviet position that aerial observation should be limited. Yet the proposals put forth by both sides did not conform to the accepted logic of transparency as a CBM. U.S. officials saw Open Skies as a necessary first step toward arms control, but the aerial observation proposal could not bear the weight of the fear and distrust between Moscow and Washington. The United States could have pursued a more modest transparency scheme along the lines suggested by Khrushchev, such as the exchange of military officers and ground observation posts. This scheme over time might have generated the mutual trust required for more ambitious measures like aerial observation. A "go-slow" approach is what confidence-building theory would expect from U.S. calls for openness. Although Soviet leaders had reason to suspect that Open Skies might increase tensions, their insistence that Open Skies should be introduced only in the final stages of disarmament was untenable and was contrary to the logic of confidence-building (not to mention arms control verification).

Realist theory is useful in accounting for the original Open Skies proposal. Open Skies was a casualty of the intense U.S.-Soviet security competi-

tion, but it was also a peculiar creation of that competition, rooted in American political culture and transformed (in retrospect) into a blunt tool of U.S. Cold War statecraft.

The more recent success of the Open Skies treaty is not necessarily a vindication of the conventional wisdom on transparency and confidence-building. Some aspects of the record of the treaty's negotiation and implementation should give us pause.

First, the revival of Open Skies in 1989 and the subsequent negotiation of the treaty proved to be quite contentious, with the United States singled out at various junctures for conducting itself in a manner contrary to the spirit of openness, notably through its early opposition to the sharing of data with other states. Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Karpov spoke for the majority of delegates when he said that Open Skies would undermine trust rather than help to build it if, as the U.S. delegation insisted, states were not required to share with others the information they collected. With more than a hint of sarcasm he asked the U.S. delegation: "So, where is [the] openness?"[87]

Second, the signing of a final agreement took much longer—three years—than most national delegations had originally expected. Impasses in the negotiations certainly had something to do with this delay. So, too, did developments in Moscow, notably the failed coup against Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in August 1991. By 1995, all of the signatory states except Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus had ratified the treaty. The Ukrainian parliament voted it down in 1996 but ratified it in 2000. For a time, the Russian parliament refused to vote on the treaty but finally approved it in 2001. One reason for Russia's delay in approving the treaty was the view held by some legislators that Russia's national security had been jeopardized by NATO's move eastward, by the war in Kosovo, and by U.S. plans for ballistic missile defense. What finally convinced the Russian parliament to endorse the treaty was the Russian Defense Ministry's contention that Open Skies would improve Russia's military information about other states by twenty-five percent—compared to only one percent for the United States.[88]

Third, the notion that Open Skies today is a multinational, comprehensive observation regime that provides an unprecedented level of openness from Vancouver to Vladivostok is somewhat misleading. The skies are open,

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87. V. Shelkov, "Interview with Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister V. P. Karpov at the Ottawa Open Skies Conference," *Pravda* (Moscow), 4 March 1990, p. 6, trans. in U.S. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), *Soviet Union Daily Report,* 90/043, 5 March 1990, p. 1.

88. "Russian Parliament Committee Recommends Ratification of Open Skies Treaty," ITAR-TASS, 22 December 2000, trans. in FBIS, *Central Eurasia Daily Report,* 2000/1222, 22 December 2000, p. 7.

but they are not necessarily well traveled. For instance, the NATO member-states, now including former members of the Warsaw Pact and the three former Soviet Baltic republics, have pledged to forgo aerial observation flights over each other's territory. Consequently, the NATO states conduct nearly all of their active flights over Russia. Meanwhile, Russia flies almost exclusively over the territory of NATO member-states—mostly in Europe, with a handful of flights over the United States. In addition, whereas the number of flights Russia must accept has consistently been allocated fully to other state parties, flights over America have been similarly undersubscribed, at a rate of about 10 percent. Indeed, Russia and Ukraine are the only major state parties that fly America's skies.

On this same point, the various sensing technologies specified in the treaty for data collection hardly cover the full spectrum of those commercially available and currently in use by the United States and some other countries for satellite remote sensing. The same goes for the resolutions at which these sensing technologies can be used. At one level, these limitations make perfect sense: Because Open Skies is designed for confidence-building and not traditional intelligence-gathering, the data are meant to help states distinguish "a tank from a truck" as opposed to the specific characteristics of that tank. At another level, however, these limitations naturally compel one to question the relevance of the treaty in today's world.

Finally, the central irony of the Open Skies story was not fully appreciated by its proponents. During the early Cold War, when the U.S.-Soviet security competition was particularly acute, the voluntary disclosure of military information, including some form of mutual aerial observation, might indeed have helped to reduce tensions or at least abate the spiral of hostility between the two rivals. We will never know for sure. But despite all the talk about the potential security benefits of transparency, we do know that efforts to institutionalize openness were a dismal failure. In the completely transformed security environment of the post–Cold War world, a modest (some might say quaint) Open Skies agreement was negotiated and put into operation. The treaty was not what caused this transformation; instead, it was merely a beneficiary of it. In that sense, Open Skies was little more than a bellwether. Those who see systems of transparency as the answer to current-day competitions for security between bitter rivals in the Middle East, South Asia, or Northeast Asia are bound to be disappointed. They are drawing the wrong lesson from the Cold War and putting forth ad hoc explanations for the failure of the original Open Skies proposal (e.g., transparency was an idea whose time had not yet come) that gloss over the concrete factors dividing the United States from the Soviet Union. Their point of reference is the heady days that closely preceded and followed the collapse of East European Com-

munism and the Soviet Union itself—when the drafting of ambitious plans for a new, light-filled security architecture ensued. A close analysis of the original Open Skies proposal confirms that transparency in U.S. Cold War national security policy—and in the U.S.-Soviet security competition during the early Cold War—was not what it appeared to be.

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