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The Pizza Ad Guy Is Dead

9-12 minutes

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The guy [in that Pizza advertisement](#) is dead.



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His biggest mistake was his gullibility towards 'western' economist and leaders. It came at a catastrophic cost for the people in the former states of the Soviet Union. The Russians in general hated him for this. The 'western' leaders lauded him for what he has done for them.

Gilbert Doctorow has written a [decent obituary](#):

[H]istory is always being reinterpreted in light of current developments. As I commented in my interview, the achievements and failures of Gorbachev in power must now be

reevaluated in light of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, which is the largest and most dangerous military conflict on the European continent since 1945.

This war follows directly from the break-up of the Soviet Union, which Gorbachev failed to prevent, though he did his best.

Indeed, in the spring of 1991 he oversaw a referendum on the issue and won support from the population for continuation of the USSR. However, his playing off the right and left forces within the Politburo and within the Party at large over a number of years, the deceptions he practiced to get his way, finally caught up with him and laid the way in the summer of 1991 for the Putsch by rightists intent on restoring Soviet orthodoxy, which in turn so weakened Gorbachev that he was easily pushed aside by Boris Yeltsin. Destruction of the Union was Yeltsin's instrument for achieving the complete removal of Gorbachev from power and setting out on a course of economic reform and de-Communization that was anathema to the leaders of the more conservative Soviet republics.

...

I direct attention to Gorbachev's greatest failure which resulted not from the conspiracies of his compatriots but from his own peculiar naivete in his dealings with the United States, meaning with Reagan, with Bush and their minions. The man who had shown such cunning in outfoxing his Politburo colleagues was completely outfoxed by his American and European interlocutors. Had he been more cautious to protect Soviet-Russian interests, he would have demanded and likely received much better terms of compensation for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from all of Eastern Europe and disbanding the Warsaw Pact. Had he been less gullible and more realistic, he would have demanded written treaties setting in concrete the prohibition of NATO

expansion to the East and, or, he would have left Soviet garrisons in each of these states to ensure compliance. As it was, the Americans who gave him verbal assurances knew full well that they were meaningless and were perplexed at the Kremlin's failure to defend strategic national interests.

These are the sins which patriotic Russians hold against Gorbachev today, even as they acknowledge his astonishing feats in freeing Soviet citizens from the totalitarian yoke of the past through glasnost and perestroika.

Thirty five years ago Robert Scheer published a review of Gorbachov's Manifesto. *Consortiumnews* has [republished it](#). It helps us to understand why Gorbachev was gullible and failed:

When Mikhail S. Gorbachev comes to the United States next month for his summit conference with President Reagan, he will convey the main theme of this book: The Soviet Union is now in the grip of a new realism about its domestic crisis and world priorities.

His top foreign policy advisers are convinced that the "new thinking" of perestroika in foreign affairs has permitted a breakthrough on arms control beyond the signing of a ban on intermediate range nuclear force (INF) missiles. They speak openly of a dramatic deal to halve each side's strategic missile force in return for continued strict observance of the existing Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty.

...

Perestroika, or restructuring, as vividly and conversationally described in this remarkable manifesto, is based on a profound criticism of the "stagnation" of Soviet society and an insistence on radically reordering its essential economic mechanisms. But perestroika requires for its success a breeze of glasnost blowing through the country's stultified intellectual and political life.

...

The more dramatic changes revolve around the other magic word of Gorbachev's revolution: glasnost, or openness. [...]

The connection between glasnost and perestroika is [...] vital, Gorbachev writes: "Today our main job is to lift the individual spiritually, respecting his inner world and giving him moral strength." And, he adds, in italics no less, "in short we need broad democratization of all aspects of society."

That did not work well in the Soviet Union which had zero democratic traditions and none of the institutions that are needed to develop a real democracy.

Later Scheer comes to the international part of the Manifesto. He criticizes some of it to then write:

Basically, Gorbachev argues that the time of the Cold War is over and that the Soviet Union and the United States no longer have a military avenue for pursuing their differences. It is a point not very different than that made by President Richard M. Nixon in his book, "The Real Peace," which holds that war, either nuclear or conventional, isn't any longer an option: "Peace is the only option," Nixon wrote. Gorbachev puts it somewhat differently: "Having entered the nuclear age ... mankind has lost its immortality." He adds:

"Clausewitz's dictum that war is the continuation of policy only by different means, which was classical in his time, has grown hopelessly out of date. It now belongs to the libraries. ...

Security can no longer be assured by military means—neither by the use of arms or deterrence, nor by continued perfection of the 'sword' and 'shield.' Attempts to achieve military superiority are preposterous."

That belief was and is delusional. The U.S. did not swallow that

bullshit and, being rid of the former competing power, it proceeded to [menace the world](#) more than ever:

The United States has conducted nearly 400 military interventions since 1776, according to innovative research by scholars Sidita Kushi and Monica Duffy Toft.

...

Until the end of the Cold War, note Kushi and Toft, U.S. military hostility was generally proportional to that of its rivals. Since then, “the U.S. began to escalate its hostilities as its rivals deescalate it, marking the beginning of America’s more kinetic foreign policy.” This recent pattern of international relations conducted largely through armed force, what Toft has termed “kinetic diplomacy,” has increasingly targeted the Middle East and Africa. These regions have seen both large-scale U.S. wars, as in Afghanistan and Iraq, and low-profile combat in nations such as Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, and Tunisia.

From the abstract of the [published study](#):

According to MIP, the US has undertaken almost 400 military interventions since 1776, with half of these operations undertaken between 1950 and 2019. **Over 25% of them have occurred in the post-Cold War period.**

Those were 100 intervention after the cold war during which the U.S. tried to implement its policies by military means.

And Gorbachev had thought doing such "hopelessly out of date". His failure to understand that real power flows from the sword was a major defect in his thinking.

His belief was the reason why he fell for [sweet 'western' assurances](#) without making sure that they were enforceable. The current proxy war the U.S. is waging against Russia is a

direct consequence of this.

As such: Good riddance.

Posted by b on September 1, 2022 at 17:32 UTC | [Permalink](#)

Comments

it is easy to shit on gorbachev..... at the time he could be accused of being naive and idealistic, not recognizing the nature of his opposition..

in reading michael hudsons latest book, he basically suggests financial control is what is sought.. if you have that, you don't need to go to war... it seems that is what is at stake here at this moment... unfortunately neither gorbachev or a lot of ordinary people today see the extreme importance of this... there is always some evil lurking in the future... very few are capable of foreseeing it either...

Posted by: james | Sep 1 2022 17:46 utc | [1](#)

History is filled with tragic figures, Gorbachev was one. But when it comes to the USSR's dissolution, many are guilty, Lenin and Stalin foremost. So, there's lots of blame to be spread around, Gorbachev was just the easiest one to point out.

Soon, the Outlaw US Empire will be in worse shape than the former USSR, and who will be blamed for that result? As with the USSR, the list is long; but to be sure, whoever's POTUS will get the blame.

Posted by: [karlof1](#) | Sep 1 2022 17:54 utc | [2](#)

Lenin and Stalin found Russia a broken wreck and made it into the world's foremost power of its day. Gorbachev represented a political project which consciously sought to destroy that.

Posted by: Cesare | Sep 1 2022 18:14 utc | [3](#)

When the enemies of your country love you and the citizens of your country hate you, then what are you to your country? Gorbachev is unanimously sanctified in Western press while democratically elected Russian president Putin is vilified. No country needs weak and gullible leaders like Gorbachev. Good riddance indeed.

Posted by: xor | Sep 1 2022 18:15 utc | [4](#)

He who comes from the city hall is wiser. But: Gorbi was as drunk on the flash of the West media as Yeltsin was on vodka. All the prizes, the honors, the invitations.... Perhaps he was too vain where he was not clever enough.

Posted by: Dreigroschen | Sep 1 2022 18:16 utc | [5](#)