Praise for *Human Rights, Perestroika, and the End of the Cold War*

"In the summer of 1990, I heard Eduard Shevardnadze publicly credit the U.S. emphasis on human rights in bilateral relations as a major contribution to perestroika. Adamishin and Schifter, their foreign ministries' human rights "tsars" at the time, were less adversaries than they were colleagues in the cause of change in the Soviet Union. Their friendship and imagination regarding the bilateral relationship helped bring the leaderships of the United States and the Soviet Union into a disposition of comity during the Gorbachev years, without which the fall of Communism and the end of the Cold War might not have been nearly as gentle as it was. Their memoir is an important contribution to our understanding of the crucial events of 1987-1991."

—**Kenneth M. Jensen**, editor, *Origins of the Cold War: The Novikov, Kennan, and Roberts 'Long Telegrams' of 1946*

"This unique, joint memoir reveals a behind-the-scenes look at the U.S.-Soviet policymaking process at the end of the 20th Century. The authors provide a fascinating account of their roles in moving the issue of human rights up the foreign policy agenda."

—**Robert Kagan**, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

"Both authors were effective participants in the process and are, for me, the symbols of where our civilization must head if a civilized world is to be achieved."

—**Max M. Kampelman**, Counselor of the Department of State and Head of the U.S. Delegation to Negotiations on Nuclear and Space Arms with the Soviet Union, 1985-1989.

"In recounting the experience of the senior negotiators on one of the key issues that arose during the Cold War, the authors provide valuable insight into negotiations that have received relatively little attention as compared to those on arms control and geopolitical issues. Their comments are also very useful in combating some widespread misconceptions about the nature and achievements of Gorbachev's perestroika."

—**Jack F. Matlock, Jr.**, U.S. Ambassador to the USSR, 1987–1991

"Human Rights, Perestroika, and the End of the Cold War *represents a unique effort to combine Russian and American perspectives on the role of human rights in the U.S.-Soviet relationship at the end of the Soviet Union."*

—**Dimitri Simes**, The Nixon Center

"Of all the factors that led to the downfall of Soviet Communism and the end of the Cold War, the issue of human rights stands out. Human rights are the very antithesis of Communist ideology and practice, and sapped at their foundation. Adamishin and Shifter offer invaluable insights into how the softest of all elements of soft power triumphed over a regime built on force and fear. More than a study of recent history, this is a much-needed encouragement for all those who aspire to a world with a human face."

—**Dmitri Trenin**, Director of the Carnegie Moscow Center

Human Rights, Perestroika, and the End of the Cold War

HUMAN RIGHTS, PERESTROIKA, AND THE END OF THE COLD WAR

ANATOLY ADAMISHIN AND RICHARD SCHIFTER

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To Svetlana, quite obviously

—Anatoly Adamishin

To the memory of my mother, Balbina Schifter, whom I last saw in 1938, but whose teachings have guided my outlook on world affairs throughout my life

—Richard Schifter

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Foreword

Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev

This book by Anatoly Adamishin and Richard Schifter speaks about a time of major changes in the Soviet Union and in the world—a time when, as a result of joint efforts by states and citizens in the still divided world, confrontation between the East and the West came to an end, ridding mankind of the Cold War. The journey to that goal took, historically, very little time and was filled with extraordinary drama.

Of key importance in the interaction between the Soviet Union and the United States at that time were human rights issues. This book's authors were directly involved in that interaction and their account of its evolution, its complexities, and the obstacles that had to be overcome should be of interest and importance to historians and to those who want to learn from the lessons of that period.

I strongly recommend this book to the reader. As I do so, I would also like to share my thoughts about the role of human rights in the context of the problems and challenges that confront mankind in the twenty-first century.

Today, as before, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, whose sixtieth anniversary we celebrated in 2008, remains our lodestar. Its authors were able to concentrate in one document the key principles of a humane society that would ensure the dignity of every person. However, I think they fully understood that there is a distance between proclaiming the principles of human rights and implementing them in a complex and diverse world.

Movement in that direction is a difficult process with inherent contradictions. The practical realization of human rights was greatly advanced by popular movements that fought for civil rights, against racial discrimination, and against totalitarian and authoritarian regimes. Yet, in a world divided by ideological confrontation, the ideals of human rights were often put aside or distorted. A ruler who suppressed them would receive support from one or other of the world's superpowers if he or she qualified as "our son of a bitch." Human rights problems became weapons in propaganda wars, tools for making political capital, or levers for applying international pressure.

The changes that occurred in our country, in Europe, and in the world as a whole in the second half of the 1980s created a unique opportunity to put an end to the Cold War and to confrontation in various areas, including human rights. The intense effort undertaken in those years by reform-minded political leaders and diplomats is described in detail in this book. Its result

was not just the resolution of specific issues but also a new perspective on human rights.

In place of futile disputes about whether political or socioeconomic rights should take precedence, a new consensus began to emerge in the world, a consensus that recognized the interconnectedness of those rights and freedoms. In a way, it harked back to the concept voiced by Franklin D. Roosevelt, who proclaimed as fundamental not only the freedoms of speech and religion but also freedom from want and freedom from fear.

We had an opportunity to move toward those great goals together. This required a real transition from confrontation to cooperation and partnership, the erasing of old dividing lines and the prevention of the emergence of new ones—in short, a transition to a new international politic.

To our regret, this did not happen. The opportunities offered by the end of the Cold War were not seized.

Globalization, which could have brought billions of people closer together and opened the way to a common, humane, and dignified future, took a different course. Politicians proved unable to manage the process of globalization. The consequences of this failure can be seen in the widening gap between the rich and the poor; the global environmental crisis; the growing scale of terrorism; the failures of politics, particularly glaring in the cases of wars in Europe and the Middle East and genocide in Africa; and the real danger of a new arms race.

The current stalemate in world politics will be increasingly aggravated by the global financial crisis, which initially affected the world's economy but which is evolving into a political crisis both in individual countries and in international relations. In all likelihood, this crisis will deal a heavy blow to the rights of hundreds of millions of people, depriving them of any chance of breaking out of poverty and thus of access to the most basic human rights. Things could get even worse if efforts to end the crisis continue to focus on rescuing the pillars of the financial system rather than helping ordinary people—if we are left with a ruthless, cutthroat capitalism for the majority and a "socialist" welfare state for the rich.

We are now in the early stages of building a new financial and economic system. Which principles will form its basis? This is a question of crucial importance that will affect all areas, including the protection of human rights. Success will depend on how democratic this evolving process is, on whether it truly serves the entire international community, and, even more importantly, on whether it contains an ethical, moral core.

In the final analysis, the main challenge that we face is to build the human, moral factor into political, economic, and social architecture that must open the way to a life of dignity for all mankind in the foreseeable future.

This is a challenge not just for nation-states but also for the emerging global civil society and for the academic and media communities. We need a political, intellectual, and moral breakthrough. As in the years when we worked together to end the Cold War, we must again combine our efforts, transcending the stereotypes and barriers of misunderstanding and hostility inherited from the past and persevering on the road to our common future.

Foreword

George P. Shultz

On the afternoon of October 15, 1987, I was asked to be available for a phone call from Jerusalem. At 3:18 p.m., the call came through: "This is Ida Nudel. I'm in Jerusalem. I'm home." My eyes filled with tears, as they still do when I think of that moment. I had met with her in Moscow and worked on her case. She was strong and determined, but I saw no reason to believe that she might get a break. How did this happen and how was it that so many other Soviet Jews were allowed to emigrate? That is one of the key questions addressed in this book of seminal importance.

The authors of this book played a central role in the evolution of these important developments as they worked within the envelope provided them by President Ronald Reagan and General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev. I was proud to be a part of these efforts with my Soviet counterpart, Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze.

Ronald Reagan was a man of deep convictions that had formed in his mind well before he became president and that resonated with his strong gut instincts. As an Air Force officer, he had seen initial films of the Holocaust camps. He would never forget the images, and he saved the films for his own private collection so he would always be able to demonstrate what happened. There will inevitably be people, he knew, who might later question whether such horrors could be perpetrated by any human being. Reagan also held a long-standing belief that nuclear weapons were immoral and that their numbers should be reduced and, ultimately, eliminated. His convictions about nuclear weapons were another expression of his deep concern for human rights.

I saw his convictions vividly on display when, by the luck of a snowstorm that unexpectedly kept President Reagan and Nancy in Washington, my wife and I were invited to the White House for an informal supper. I could see the president's interest in direct and personal contact with the Soviet leadership and arranged a meeting between him and the Soviet ambassador, Anatoly Dobrynin, the following Tuesday. In almost two hours of talk about a wide range of issues, Ronald Reagan made clear that human rights and Soviet Jewry were at the top of his agenda. He pointed to the Pentecostals being sheltered from religious persecution in our embassy in Moscow as a glaring illustration of the problem. Let them emigrate, he emphasized. You won't

hear any crowing from me. Dobrynin and I made this our special project and, in the end, with strong help from Max Kampelman, we succeeded. When sixty Pentecostals were allowed to leave the Soviet Union for Israel, Ronald Reagan didn't crow. So our first deal with the Soviets was a human rights agreement, and the Soviets got the message that President Reagan cared about human rights in a nonpolitical way.

In the meantime, in my periodic meetings with Soviet foreign minister Andrei Gromyko both before and after the Pentecostal event, I would raise human rights as an important issue. Gromyko always diminished it as a "tenth-grade question." He regarded the issue as domestic and none of my business.

On October 22, 1984, the National Assembly of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry gave me an award for our efforts. I was honored but embarrassed. We had achieved very little. The situation of Soviet Jews remained, as I said, "very grim."

On March 10, 1985, General Secretary Chernenko died and I accompanied Vice President Bush to the funeral in Moscow. While there, we met with the new general secretary of the Communist Party, Mikhail Gorbachev. He told Vice President Bush that the Soviets respected "your right to run your country the way you see fit." He insisted that, in the same way, it was up to the Soviet people to make such decisions on behalf of the USSR. Vice President Bush assured Gorbachev that "we have no aspiration of dictating to the Soviets." But he immediately argued against the denial of Jewish emigration, the persecution of Hebrew teachers, and the treatment of dissidents such as Shcharansky, Sakharov, Begun, and Orlov, which he said violated the Helsinki Accords. Gorbachev flushed and offered to think about appointing rapporteurs on human rights to discuss the issue. Bush seized on the idea, and another small step was taken.

A few months later, Gromyko's tenure as foreign minister ended and he was replaced by Shevardnadze. Shevardnadze and I met for the first time in August 1985 in Helsinki. After a lengthy discussion of our broad agenda, with staff members present, we met privately. Once again, I raised the issue of human rights, telling him bluntly, "Until the Soviet Union adopts a different policy on humanitarian issues, no aspect of our dealings will be truly satisfactory, nor will your society be able to progress as it can and should." Shevardnadze's reaction was quite different from Gromyko's. He did not respond in a hostile fashion, but merely smiled and asked whether, on the occasion of our next meeting, he should talk about "U.S. unemployment and blacks."

Then in November 1985 came a big event: the first summit meeting, held in Geneva, between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev. There we not only made significant progress on arms control issues but also, and more importantly, changed the atmosphere of U.S.-Soviet relations.

On February 11, 1986, Anatoly Shcharansky crossed the Glienicke Bridge to West Berlin as part of a carefully crafted deal that carried no implication that he was a spy. That deal demonstrated that we could bargain successfully with the new leadership.

We made another deal under tense circumstances in September 1986, after the Soviets arrested Nicholas Daniloff, a reporter they had entrapped to exchange for a Soviet scientific attaché named Zakharov. We secured Daniloff's freedom, the freedom of Yuri Orlov and his wife, and a promise by Shevardnadze that he would work on getting other dissidents and refuseniks released. Zakharov, after pleading nolo contendere to a charge of receiving classified documents, returned to the Soviet Union. Shevardnadze followed through over the next year; all the people on a list I had given him were released or pardoned. Perhaps the biggest bonus from this exercise was the increased trust it created between Shevardnadze and me.

Then came the extraordinary meeting between Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev on October 11–12, 1986, in Reykjavik, Iceland. While no full agreement was consummated there, great progress was made on major arms control issues, and the prospect of a world free of nuclear weapons was seriously discussed. Not so well noticed was the agreement by the Soviets, achieved in an all-nighter by Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs Roz Ridgway, to make human rights a recognized and regular part of our agenda.

Under the new Soviet leadership, relations between the United States and the Soviet Union began to improve significantly. Progress was made in our discussions of arms control and there were reports of a loosening of totalitarian controls in the Soviet Union. In December 1986, Andrei Sakharov, who had been exiled from Moscow, received a telephone call from Gorbachev telling him that he could return to Moscow. It seemed that Margaret Thatcher had been right when she said, even before Gorbachev became general secretary, that one could "do business" with him.

It was against the background of these developments that I prepared for my April 1987 trip to Moscow. I wanted to get into deeper discussions with Gorbachev and Shevardnadze about the shape of the future. Our assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs, Dick Schifter, was a member of the delegation that joined me on this trip. At my very first meeting with Shevardnadze following my arrival in Moscow, I asked that he appoint a counterpart for Dick Schifter who would be authorized to discuss human rights issues with him. It was my hope that by moving from generalities to specifics, by getting into a discussion of concrete issues and cases, we might be able to begin to solve the problems of individual victims of repression. Shevardnadze agreed and, as it turned out, he selected a person he trusted, Deputy Foreign Minister

Anatoly Adamishin, to meet with Dick and initiate a goal-oriented human rights dialogue.

On the evening of April 13, 1987, I went to the U.S. ambassador's residence, Spaso House. Everything was ready for the Passover seder. The fancy ballroom had been transformed into a warm and welcoming sanctuary. Dozens of the most famous Jewish refuseniks were there. I put on a yarmulke, met them all, and then said exactly what all of us felt:

> You are on our minds; you are in our hearts. We never give up, we never stop trying, and in the end some good things do happen. But never give up, never give up. And please note that there are people all over the world, not just in the United States, who think about you and wish you well and are on your side.

Their determination amazed me. We held the seder to encourage them, but I realized that they had given me far more strength and resolve than I could possibly have given them.

Then Schifter and Adamishin went to work. This dialogue between diplomats produced concrete results: an end to abuse of psychiatry, the release of political prisoners, the repeal of laws restricting freedom of expression, an end to the repression of religion, and a fundamental shift in the laws and regulations that governed emigration. These changes in Soviet policy significantly helped not only to improve U.S.-Soviet relations, but also to bring greater freedom to the citizens of the Soviet Union.

Understandably, these vitally important details could not be focused upon in meetings of heads of government or in ministerial meetings. That is why it was necessary to set up a working group of experts in the field of human rights to parallel the working groups that focused on arms reduction. What was important was that those entrusted with the task of carrying the human rights dialogue forward knew precisely what was expected of them by their respective superiors and that they were committed to reaching their respective government's policy goals. As Dick notes in this book, his good relationship with me enabled him at a certain point to overcome a bureaucratic obstacle that had been placed in the way of attaining one of my major policy objectives, the adoption of the CSCE Vienna Concluding Document.

Questions have been raised from time to time as to whether personal relationships of U.S. presidents or secretaries of state with governmental counterparts may thwart the attainment of policy goals that are in our national interest. As history has shown, the personal relationships that developed between President Reagan and President Gorbachev, and between me and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze (as distinct from my relationship with Gromyko), set the tone as Cold War tensions gradually eased. But to benefit fully from these momentous events, we had to defeat the devils that are so often in the details. As this book shows, that is what was accomplished as a

result of the personal relationship established between Anatoly Adamishin and Richard Schifter in their effort to resolve the key human rights issues that had stood in the way of better relations between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The net result of the close working relationships that had been established at all levels was a feeling of mutual trust. That feeling of trust laid the foundation for increasingly close cooperation on issues of democratic governance and the rule of law. In the years that followed, for example, reciprocal visits played an important role. U.S. judges would travel to the Soviet Union and participate in seminars with Soviet judges. Soviet judges, in turn, came to the United States to visit U.S. courts and observe the proceedings there, including the role played by juries. So better understanding was achieved in both countries, with the benefits spread widely.

This book has much to tell us about the way the Cold War ended, the power of diplomacy, and how diplomatic partnerships help effect profound political changes peacefully. We would not have the opportunity to ponder the important lessons this volume offers were it not for the United States Institute of Peace and its president, Richard Solomon, who granted Ambassador Adamishin a Jennings Randolph Fellowship that allowed him to come to the United States, where he worked with Dick Schifter on the manuscript. Their collaboration was essential to the production of this book.

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Timeline, 1981–1991

January 1981: Ronald Reagan is sworn in as president of the United States.

July 1982: George Shultz takes office as secretary of state.

November 1982: Leonid Brezhnev, general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, dies and is succeeded by Yuri Andropov.

July 1983: The Siberian Seven—Pentecostal Christians who had taken refuge in the U.S. embassy in Moscow—are allowed to leave the Soviet Union.

February 1984: General Secretary Andropov dies and is succeeded by Konstantin Chernenko.

March 1985: General Secretary Chernenko dies and is succeeded by Mikhail Gorbachev.

July 1985: Eduard Shevardnadze succeeds Andrei Gromyko as Soviet foreign minister.

November 1985: A summit meeting is held in Geneva between Reagan and Gorbachev.

November 1986: Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) follow-up meeting convenes in Vienna.

December 1986: Gorbachev calls Andrei Sakharov and tells him that he may return to Moscow from his exile in Gorky.

January 1987: A substantial number of political prisoners are released from the gulag penal labor camps and return home. The first slight increase since 1981 is noted in the number of Soviet exit permits issued.

April 1987: A U.S. delegation, led by Secretary Shultz, visits Moscow. Shultz and Shevardnadze agree on a human rights dialogue. Anatoly Adamishin and Richard Schifter have their first meeting.

September 1987: A ministerial meeting is held in Washington between Shultz and Shevardnadze. Detailed discussions take place between Schifter and Yuri Reshetov, Adamishin's assistant. Significant progress is made on the rules governing the issuance of exit permits; the Soviet representatives assure their American counterparts that the abuse of psychiatry has been ended.

December 1987: A summit meeting is held in Washington; the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty is signed.

September 1988: Adamishin and Schifter meet in Milan and discuss steps to be taken to conclude the Vienna CSCE meeting, including agreement on a Moscow human rights conference to be held under CSCE auspices.

November 1988: Schifter visits Moscow, carrying personal instructions from Shultz making it clear that Shultz wants the Vienna meeting to be concluded successfully during his term in office, noting that the Soviet Union has made significant progress in dealing with human rights issues, and asking for modest but concrete steps to be taken in the human rights area so as to make possible an agreement on a concluding document.

December 1988: Gorbachev addresses the UN General Assembly, committing his country to democracy and respect for human rights and noting that political prisoners have been released.

January 17, 1989: The CSCE's Vienna concluding document is adopted, calling for a CSCE human rights conference in Moscow and the prompt start of negotiations on a treaty on conventional forces in Europe. In the eyes of many observers, the Cold War comes to an end.

January 20, 1989: George H. W. Bush is sworn in as president of the United States and appoints James Baker secretary of state and Brent Scowcroft as national security adviser. The new administration begins a reappraisal of U.S.-Soviet relations.

March–April 1989: Soviet Union conducts free elections for the Congress of People's Deputies; many officially backed candidates are defeated.

August–December 1989: The Communist dictatorships in the junior members of the Warsaw Pact come to an end.

December 1989: Bush and Gorbachev hold a summit meeting in Malta.

March 1990: Lithuania declares its independence from the Soviet Union.

October 1990: German reunification takes place.

December 1990: Shevardnadze resigns as Soviet foreign minister.

August 1991: Leaders of the Soviet Army, police force, and KGB fail in their effort to take control of the Soviet Union.

September–December 1991: The central government of the Soviet Union gradually disintegrates.

December 1991: Gorbachev resigns and the Soviet Union comes to an end.