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More Urgent than Ever: Gorbachev's Message for the World

Launch of Book on His "Essential Thoughts" Aims to Inspire a New Generation of Global Citizens to Tackle Nuclear and Climate Challenges

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A new book on Mikhail Gorbachev's world-changing achievements is being released just as one of his crowning contributions, the INF nuclear weapons treaty, is being undone by both Russian and US withdrawal. *Mikhail Gorbachev – Essential Thoughts: Learning from the Man who Changed the World* highlights his vision, spirit and achievements.

The release of advance copies is timed to pay tribute to the impact of the former Soviet leader on his 88th birthday, on 2 March.

The Doomsday Clock, measuring how close the world is to destruction, was recently set at two minutes to midnight, the closest it has been since it was started in 1947 – mainly because of threats from nuclear weapons and climate change. But in 1991, when Gorbachev stepped down as president of the Soviet Union, the world was the farthest away from “apocalypse” in its history.

This new book reveals, in a concise form, the ideas and ideals that made such a great change possible — the groundbreaking thinking and vision that guided Mikhail Gorbachev. It also offers Gorbachev's insights into how each of us can help turn the Doomsday Clock back again - by restoring humanist values and personal responsibility as the foundations of global politics.

“New Thinking” for a New Time

“My most urgent message is that it is time for every person and every nation to rethink their role in global development,” the new volume quotes Gorbachev. “Everyone needs to be involved. Everyone has a role to play. And it is the personal involvement of each and every individual that will allow a new civilization to flourish on Earth.” It also cites his words: “Today it is my dream that every aware citizen should be ‘a president of the Earth’ and take responsibility for its fate upon himself or herself.”

The majority of texts in this book are selected from Mikhail Gorbachev's books, speeches, letters and interviews, some never before available in English. Commentaries from contemporaries and historians related to Gorbachev and his work are added to give additional historical context and understanding of the Soviet leader's impact. The book is richly illustrated with historic photographs that offer further glimpses into the personality of this fascinating world figure.

The original English version will be released on May 7 by Wisdom-Light Publications, based in Nurnberg, Germany, and can be preordered on Amazon. A Russian translation will be released later in the year.

Insight for Current Challenges

The book focuses attention on the historic action that Gorbachev took, with Ronald Reagan and George Bush, in significantly reducing nuclear weapons – action now being reversed by both sides. It cites his thinking: “It is my firm belief that the infinite and uncontrollable fury of nuclear weapons should never be held in the hands of any mere mortal ever again, for any reason.”

The volume also highlights Gorbachev's thinking underpinning his groundbreaking role in the global environment movement and early action on climate change, which is threatening today's world more than ever. He is quoted: “I believe that the environmental challenge is the number one problem on the [international] agenda. If we don't succeed, then no theory, no system will matter, all the current disagreements will seem like peanuts compared to the destructive impact of the conflict between man and his environment.” He adds, “We need a new global consciousness, an environmentalization of consciousness” and says, “I propose a new motto: “We are one Mankind, we are one Planet!”

The book's editor, Michael S. Karlen of Switzerland, has selected text passages from many books to shed light on a number of current challenges such as the new political thinking, leadership and responsibility, US-Russia relations, climate change and more. Karlen says: “Having studied the subject for over two decades, I felt there was a huge treasure of wisdom, knowledge and practical know-how that should not be lost and that could be of great value and importance to overcome today's challenges. I have attempted to gather these gems and present them in a concentrated and easily accessible format for a wider audience.”

Mikhail Gorbachev – Essential Thoughts: Learning from the Man who Changed the World

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