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THE PATTERN OF SOVIET CONDUCT IN THE THIRD WORLD

Review and preview.

by

WALTER LAQUEUR AND OTHERS

FOR

OSD/NET ASSESSMENT

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THE PATTERN OF SOVIET CONDUCT IN THE THIRD WORLD:

Review and Preview

by

Walter Laqueur and others

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VANGUARD PARTIES IN THE THIRD WORLD

David E. Albright

To assess the precise import of this trend, it is essential to understand both the lessons that Moscow has learned and the new Soviet notion of a vanguard party.

Lessons Learned

Soviet experiences in the Third World since the mid-1950s have caused Moscow to arrive at several key judgments. First, Soviet leaders now deem that in the foreseeable future the chance of "genuine" revolutionary breakthroughs -- i.e., the emergence of Soviet-style Communist regimes that would associate themselves closely with the U.S.S.R. and thereby afford vehicles for the projection of Soviet influence -- are poor throughout at least the great bulk of the Third World. This assessment runs counter to that which prevailed during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Indeed, it was a series of major Soviet setbacks during the earlier period that triggered the reversal in Moscow's view.

As the British, French, and Belgian territories of sub-Saharan Africa moved toward independence in the last half of the 1950s and "anti-imperialist" ferment spread even to Latin America with the Cuban revolution of 1959, Moscow became convinced that the demise of colonialism finally loomed on the near horizon. Along with this new evaluation went an upsurge of Soviet revolutionary optimism regarding the Third World in general.

Leninist doctrine conditioned Soviet leaders to see the break-up of the colonial system as the harbinger of a revolutionary tidal wave that would sweep over the Third World and leave Communist regimes in its wake, and Soviet commentary about the Third World took on a tone at betrayed Moscow's belief that such a course of events would ensue. A retrospective critique in the mid-1960s by a prominent Soviet writer affords a highly revealing insight into the temper of the times. Speaking specifically about Africa, he observed: "the effective achievements of the national liberation movement on the continent, the establishment, in a few years, of dozens of new national states tended to create the erroneous impression that the struggle was almost at an end, that the way to liberation was easy and the forces of imperialism were played out."

For nearly a decade, Soviet leaders clung tenaciously to this revolutionary optimism, despite the sharp adversities they encountered. In fact, what preoccupied them was figuring out how the revolutionary process might develop and how the U.S.S.R. might hasten the process along. Initially, they seemed inclined to assume that the process would proceed fairly rapidly on its own steam. However, efforts in the late 1950s by some Third World rulers such as Gamal Abdel Nasser of the United Arab Republic to repress local Communists soon threw that assumption into question.

Moscow then decided that it was both desirable and possible to speed up the revolutionary process by encouraging greater militancy on the part of radical elements of the Third World

within a framework of cooperation with the currently dominant "national bourgeois" forces. This calculation underlay the calls in 1959-1960 for the establishment of "independent national democracies" in the Third World. In Soviet eyes, the struggle to achieve such a goal would have several distinct characteristics. Local left-wing elements would continue to participate in -- or, in certain instances, seek to promote -- broad national-front alliances composed of all "anti-imperialist" forces. While accepting temporarily the primary role of the "national bourgeoisie" within these alliances, left-wing forces would attempt to build up their strength and eventually take control of the alliances by championing the "progressive" economic and social measures that the masses presumably wanted. Depending upon circumstances, the alliance itself would take one of two forms. Where a Communist party already existed or where the dominant non-Communist party contained few leftist elements, the alliance would involve separate parties in classical Leninist tradition (thereby necessitating the formation of a Communist party in the latter case). But where the main non-Communist party was an umbrella organization and included visible left-wing forces, the party itself might serve as the alliance, and the struggle for hegemony might take place within its ranks.

At about the same time that this evolution in Soviet thinking was going on, the U.S.S.R. suffered a severe reversal of fortunes in the Congo-Leopoldville (now Zaire), which had gained independence from Belgium in June 1960. After the emergence of the new state, the U.S.S.R. had developed close ties with Premier

Patrice Lumumba, but it quickly found him ousted at the behest of President Joseph Kasavubu, who was suspicious of Soviet blandishments. More galling, the United Nations General Assembly, with major backing from Third World countries, recognized a Kasavubu delegation, and spurned a Lumumba delegation, as the legal representatives of the Congo-Leopoldville in late November 1960.

This setback, and especially the divisions among Third World states that contributed to it, seems to have persuaded Moscow that the revolutionary tide was not running with equal force in all places in the Third World, and such a judgment in turn induced the U.S.S.R. to focus its attention on those countries where "progressive" representatives of the "national bourgeoisie" appeared to be in charge. These included the United Arab Republic, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Cuba, Indonesia, and eventually Algeria and Burma.

Quite soon after the completion of this two-step reappraisal of the situation in the Third World, however, a split began to emerge among Soviet observers as to the validity of aspects of the new approach. While one group upheld it in all particulars, a second group evinced misgivings about elements of it. The latter, highly conscious of the weakness of left-wing forces in many "progressive" states, questioned the ability of these forces to carry out a struggle for hegemony with the "national bourgeois" rulers there; furthermore, they worried about the growing tendency of at least portions of the local left-wing forces to side with China in the intensifying Sino-Soviet

dispute. Perhaps most important, these observers doubted the willingness of extant "progressive" leaders to tolerate activities that threatened to undermine their regimes. As Soviet commentators were plainly aware, Ahmed Sekou Toure of Guinea had reacted sharply in late 1961 to a local effort to push his government in a more radical direction than he wished to go; this affair cast a pall over Moscow's relations with Conakry.

Moreover, the adherents of the second school of thought discerned an alternative way of furthering the revolutionary process. They noted that Cuba had undergone a rapid transition to socialism through Fidel Castro's conversion to "scientific socialism," and they pointed out that "progressive" countries such as the United Arab Republic, Algeria, Ghana, Mali, and Burma were undergoing domestic radicalization under the auspices of rulers who had at least verbally embraced "scientific socialism." Therefore, they argued, the U.S.S.R. might accept the commitment of these "revolutionary democrats" as genuine and seek to guide them toward a "true understanding" of scientific socialism." The transition to socialism would thus result from the transformation of extant rulers into traditional Marxist-Leninists, rather than from their replacement by others of such a persuasion.

In late 1963, Nikita Khrushchev, against some high-level opposition, formally endorsed the Third World "revolutionary democrats," outlook, which subsequently remained the operative one for the U.S.S.R. until early 1966. Over the intervening months, however, the formidable requirements of inducing

socialism even in the states under "revolutionary democratic" leadership hit home to Soviet analysts. Hence, they increasingly suggested that the revolutionary process in the Third World would probably be more protracted than originally anticipated.

More critical, events in these countries highlighted the possibility that the "revolutionary democrats" might not be up to bringing about a transition to socialism. Ahmed Ben Bella's fall in Algeria in 1965 showed that they might not even have the requisite skills to fend off internal challenges, and the ousters of Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana in February 1966 and President Sukarno of Indonesia in March 1966 demonstrated that their realms could well pass into the hands of "reactionary" rulers.

The debacle in Ghana prompted Politburo to launch a full-scale review of Soviet Third World assumptions. Out of this came some basic shifts in perspective. Not only did the existing "revolutionary democrats" have such grave faults that they would in all likelihood never carry out transitions to "true" socialism in their countries, but prospects for "real" revolutionary breakthroughs in the Third World in the discernible future were bleak. The fundamental problem, as Soviet analysts saw things, lay in the prevailing conservatism of Third World societies.

To be sure, Moscow subsequently recognized the appearance during the 1970s of a new breed of "revolutionary democrats" in Third World countries such as South Yemen, Angola, Mozambique, and Ethiopia. Nevertheless, the reserve it displayed about revolutionary prospects in the Third World in the late 1960s has persisted to the present. Soviet commentators, for example, have

continued to stress the impediments to "genuine" revolution there, heeding the low level of class and political consciousness of the masses. Indeed, they have underscored the "instability in the revolutionary process" in even the most advanced "revolutionary democratic" states, and they have carefully called attention to potential aberration and regression in these as well as other countries.

The second conclusion that Soviet leaders have reached about the Third World concerns the present rulers of the states there. Moscow today sees the vast majority of these rulers as having little in the way of a shared outlook with the U.S.S.R. Furthermore, it feels that they tend to try to use ties with the Soviet Union to advance their own particular interests. Such a perception represents a big departure from the view to which Soviet leaders subscribed in previous periods and reflects disappointments that Moscow has suffered as a consequence of what it now regards as excessive sanguineness.

During the late 1950s and early 1960s, when neutralism and nonalignment were acquiring considerable vogue in non-Western areas, Soviet commentators repeatedly spoke of common purposes that bound the developing countries and the U.S.S.R. together. They cited two in particular. The developing states and the Soviet Union alike desired to prevent war, and they also wished to follow their own economic paths, free of interference from Western imperialism and colonialism.

Events connected with the Congo-Leopoldville imbroglio of 1960-1961, however, revealed the shakiness of such a premise.

Many Third World countries failed to rally behind the U.S.S.R. and other champions of Patrice Lumumba that endeavored to restore him to power after his deposal. Moscow analyzed the Congolese fiasco in terms of Afro-Asian Socialist disunity, in stark contrast to the concerted response welded during the 1956 Suez crisis.

The behavior of most Third World countries in the context of mounting Sino-Soviet discord in the 1960s merely confirmed the gulf between them and the U.S.S.R. Despite the U.S.S.R.'s frequent attempts to pressure them into backing Moscow against Peking, they insisted on staying out of the quarrel.

Nonetheless, the mounting attention paid by Third World states to global economic issues, their push for the creation of a New International Economic Order, and their general "anti-imperialist" rhetoric in the 1970s encouraged Moscow as to the prospects for shared perspectives. Soviet leaders, for example, took pains to depict the U.S.S.R. as a "natural ally" of the nonaligned. Leonid Brezhnev characterized the real division in the world as one between socialism and imperialism, rather than between big and small, or rich and poor nations.

What finally induced the U.S.S.R. to shed its illusions on this score was Third World responses to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. In January 1980, the overwhelming majority of Third World states endorsed the U.S. General Assembly resolution calling for the removal of all foreign troops from Afghanistan. Of those that did not, most either abstained or failed to vote. Only Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Grenada,

South Yemen, and Afghanistan actually supported the U.S.S.R. Moreover, the United Nations ambassador of one of the Third World's most important member-states, Nigeria, pointedly observed that since Havana (the sixth summit meeting, in September 1979), the nonaligned movement had undergone tremendous strain, and that the myth of "natural allies" ultimately became exposed.

In light of the Soviet realization that national self-interest moves developing countries first and foremost, Politburo has decided that it needs some means of ensuring a Soviet presence in Third World states and a Soviet voice in Third World affairs. Since the early 1960s, Moscow has revived the claims that Nikita Khrushchev made in the 1950s to global power status for the U.S.S.R. Yet, as Brezhnev and his associates know full well from the problems that Khrushchev encountered in seeking to validate his claims, global power status must not only be self-asserted but also self-achieved and self-sustained; it does not flow from the consent of the international community. And upholding claims to such a status requires a country to demonstrate global reach. That is, it must have a continuing presence and exert influence throughout the world.

Moscow has looked with increasing favor on political means to further its purposes in the Third World. In this context, ties with vanguard parties have had special appeal.

Concept of a Vanguard Party

The extent of the appeal of such ties has related directly to the expanded Soviet definition of a vanguard party. Prior to

the late 1970s, the Soviet notion of a vanguard party followed conventional Leninist lines. Such a party, in Soviet eyes, had to be an organization of tested cadres, not a mass body open to all, and it must operate according to the principle of democratic centralism, with its lower levels closely subordinate to its upper ones. At the same time, Moscow held that a vanguard party must have deep organizational roots among the masses, so as to be able to mobilize them behind its programs. In the wake of the Ghanaian coup of 1966, Soviet analysts severely criticized the ruling parties in what Moscow had earlier dubbed "revolutionary democracies" for falling short of organizational fusion with the rank and file and for instead resembling clubs for revolutionary intellectuals. With the growing fragmentation of the international Communist movement in the early 1960s, Moscow also made explicit what it had hitherto left implicit. A vanguard party had to accept not just "scientific socialism" but the Soviet version thereof. Thus, self-classification as a Marxist-Leninist entity would not qualify a body as a vanguard party unless it met Soviet standards as well.

During the late 1970s, however, the U.S.S.R. modified its concept in significant ways. To begin with, it now bestowed Marxist-Leninist legitimacy upon at least certain parties that had originally formed in opposition to pro-Soviet Communist parties. The Communist Party of India -- Marxist (CPI-M) afforded the classic illustration.

This party had come into being in 1964 as a result of an apparently irreconcilable split in the Indian Communist movement

triggered by Nikita Khrushchev's revision of the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism in the U.S.S.R., and the CPI-M had pursued a domestic programmatic line during the 1960s and 1970s which was sharply at variance with that of the Moscow-backed Communist Party of India (CPI). While the CPI had opted for a combination of the parliamentary path and cooperation with the government of Indira Gandhi, the CPI-M had adopted a political strategy of peasant mobilization, focusing upon India's eastern flank, and remitting opposition to the Gandhi government. Its approach had yielded substantial dividends in the electoral upheavals of 1977-1978 in India. The CPI-M had garnered 4.30 percent of the vote and 22 Lok Sabha seats in the 1977 national elections; in elections held three months later to legislative assemblies in two territories and ten of India's states, it had won 205 of 2,455 seats. By obtaining 174 of 294 seats in West Bengal, it had captured control of that state government, and at the end of the year a leftist front led by the CPI-M had swept to power in Tripura too. The CPI, in contrast, had seen its share of the national vote drop from 4.73 percent in 1971 to 2.82 percent in 1977, and its number of seats in the Lok Sabha fall from 23 to 7. Worse yet, it had virtually been wiped out in the elections for legislative assemblies.

In the wake of these developments, the CPI, with Moscow's unmistakable blessing and perhaps even at Moscow's instigation, moved to restore links with the CPI-M and to forge a "left and democratic" front including it. After much pulling and tugging, the two parties finally reached a quid pro quo in the autumn of

1979 -- to the unconcealed delight of the U.S.S.R. Thus, in the January 1980 national and state elections the two parties divided up constituencies, campaigned together, and extended each other a degree of logistical support.

This unity strategy produced some impressive fruits. The two parties got a total of 47 seats in the Lok Sabha (35 for the CPI-M and 12 for the CPI). In the voting for the Kerala state legislature later in January, the "left and democratic" front led by the CPI-M there also garnered 93 seats in a legislature of 140.

But the big winner was the CPI-M. In the parliamentary elections, the CPI-M polled 17 million votes nationwide, as compared with 83.5 million for Mrs. Gandhi's victorious Congress-I and 37.2 million and 18.5 million, respectively, for Janata and Lok Dal, the two main non-Communist opponents of Congress-I. The CPI, in contrast, captured just 500,000 votes (some 80,000 fewer than it had received in 1977.)

Far from oblivious to these realities, Moscow in the 1980s has continued to encourage unity of the two Indian Communist parties and has pushed as well for rapprochement between the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and the CPI-M. In July 1980, for example, a CPSU team headed by Boris Ponomarev, director of the International Department, welcomed Jyoti Basu, a member of the CPI-M Politburo, to the U.S.S.R. and had "wide-ranging" discussions with him. Leonid Brezhnev also spoke briefly with several members of the CPI-M Politburo at official functions during his visit to New Delhi in December 1980,

although no formal meeting took place between the CPSU General Secretary's delegation and the CPI-M.

Even more striking than Soviet acceptance of the Marxist-Leninist credentials of parties such as the CPI-M was Moscow's recognition of a wholly new category of vanguard bodies. For shorthand, it referred to these as Third World "vanguard parties" or "vanguard revolutionary parties," but it made clear that they were "revolutionary democratic parties of a new type." That is, it carefully distinguished such entities from Communist parties.

Beginning with the Labor Party of the People's Republic of the Congo in 1969, a number of ruling parties in the Third World had proclaimed a commitment to Marxism-Leninism and an intention to transform themselves into "vanguard" parties. Throughout much of the 1970s, however, Soviet observers had either ignored these developments or had passed over them lightly. A typical commentary had more or less equated the outlook of the ruling elements of countries like the People's Republic of the Congo with that of the leaders of such avowedly non-Marxist-Leninist states as Tanzania, Egypt, Algeria, and Guinea. Specifically, it had classified all of these countries as merely "socialist-oriented states" -- i.e., all had at one time or another, pledged themselves to socialist ideas and had shunned the capitalist road of development.

About the spring of 1978, signs appeared that the Soviet perspective was undergoing change. For example, a major Soviet political journal endorsed the one-party system, provided it reflect the (anti-imperialist, anti-colonial, and progressive mood

of the working masses. The MPLA Party of Labour of Angola, resting on a broad-based national liberation movement, and the FRELIMO of Mozambique were taken to illustrate this view. Importantly, the article sought to reconcile the primacy of vanguard parties in so-called socialist countries.

What set in motion a reappraisal remains somewhat foggy. Perhaps it was nothing more than the recent proliferation of self-styled Marxist-Leninist, "vanguard" parties in the Third World. Such parties had emerged in Benin and Somalia in 1976 and in Angola and Mozambique in 1977. Or other circumstances may have entered into the calculations too. For instance, all of the "vanguard" parties that had come into being prior to 1977 had done so under the auspices of radical military leaders, but 1977 had witnessed the birth of some under civilian aegis.

In any event, a new Soviet attitude had become manifest by early 1979. Soviet media now devoted long disquisitions to the "vanguard" parties of the Third World. These analyses initially identified six specific parties as belonging to the group. They were the Popular Liberation Movement of Angola -- Labor Party (MPLA-PT), the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), the Congolese Labor Party (PCT), the Benin People's Revolutionary Party (PRPB), the (South) Yemen Socialist Party (YSP), and the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). Over time, the Commission for Organizing the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia (COPWE) has been added to the list, although this body's organization is conceded to be in its infancy. One final point is worth noting here. While Soviet sources have not yet

explicitly labeled the New Jewel Movement of Grenada and the Sandinist National Liberation Front of Nicaragua "vanguard" parties, they have come quite close to doing so.

Such parties, in Soviet eyes, have a number of distinct characteristics. They constitute "revolutionary democratic" alliances of workers, peasants, artisans, the state petit bourgeoisie, the radical intelligentsia, and employees. Although they are at present still in the beginning stages of formation, they strive to strengthen their organizational and ideological unity and to reinforce their impact on the people. They are also in the process of conversion to Marxism-Leninism as regards to the revolutionary transformation of society. Last but not least, they are facilitating cooperation with the world Communist movement, and with the ruling parties of the socialist countries.

Neither of these broad innovations in Soviet thinking about vanguard parties in the Third World, it should be emphasized, took place in the abstract. Both represented Soviet responses to developments in the real world. In this sense, they reflected evolving Soviet views of the opportunities that the Third World offered the U.S.S.R.

Exploitation of Vanguard Parties

In paying increased heed to Third World vanguard parties as means of advancing the U.S.S.R.'s interests in Third World areas, Moscow has not yet reverted to the wholesale and virtually total reliance on them that typified its policy in the late 1940s and

early 1950s. Rather, it has differentiated the political situations in individual countries and has tailored its approach to each country to try to maximize the U.S.S.R.'s position there. Thus, both the extent to which and how vanguard parties now figure in Soviet policy toward the Third World vary from context to context.

One can, however, discern some patterns in this regard. These deserve exploration in detail. At the outset, it is important to bear in mind that no vanguard parties have formed yet in a substantial number of states in the Third World. This includes most of the countries of sub-Saharan Africa and the smaller countries of the Persian Gulf region. Nor has the U.S.S.R. taken any concrete steps to foster the creation of such parties in these states, even though Soviet analysts have spoken of the need for the establishment of "vanguard" parties there to ensure "progressive development."

Where vanguard parties do exist, their role in Soviet policy is the least complicated in countries which have only Communist parties with a staunchy pro-Chinese orientation. Moscow has long simply ignored these parties. This has been the case regardless of the nature of the U.S.S.R.'s relations with the governments of the states concerned. The countries that fall into this category lie exclusively in Asia, with Malaysia, Thailand, and Burma being its key representatives.

The situation is far more complex with respect to states in which (a) there exists either a single pro-Soviet Communist party or two or more Communist parties at least one of which displays a

pro-Soviet orientation, but (b) no Communist party has much clout. The degree to which any of these parties enters into Soviet policy depends upon the importance that Moscow attaches to the specific countries in which they operate.

Soviet leaders appear to see a number of the states in this group as of relatively minor consequence in the overall Third World picture. These countries, for example, fall outside the southern rimlands of the U.S.S.R., which have constituted the prime focus of Soviet concern in the Third World since the mid-1960s. They are also fairly small entities in terms of both size and population, and they enjoy little influence beyond their own borders. The African states of Senegal and Lesotho and such Latin American and Caribbean states as Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Panama, Paraguay, Suriname, and Uruguay provide good illustrations.

In keeping with its generally low level of interest in these countries, Moscow has not really tried to employ the indigenous Communist parties there as instrumentalities for affecting local conditions favorably from its standpoint. This has been true no matter how warm or cool the U.S.S.R.'s relations with the governments of the states involved.

The remainder of the countries in the group clearly qualify as significant in the eyes of Soviet leaders on at least one of several grounds. A good many make up part of the southern rimlands of the U.S.S.R. Some are large countries of considerable regional weight. Others occupy territory of particular strategic significance. Some are especially well

endowed with natural resources. Egypt, Israel, Brazil, Sudan, Tunisia, and Saudi Arabia offer first-rate examples.

Although plainly cognizant of the weaknesses of the pro-Soviet Communist parties in these states Moscow has nevertheless sought to capitalize to the degree possible on their presences there to further the U.S.S.R.'s purposes. The exact way in which it has done so, however, has varied.

In countries with whose governments the U.S.S.R. has been on poor terms, Soviet leaders have not entirely eschewed attempts to foster alternatives to these governments with the aid of local Communist parties. Soviet media commentaries on Sudan in the 1980s, for instance, have strongly suggested Moscow's endorsement of the efforts of the Sudan Communist Party and other opposition forces to topple Ja'far Numeiry -- a firm backer of the Camp David peace process and of former Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat.

But by and large Moscow has endeavored to exploit the Communist parties in these states to alter official attitudes toward the U.S.S.R. and/or to induce the local governments to adopt policies beneficial to it. During the last years of Sadat's rule in Egypt, for example, Soviet officials in Cairo maintained clandestine contacts with the outlawed Egyptian Communist Party and other opposition elements, but these contacts appear to have been aimed essentially at fomenting sufficient internal unrest to render it difficult for Sadat to sustain his rapprochement with Israel and his hostility to the U.S.S.R. Motives of a comparable sort seem to have underlain the amount of

publicity that Moscow has given to the anti-Zionist, pro-Arab-nationalist stance of the Communist Party of Israel (RAKAH). This party, it should be noted, draws the great bulk of its membership and electoral support from Israel's Arab minority.

In countries with which the U.S.S.R. has fairly decent to close official relations, Soviet leaders have adopted quite a different tact. They have encouraged local Communist parties to behave in a manner which bolsters these relations -- or at minimum does not affect them adversely. Iran furnishes an excellent illustration. Moscow has counseled the Tudeh Party to endorse the government of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and to seek to fan its anti-Westernism, and the party has gone along with this advice, even though it has encountered some travails as a result of such a policy. One could cite evidence of a similar kind in the case of states like Algeria, Jordan, Morocco, Nigeria, Nepal, and even Argentina.

Not surprisingly, the U.S.S.R. shows a much greater inclination to assign Third World vanguard parties a role in its foreign policy in countries where these entities possess substantial influence than in those where they do not. Indeed, demonstrable influence plainly matters more to Moscow in this general connection than even the niceties of ideological viewpoint.

In all cases where a non-ruling Communist party of any kind enjoys some local political clout, Soviet leaders in recent years have extended it their firm support. However, the calculations entailed in rendering such support have differed from context to context.

In a few states, the U.S.S.R. through its championing of influential Communist parties, has lent its weight to efforts to displace existing governments by violent means, for the local parties have been carrying on armed struggles against these governments -- usually within the framework of broad political fronts embracing non-Communists as well as varied kinds of Communists. El Salvador, Guatemala, and South Africa provide the leading examples. Such decisions have required Moscow to give up any thought of productive ties with the current governments there, but it has lost little in the process because its relations with them have ranged from bad to nonexistent anyway. Moreover, the prospects for success for the efforts to bring down the governments have been at least fair over the medium run.

Elsewhere, Soviet backing of Communist parties of local consequence has been designed to enhance the U.S.S.R.'s capacities for dealing effectively with the governments of the countries concerned, but the precise goal has not been the same in all instances. One can distinguish three settings that have resulted in diverse preoccupations.

Where governments have maintained a distant or at best correct attitude toward the U.S.S.R., Moscow has appeared to see links with important local Communist parties as means of improving the climate of official relations. That is, it has viewed these parties as useful advocates of an expansion of ties with the U.S.S.R. and articulators of foreign policy positions generally compatible with Soviet ones. The Soviet approach to the new United Socialist Party of Mexico has reflected such a

perspective. In contacts with the party, Soviet officials have played down its Eurocommunist orientation.

Where governments have in the past looked upon the U.S.S.R. with great favor but have recently cooled toward it, Moscow has tended to regard links with local Communist parties of significance as insurance against a further deterioration of the relationships. Such ties guarantee the U.S.S.R. forceful domestic voices for continued relations of some intensity, and they constitute reminders to local governments that the U.S.S.R. does have the ability to cause them trouble internally if alienated. India furnishes perhaps the prime illustration of circumstances in which a consideration of this kind has been operative. After the defeat of Indira Gandhi in the elections of 1977, Soviet-Indian relations took a turn for the worse, and even though Mrs. Gandhi returned to power in 1980, she has not displayed her old warmth toward the U.S.S.R. In part, her new reticence probably stems from ire at the vehemence with which Soviet commentators in the late 1970s criticized her for the emergency rule that had precipitated her downfall in 1977; in part, it is clearly a reaction to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. At any rate, Moscow seems to have concluded that support of a leftist from involving both the CPI and CPI-M would help give it leverage to restrain Mrs. Gandhi from moving farther away from close alliance with the U.S.S.R. Comparable developments in Iraq since the late 1970s appear to have led Soviet rulers to adopt a similar tactic there, centered on the Iraqi Communist Party. But this party has proved to be a

relatively ineffectual instrument for stopping the decline of official Soviet-Iraqi amity.

Where governments at present maintain cordial relations with the U.S.S.R., Moscow seems to have viewed strong links with Communist parties influential in local milieus as a hedge against the sort of evolution that has occurred in India and Iraq. Not only do such ties help to deepen Soviet involvement in internal political life in these states, but they also force local governments to keep in mind the Soviet capacity for mischief-making. Motivations of this nature appear to have accounted for Soviet behavior in places like Syria, Guyana, and Peru.

Finally, the ruling "vanguard" parties of "revolutionary democratic" countries have been the object of intense Soviet courtship in world affairs. Because they control governments, the U.S.S.R. has solicited their support on a wide range of international issues. By the same token, it has joined with them on a variety of causes that they have promoted in the world community.

Conclusion and Prospects

As the preceding analysis has tried to suggest, the increased use that the U.S.S.R. has made of vanguard parties in conducting its foreign policy in recent years and the new elements of diversity that it has introduced into its approach to them represent attempts to come to grips with the Third World's contemporary reality. Yet that reality is by no means fixed.

Moscow's experiences with "bourgeois-nationalist" rulers

throughout much of the Third World may for the moment justify a high degree of wariness toward them on its part, but fresh opportunities associated with them could open up and significantly alter its attitude toward them. Such a development, in turn, could reduce its attention to vanguard parties.

Already one can detect a tentative drift in this direction. For example, Soviet analysts during the last two years have perceived a major "contradiction" between those Third World states that have embarked on the capitalist path and Western "imperialism." A growing number of these states are following or want to follow a "national capitalist" road, while Western "imperialism" seeks to channel them along the road of "dependent capitalism." Such an analysis implies that this "contradiction" offers an opportunity for the U.S.S.R. to exploit. Similarly, Soviet commentators have recently displayed a fascination with the resurgence of Islam in the Muslim world. They have indicated that Islamic movements with a political tinge may take one of two forms -- progressive or reactionary. The first seen as anti-imperialist, anti-monopolist and anti-feudal; the second, anti-Communist and anti-socialist. Implicit here is the proposition that movements of the first sort present openings upon which the U.S.S.R. might capitalize.

In addition, Moscow's stretching of its concept of a vanguard party to encompass unorthodox entities has greatly complicated the task of advancing its ends through exploitation of vanguard parties. As long as it dealt essentially with pro-

Soviet Communist parties, it could exercise a reasonable amount of control over events. Now, however, it has lost much of that advantage. To pursue its goals, it must engage in persuasion to get many key parties to behave in the manner it wishes, and there is no certainty that such undertakings will prove successful. Under these circumstances, the U.S.S.R. could suffer some setbacks to its interests.

It is crucial to recognize that the role that vanguard parties play today in Moscow's foreign policy may not stay the same in ensuing years. If Soviet leaders see new opportunities emerging that require exploitation by other means and/or if they encounter severe problems in trying to induce diverse vanguard parties to act in ways the U.S.S.R. desire, they could significantly modify the role that they assign to vanguard parties.

East Germany and Soviet Policy in the Third World

by

Melvin Croan

In recent years, East Germany -- the German Democratic Republic (GDR), to invoke its official designation -- has come to play a significant role as a major instrument of Soviet policy in the Third World. Among Soviet client states, the GDR's involvement in the Third World now ranks second only to that of Cuba. While the latter's activities may possibly have peaked, at least as concerns Cuban military adventures in Africa, the influence of the GDR seems to be growing. Although the GDR's presence is still recorded primarily on the African continent and in adjacent regions of the Middle East, East Germany has begun to manifest a lively interest in areas further afield -- and, in one instance, from the American point of view, closer to home, i.e., in Central America and the Caribbean as well as with respect to Latin America more generally. (In the past, such East German expressions of ideologico-political interest have often been implemented by quite practical policy measures.) Moreover, while Cuban motivations have always been complex, if not exactly inscrutable, those of the GDR have remained relatively plain and simple. Given Moscow's more direct and more complete control over East Berlin than over Havana, East Germany has doubtless been viewed by the Kremlin as the more consistently reliable surrogate for Soviet policy purposes. In any event, the range

and scope of East Germany's activities in the Third World are now quite striking, particularly if one recalls that a mere two decades or so ago the GDR appeared to be little more than an artificial construct and, as such, a virtual international outcast beyond the confines of the Soviet orbit itself.

What resources does East Germany bring to its involvement in the Third World and what motives sustain its various activities there? What forms has the GDR's involvement taken and which countries have been particularly targeted? How successful have East German activities been and what are the prospects for the future? The outline that follows, to be developed further as may be subsequently needed, will seek to suggest answers to all these questions.

I. Resources and Motives

- A. The geopolitical foundations of the GDR's tight alignment with the Soviet Union.
- B. The GDR as an advanced industrial society.
 - 1. Economic growth and industrial development since the erection of the Berlin Wall in 1961; East Germany's attainment of a per capita gross domestic product exceeding that of the United Kingdom.
 - 2. Managing the transition from extensive growth to intensive development without major administrative decentralization or any significant retrenchment of the "leading role" of East Germany's ruling Communist Party (SED).

3. East German technical efficiency, organizational skills, and military know-how at the disposal of Soviet policy in the Third World.

4. Current problems of the East German domestic economy as a potentially limiting factor with respect to a further expansion of GDR Third World activities in the future.

C. The GDR's credibility in the Third World.

1. "Anti-imperialist" and "anti-racist" propaganda efforts.

2. Self-depiction in the Third World as an advanced industrial (i.e., Western) country, allegedly untainted by a colonial past and ostensibly bereft of superpower pretensions.

D. East Germany's domestic preparation for Third World involvement.

1. Research and training institutes; the GDR Journalist League's "School of Solidarity," the East German Youth Organization's (FDJ) "Brigades of Friendship," Police and military academies, Third World exchangees at SED Party schools. Early organizational ties between the SED and various national liberation movements.

2. Third World language and culture programs at East German institutions of higher learning.

3. Hospital and clinic facilities for the care of the wounded in Third World "liberation" struggles.

4. The world-wide mission (advancing and defending "socialism" on a global scale) of East Germany's National People's Army (NVA). Advanced state of integration between the NVA and Soviet armed forces and between the East German security service (SSD) and the KGB.

5. The reliability of East German personnel in the Third World. Despite the regime's "deficit of legitimacy" at home and the concomitant problematic loyalty of a majority of the East German population as a whole to the SED regime, the circumscribed numbers of highly professional cadres, civilian as well as military, thus far dispatched to the Third World have proved remarkably disciplined and reliable. To the best of current knowledge, for example, no East German has yet defected while on duty in Africa.

E. GDR motives for involvement.

1. The initial impetus, in the period of the GDR's diplomatic isolation (i.e., pre-1970s), to establish a quasidiplomatic presence.

2. The GDR's breakthrough to general international recognition and membership in the U.N. of the early to mid-1970's, occurring in tandem with Soviet-Western "detente" in Europe, both broadened and narrowed the margin for maneuver for East German foreign policy.

While throwing open the entire Third World to a full range of official East German activities, the "normalization" of the GDR's international position was only achieved at the cost to East Germany of opening up the GDR to West German penetration and influence. The latter development served to heighten all the basic insecurities of the SED leadership vis a vis the East German population and this, in turn, underscored for East Germany's ruling elite the crucial role of the Soviet Union for the very survival of the GDR as a "second German state." The latter factor continues to predispose the East German leadership actively to demonstrate the GDR's value and reliability to the Soviet Union and thus strongly motivates and sustains its Third World activities on behalf of the interests of Soviet policy.

3. The GDR leadership has regarded the Third World as a promising arena in which East Germany can pursue its basic inner-German interests and fundamental goals of Abgrenzung ("delimitation") from and competition with West Germany.

4. The domestic uses of the GDR's involvement in the Third World to propagandize the "forward march" of socialism on a global scale in order to strengthen the morale of SED Party functionaries at home. The overseas role of the NVA is utilized to enhance the domestic status of the East German army.

5. Economic and commercial motivations. The search for markets and sources of supply of raw materials and foodstuffs, considerations that, although important, take second place behind the GDR's aforementioned political motivations. (Still, East Germany's trade with Africa now accounts for about 16% of the GDR's total foreign trade.)

II. Forms of Third World Involvement and Targeted Countries

A. General observations. Western analysts disagree on the total number of East German personnel stationed in the Third World. Estimates range from as few as 1,000 or less to as many as 15-17,000. In all probability, the figure is now around 5,000. East German sources never cite numbers of personnel abroad and they are notoriously vague with respect to the precise character of East German undertakings, many of which have remained almost totally covert. There is some circumstantial evidence of increased coordination between the GDR and Cuba, dating from the visit of the East German leader, Erich Honecker, to Havana in 1980, with the Cubans relinquishing top technical and specialist roles, particularly in the military field, to the East Germans. The value of East German military exports to Africa alone is now estimated to exceed 200 million Marks a year; in addition, the value of non-military shipments (East Germany's much valued

"solidarity goods") is estimated to run to more than 300 million Marks a year.

B. Military Involvement.

1. Angola. During the Angolan Civil War, the GDR provided the MPLA with military advisors (and, reportedly, some military pilots on active service), war material, including heavy weapons, and a host of medical supplies. MPLA wounded were evacuated to the GDR for hospitalization. The GDR continues to provide military advisors and technicians, together with some weaponry.

2. Mozambique. The East Germans were involved from the very outset in training FRELIMO guerillas for the struggle against Portugal. FRELIMO detachments utilized East German weapons, munitions, military vehicles, and helicopters as well as tents, blankets, and combat boots, all supplied by the GDR. Many of its wounded were evacuated to East Germany for care. On the occasion of Honecker's visit in 1979, Mozambique and the GDR concluded a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation that included a specific provision for "cooperation in the military sphere" and another calling for "immediate contact" between the two sides in the event of any "situation that threatens or violates peace." East Germany military and security advisors continue to play a major role.

3. Ethiopia. Shifting with the Soviet Union from

support of Somalia to the side of Ethiopia in 1977, the East Germans assumed responsibility for the training of South Yemenese military detachments which were then thrown in the battle for the Ogaden. NVA military advisors and other East German military personnel may also have seen combat service with the Ethiopians against the Eritrean secessionists. A major military cooperation agreement between Ethiopia and the GDR was concluded in 1979 and East Germany continues to be one of the main suppliers of military equipment and military advisors to the regime of Col. Mengistu.

4. Yemen. Military assistance and training as indicated above.

5. Zaire. East German military involvement in Shaba I (1977) and Shaba II (1978) was widely rumored at the time. Although probable, an East German role in these affairs cannot be documented.

6. Elsewhere. Zimbabwe (military and logistical support for Nkomo's ZAPU up through 1979). Namibia (active military and logistical support for SWAPO is continuing). An East German military presence of more limited proportions can also be found in Algeria, Libya, Iraq, Syria, Guinea-Bissau, Benin, the People's Republic of the Congo, Tanzania, and Zambia.

C. Logistical and Security Assistance.

1. Development of port facilities. In Angola, the East Germans have contributed in significant ways to

the development and modernization of the harbors at Luanda, Lobito, and Mocamedes. Piloting services have also been provided. In Mozambique, the GDR facilitated expansion and modernization of the port at Maputo. East German oceanographic and fishing agreements have been concluded with Mozambique. In Ethiopia, technical assistance for expansion of port facilities at Asab on the Red Sea. In South Yemen, possible East German involvement in the development of the port at Aden.

2. Security and intelligence services. In Angola, the GDR's State Security Service (SSD) supplies advisors for the MPLA regime's Department of Information and Security of Angola (DISA), an agency that has now reportedly been dissolved. In Mozambique, "technical assistance" in the establishment of the National Service for Popular Security (SNSAP), continued advisory role. East German training of personal body guards for Mozambique's President Samora Machel and Ethiopia's Col. Mengistu. In Ethiopia SSD advisors have been training both the regular police and a secret police force. In South Yemen, a comparable role for the SSD, including, allegedly, the administration of a concentration camp. In Libya, reported East German technical advice to Qadaffi's civilian and military intelligence.

D. Infrastructural Development Aid.

1. The GDR's contribution to the management and

expansion of communications networks and the training of Third World administrative cadres in communications and related fields.

2. East German assistance in the promotion of literacy campaigns and in the development of national educational services.

E. "Proto-Leninist" Assistance.

"Proto-Leninist" assistance in the form of East German activities pertaining to the consolidation of power, the exercise of control, and the inauguration of socio-economic change, all in keeping with the prerequisites of the distinctively Leninist version of "political development." The focus here has been on "socialist oriented" regimes (i.e., leftist and/or Soviet-leaning countries) with special attention on the part of the East Germans to Mozambique and Ethiopia and, to a somewhat lesser extent, Angola, East German advice and assistance in the formation and establishment of mass organizations, i.e., trade unions, peasant associations, women's and youth groups. Even more centrally, East German involvement in the shaping and disciplining of proto-Leninist ruling parties, such as the MPLA in Angola, FRELIMO in Mozambique, the PCT in the Congo, et., al., and, more recently with respect to COPWE (Commission for the Organization of the Party of Workers of Ethiopia), to institutionalize along party political and ideological

lines the rule of the Mengistu junta. Contacts between SED and Arab as well as African ruling parties.

III. Assessment and Future Prospects

- A. Initial East German successes can be ascribed to specific domestic circumstances in individual Third World countries and, as such, may be regarded as subject to change particularly in the longer term following the attainment of national liberation and/or with international power shifts in the larger regional context.
- B. The novelty of the GDR's relatively recent involvement is now wearing off and although the East Germans may still be respected for their technical competence and organizational efficiency and although they may also continue to enjoy greater popularity than their Soviet counterparts in the Third World, the GDR's role as a proxy for Soviet influence is becoming increasingly difficult to hide from the recipients of the GDR's ministrations. (In this regard, note various Third World reactions to the GDR's vociferous support for and marginal involvement in the Soviet move against Afghanistan.)
- C. Although expressions of gratitude to the GDR from Third World revolutionary leaders (especially, Angola's late President Neto, Mozambique's President Machel, and Foreign Minister Chissano, and Ethiopia's Col.

Mengistu) have often been effusive in the extreme, requests for economic development aid from East Germany in the quantities and on terms deemed necessary by such leaders have thus far gone largely unanswered. Indeed, the GDR's own domestic economic difficulties may prove an important limiting factor to any significant expansion of the East German involvement in the Third World, even allowing for the possibility of Soviet offset credits to the GDR economy to facilitate such an expansion of East Germany's overseas activities.

- D. East Germany's "proto-Leninist" contributions are still at a rather rudimentary stage and in no sense can they serve to guarantee the desired permanent shift of even "socialist oriented" regimes into the Soviet orbit. As one official East German commentary recently noted, 'in spite of the positive results that have been obtained so far,' the outlook for the future remains uncertain. The same commentary went on to observe that "because of the still weak social base, the inconsistencies...in the thinking and behavior of predominantly petty-bourgeois -- peasant forces of leadership, the lack of experience and of cadres, and not least of all on account of the strong economic positions and ideological influence over which imperialism continues to dispose in these countries, the development of the countries with a socialist orientation is by no means irreversible. Changes -- conceivably of a precipitous nature -- are possible."

Appraisals such as the foregoing one indicate that the GDR will not restrict its aspirations and activities in the Third World to "socialist oriented" regimes alone. By the same token, they suggest that the GDR will remain relatively flexible with respect to targets of opportunity, as identified in the first instance by the Soviet Union, frequently without undue initial emphasis on a given country's domestic ideological and political inclinations. Nonetheless, the GDR's role in "nonsocialist oriented" Third World countries is almost certain to be far less effective than what East Berlin (and Moscow) would like.

- E. Although various Western commentators frequently urge West Germany to revamp its Third World policies (particularly in Africa and especially with respect to the Republic of South Africa) so as to more effectively counter East German influence and the appeals of GDR policy, there is in fact relatively little that the West can do directly to diminish or substantially to change the GDR's role in the Third World, apart from effectively challenging Soviet policy which is another and much more important matter. Within the constraints imposed by domestic East German economic considerations, the GDR's active role as a proxy for the Soviet Union in the Third World will continue and may even expand, barring major changes in the East German-Soviet relationship of the sort that seem highly unlikely in the foreseeable future.

SOVIET AID AND TRADE

By Herbert Block

SOVIET ATTITUDES TOWARD AFRICAN CLIENT ECONOMIES

I. IDEAS, AID, AND TRADE IN GREAT POWER RIVALRY

Centuries of colonizing effort made a handful of nations masters of vast lands on all continents. In a few decades their empires were undone, the only exception --as yet-- the Soviet empire. In the past forty years 94 new states came into being, i.e., 60 percent of all states recognized as sovereign (168, counting the Republic of China as a sovereign state). Africa had only four formally independent states before 1943 (Ethiopia, Egypt, Liberia, South Africa); since then 47 have been added. Of these all but four (Libya, Morocco, Tunis, Algeria) are sub-Saharan. Two more candidates for statehood (Namibia, Western Sahara) are waiting in the wings for their cue. Of the new sub-Saharan states -- one fourth of all the nations of the world-- some are viable and fairly solid. the majority has had hardly any experience in self-government, their populations are unprepared for life under modern conditions, and their boundaries are as accidental and fragile as those the European nation-states once inherited from their dynastic predecessors. At odds with each other and often internally disunited, the new states either draw the great powers of today into their quarrels or great and greater powers, directly or through proxies, interfere uninvitedly, to bar or eject hostile forces, foreign or local. As throughout history, great power conflicts enable small and smallest countries to play the big ones off against each other,

provided they have the right mix of impudence, fortune and perspicacity.

In regard to the economies,, the post-colonial rivalries take place in three rings. There is, first, the business sphere of ordinary commercial and financial deals meant to reap the advantages trade usually bestows on all partners, though their political side effects cannot be overlooked. There is, first, the business sphere of ordinary commercial and financial deals meant to reap the advantages trade usually bestows on all partners, though their political side effects cannot be overlooked. Second is the domain of political transactions pure and simple, strengthening local regimes with outside resources in the interest of the donor to the detriment of some other foreign power. Finally, high up, competing social and economic philosophies and institutions come into play. The Soviet superpower performs in all three rings. reversing the order, we will comment first on ideological aspects.

Marxism misplaced

Ideology operates also in three regions. In the highest, the intellectual sphere, it teaches its devotees how to understand life or provides at least arguments for the all-important intra-doctrinal squabbles. Marxism-Leninism is well-suited for sophisticated and contentious scholasticism. Ideology serves political leaders a ready-made world view on a silver or rather paper platter and thus spares them precious time for action. Marx and Lenin were neither original nor clear in their vistas of a desirable society; they were pungent in their

excoriation of "capitalism" and "imperialism" and, above all, of everybody not in tune with them. If the two men had been contemporaries, they would have bitterly quarreled and, likewise, decades later, two other headstrong men, Stalin and Mao. But Lenin and Mao, having survived Marx and Stalin, were free to extol the dead.

Marx, under the influence of Hegel, understood history as law-governed progress from lower to higher stages of social development. The sequence leads from primitive communalities to feudalism, capitalism with its higher form called imperialism, and socialism-Communism. Each phase is separated from the next by cataclysmic events until, with the advent of socialism, society becomes non-antagonistic. The doctrine, with its later Soviet interpretations, poses several ideological problems in its application to sub-Saharan Africa.

Marxism does not explain how history, moving by necessity, achieves progress without a benevolent Providence. Sub-Saharanans, differing in their beliefs but, on the whole, deeply religious, are not easily reconciled to an anti-religious Marxist ideology. Such sentiments need not prevent their governments to turn to the U.S.S.R. for political and military reasons. Moreover, among their leaders are unpredictable characters with an unstable mixture of fervor and cunning; witness Benin's President Kerouke who in a matter of years veered from opportunistic moderation to "scientific socialism" and then unexpectedly to a Libyan-inspired Islamism. The currently prevailing ideological confusion, with sudden conversions to this or that creed, is reminiscent of the

twists and turns in the days of reformation and counterreformation. Atheism is a handicap in Africa.

Marxism cannot explain why the most advanced nations its creator had in mind, namely England and France, have persistently rejected Communism. It was Russia, backward compared with them--though not an underdeveloped country in the present meaning of the term--that fell into the hands of the Bolsheviks. When Lenin's expectation that the West would join his revolution came to naught, he resorted to an imperialism theory developed by Rudolf Hilferding and Rosa Luxemburg. The colonial powers, it proposed, had postponed the day of reckoning for a while by exploiting, in the interest of their capitalists but also of their workers, their possessions overseas. The "Storm over the East," to quote the title of an impressive early Soviet moving picture (Lenin called East what we now call South; even today Soviet experts on the Third World go by the name of "orientalists"), was to dislodge the capitalist overlords in the dependencies and then, their colonial lucre gone, in the West. The imperialist issue has indeed been ideally suited to stir the imagination of underdeveloped nations and has toughened their demands against the advanced West. Yet, the underlying arguments have not been borne out by the facts of history. Actually the decolonization of recent decades has not diminished the prosperity of the divested nations more than marginally. It did not convert any of them to Communism; the only developed countries joining the Soviet bloc, Czechoslovakia and East Germany, were conquered by force of arms. Finally, only a handful of the newly sovereign nations have taken to the "socialist path." Mainland China does

not fit the scheme either. It had never been colonized and its rulers have called their socialist brethren in Moscow the true imperialists.

Nor was decolonization achieved solely on the wings of Marxist-Leninist thought which, in turn, means that the Soviet ideology faces in sub-Saharan Africa, as part of the decolonized world, other philosophies. Both the demands for independence and the concepts underlying the new governmental and legal institutions have drawn on liberalist ideas of self-determination and human rights, on nationalist emotions, on syndicalist notions, and other Western creations. Socialism is only one of the contending ideologies. In fact, disregarding a recent wave of religious fundamentalism and, *faute de mieux*, a romantic glorification of traditional tribal communal life, the whole decolonization movement has lived on occidental thought--a condition that some underdeveloped intellectuals now brand as "cultural imperialism."

Even though the historical progress of the world economies as envisaged by Marxism is truncated by the failure of the advanced West to turn Communist (before as well as after decolonization), Sovietism insists on a ceremonial pecking order within the socialist camp. The uncontested head of the hierarchy is the U.S.S.R as the historically first socialist country. Other members of CMEA, the Council of Mutual Economic Aid, are trailing but they, at least, are "states of real socialism." Further down, ranked in an order reflecting their usefulness and obedience, are other less developed camp followers. Until the

late 1960s they were called countries attempting a non-capitalist course; since then they are countries "with a socialist orientation." Each bears an additional label with its current rank, which is now and then updated according to ideological fashion and political circumstances. The the May Day slogans of 1982 "salute the people of Ethiopia, who have chosen the path of socialist transformation" (slogan no. 67), while "the peoples of Angola, Mozambique, and other African countries"--slightly less exalted--"have chosen the path of socialist development" (slogan no. 68). Still further down are "Africa's peoples struggling against imperialism and racism" etc. (slogan no. 71). The Somalis are now a non-people. It is unlikely that the Africans are happy with this official pyramid, reminiscent of the ranking of colonies in the empires of yesteryear.

Whenever a doctrine establishes a hierarchy, believers among the disadvantaged orders, fervent but impatient, wonder whether they could not leapfrog to a higher rank. Marx himself, a refugee from a still less developed Germany, asked the question on behalf of his former compatriots and in 1850 expressed at least the hope that the forthcoming revolution of the French proletariat (there was none) would accelerate the advent of German socialism. Around 1882, when Russia was plagued by assassinations (terrorism is not a specialty of our time), Marx expected Russia to become "the vanguard of revolutionary action in Europe"; vanguards, however, may skirmish successfully but do not win the war. At the same time Russian revolutionaries asked Marx whether Russia, blessed with quasi-Communist peasant collectives, might not by-pass capitalism and enter socialism

directly. Marx was embarrassed and weaselworded. Now, one century later, Africans raise a similar question. They do not aspire to the elevated rank of the U.S.S.R but they would like to speed up their historical development and perhaps, with the help of their tribal communities, by-pass the obnoxious capitalism with Soviet aid.

The Kremlin's attitude toward such a notion is a clear-cut nyet. Soviets have as little use for rudiments of a primitive stage of African life as Marx for Russian peasant communes. The Soviet vanguard of history does not tolerate local attempts, touching though they may be, to salvage an outdated remnant of their own past. African leaders, whether out of conviction or convenience, could not avoid declaring on various occasions that "there cannot be an African or European socialism. . .there is only Scientific Socialism,"¹ i.e. the Soviet variety of that vague contraption.

How to Let African Clients Flirt With Capitalism Without Losing Them

Deciding against a major role for tribal communities does not yet answer the question whether a sub-Saharan state, by choosing the socialist path, might by-pass capitalism altogether or whether it would have to undergo the capitalist experience, though only for a brief historical period. Should its leadership eradicate the beginnings of "capitalism" in favor of Soviet institutions and policies or allow them to unfold so that the country traverses its pre-ordained capitalist phase as quickly as possible? Since Marxism is highly history-minded, since

Sovietism uses Russian history as a pattern, since, finally, any proposition can be proved or disproved with one of the many (ambiguous) Lenin quotations, the discussion is carried on in terms of NEP or no NEP. In 1921, when Lenin's ruinous measures had become unbearable, he embarked on a "New Economic Policy." He restored the market economy and a stable currency, permitting small business to operate in industry, agriculture, and trade; the government retained the "commanding heights," i.e., excepting general policy direction, ownership of the large plants. Russia still had a reservoir of entrepreneurs and they brought about seven years as fat as possible under Bolshevist rule. But in 1928 Stalin ended the "strategic retreat" and established his command economy with full nationalization and planning. Yet we may indulge in counterfactual history by assuming that Bukharin, a radical turned moderate, had ousted Stalin instead of becoming his victim. The result would have been a strengthened NEP, and in the end the U.S.S.R may have become a mixed economy. If in an African country Soviet and local Communists would permit a comparable strategic retreat, they might for all practical purposes NEP socialism in the bud.

Soviet references to the NEP experience in the context of African policy is not an accident. The Soviet economy is in considerable trouble exactly because it has still preserved the Stalinesque system; among the possible remedies would be a modernized version of NEP. While it would please economists with a bent for market procedures, the reigning doctrinaires would have no use for it and prefer not to regard it as an option for the U.S.S.R. But the subject has been broached in general and

for underdeveloped countries in an almost pre-capitalist phase, and "orientalists" have produced a series of papers on pros and cons of a NEP in the Third World.²

Soviet client regimes hold power in countries that have receded precipitously from a very modest level of existence under an inefficient colonial administration (Angola, Mozambique) or belong to the poorest of the poor since time immemorial (Ethiopia). And their problem is not only poverty but ignorance, corruption, and inept leadership. The Soviets, as Lenin's own people in history's avant-garde, do not mince words when discussing Africa. In the September-October issue of 1981, Viktor Sheynis of the Moscow Institute of World Economy and International Relations tries to explain why African states reversed their connection with the U.S.S.R and left the socialist path:

"Prerequisites for such countercoups and degenerations are contained in the fact that a number of negative social phenomena like corruption, nepotism, economic and administrative inefficiency, the stagnation or slow rise in the living standard, the passiveness of the masses, nondemocratic government, and the like are rooted in the existing socioeconomic and sociocultural structure of many developing countries."³

He continues by complaining about the "political leadership in certain states and the absence of a broad proletarian class basis." In truth: African Sovietism is dictatorship not of the proletariat but without one.

Clients of this type, useful for the U.S.S.R's global strategy, could cost Moscow a pretty penny and, since their orientation is reversible, money and effort may in the end be lost. With this eventuality in mind, advocates of an African NEP have argued that it would create the best of two worlds. The country, while remaining a soviet satellite, would profit from the activities of its own "capitalists" and also from Western aid, private and public, including the entrepreneurship and technology of foreign-owned companies. In the end, thanks to these class enemies, the economy would be ripe to plunge into socialism with soon native and foreign capitalists the losers.

How about the threat that a local Bukharin or, worse still, an openly anti-socialist leader would turn the Soviet-oriented economy toward an occidental path? On condition that the government remains faithful to its Sovietist inclinations, it would have to defend the "commanding heights"--which in underdeveloped countries are not particularly impressive. It would have to refrain from debasing the national patrimony to "bureaucratic capital (that is, a distinctive variety of monopoly capital the economic predominance of which is based mainly not on enterprise in the sphere of material production or circulation but on the direct use of the political power of a narrow group of persons in mercenary interests)."⁴ The "state capitalism" of a government stumbling on the socialists path would be in danger of becoming the tool either of international corporations or of the "grande bourgeoisie," a somewhat grandiloquent expression for native businessmen cooperating with foreigners and therefore also called "dependent capitalists."⁵ Finally, it would be necessary

to watch the "native capitalists," defined as petty-bourgeois local entrepreneurs, who, however, as part of the "national bourgeoisie," might be rather submissive.

The Soviets themselves would have to control the local administration as much as possible. This is difficult in a faraway country that cannot be invaded as easily as the adjoining Warsaw Pact countries or Afghanistan. The next best thing is the presence of Cuban troops, a local Communist party sufficiently subverted to offer alternative leaders, and government chiefs in need of Soviet protection (emperors of the declining Roman Empire relied on or were the glorified prisoners of bodyguards recruited from Huns or Teutons; African satraps depend on a secret police from East Germany or of similar providence). Needless to add, the system can never be foolproof. In each case the U.S.S.R has to ponder, first whether the strategic advantages obtained or expected match the outlays and possible entanglements and, second, whether the African associates are reliable or, if necessary, expendable. In the case of Ethiopia versus Somalia Moscow decided in favor of the stronger nation; in Egypt or Mali it was the Africans who made the decision.

All of this is *deja vu* in history. During the Thirty Years War the Swiss confederation maintained a prudent, heavily armed neutrality, but Graubuden, with its important Alpine passes, tried to play Hapsburg and Bourbon off against each other. When Protestant clergymen (the mullahs of their time) and their Catholic counterparts were not just killing each other, the international power game was not without temporary success. In

1637, when Paris was behind in payments to Graubunden, a French army had to capitulate to the mountain people and its illustrious commander, the Duke of Rohan, became virtually a prisoner in Chur. Richelieu was sick at heart. "This disaster," he wrote to one of his friends, "is only due to lack of money. For each ecu paid in time (to Graubunden) we will now need ten and even they will not repair the loss. For a long time I have preached to our treasury; if they do not believe me now, one has to give up all hope."⁶ Richelieu's predicament may console lesser statesmen of today. France was perfectly capable of paying Graubunden, not by reducing the court's expenditures but by economizing elsewhere or through higher taxes on the poor. A great power must make up its mind as to where it wants to spend its resources (and the resources of satellites previously subdued or suborned). Strategic advantages,, their acquisition and retention, cost money and blood. The inclusion of Cuba in the Soviet bloc shows that the U.S.S.R has been willing to spend heavily on an overseas associate, undoubtedly by far more than it anticipated twenty years ago. But the Kremlin has judged a strategic position close to the American mainland worth the cost. This consideration leads to the second issue: the resources use and resource flow accompanying political intervention and penetration in sub-Saharan Africa.

II. AID

Soviet Aspirations in Africa Backed by Costly Power Structure

When the Kremlin contemplates the cost-benefit ratio of aid to sub-Saharan Africa, it does not limit its scrutiny to what is usually called "aid," i.e., the grants and concessional credits

provided for the economic development of backward client states and--in cases aside of troops from the Soviet camp in combat--for military modernization. Moscow estimates also the resource outlay of military (and intelligence) operations conducted by the U.S.S.R. itself or by proxies expecting compensation and support in one form or another. Nor can the Kremlin nowadays farm out economic and military assignments to the smaller Warsaw Pact members without a quid pro quo. These are no longer the days of Stalin when satellites were simply given orders. But the main expense for the U.S.S.R. arises insofar as African ventures exacerbate superpower rivalry and call for larger Soviet security efforts. Incorporation of Cuba into the Soviet empire brought forth not only hefty annual subsidies for the Castro regime but, in the course and as a consequence of two major American-Soviet crises, increased Soviet security outlays. The U.S.S.R.'s Cuban undertaking was economically costly but up to now quite profitable in terms of power politics; likewise the succor for Vietnam. The outcome is not always positive. Khrushchev⁷ reportedly complained in 1957 that China is "milking us dry"; this must have been a typically Khrushchevian exaggeration, but even more economic and military help--the Chinese in turn called the U.S.S.R. niggardly--would not have prevented the Sino-Soviet rift. Egypt is another example of a Soviet political as well as economic loss. At the Horn of Africa the Kremlin experienced the typical dilemma of two "friends" at loggerheads; it opted, reasonably enough, for the one with population and national produce ten times as large as the other.

The U.S.S.R's penetration into African areas was facilitated by American handicaps at the time of the Vietnam syndrome and the Watergate crisis; they must have figured on the Kremlin's balance sheet of reasons for and against activities in Africa. But such calculations are known to be speculative and hazardous, if not in the short, then in the long run, and the Soviet armament efforts of the 1970s were inevitably meant to back the prospective expansion into Africa. On the American side the Soviet forays into Angola, Ethiopia, and other places have been reasons for preparedness measures; thus a new arms race has begun at a time of economic slowdown in the Soviet bloc and, coincidentally, in the Western world. But East and West are different in that the defense burdens measured by the share of the national product devoted to defense is twice as high in the U.S.S.R as in the U.S. and three to four times as high as in NATO Europe. It would, of course, make no sense to impute, say: one or two percentage points of the Soviet defense share of 14-15 percent to the U.S.S.R's African extravaganzas--and yet some of the Soviet defense burden is related to them. Whatever this imponderable increment, it is by far heavier than the by and large modest Soviet bloc grants and credits for African aid up to now. Obviously the superpower rivalry is an open-ended affair with political and economic exertions in the offing.

To what extent do the Soviet allies help their protagonist carry the burden of sub-Saharan ventures? The smaller Warsaw Pact members in Eastern Europe give economic and military aid, send technicians to Africa, and train Africans at their educational institutions. Cuba has armies in the African field.

Turning first to Eastern Europe, its economic aid in the five years 1975-1979 to Soviet clients in Africa was estimated in current dollars as follows: Angola close to \$100 million, Mozambique \$15 million, Ethiopia some \$70 million, Somalia \$5 million, Congo \$12 million, Guinea \$85 million, and small amounts to others.⁸ At the purchasing power of the dollar in 1980, value of the commitments might be 20 percent higher. But these amounts refer to aid extended; aid actually delivered is always lower (of Eastern Europe's economic aid to all non-Communist LDCs in the same five-year period, only 43 percent of the amounts extended⁹ were actually drawn, namely \$1.73 billion of \$4.02 billion.) Between 1975 and 1979 Czechoslovakia and Poland transferred armaments to Angola for \$30 million, to Mozambique for \$5 million, and to Ethiopia for \$40 million at current prices;¹⁰ there were undoubtedly military deliveries from the GDR and other Eastern European countries.

All of this is appreciable from the point of view of the recipients, peanuts from that of the donors. The outlay is minute in comparison with either Eastern Europe's national security expenditures--influenced, in turn, by an international tension intensified by the U.S.S.R.'s Africa policy--or with Soviet subsidies for shaky Eastern European economies. If we accept Thad Alton's calculations,¹¹ reproduced in the ACDA publication quoted in the following footnote, Eastern Europe's military expenditures amounted in 1979 to 5.1 percent of its combined national produce. Whatever the exact figure, the burden is heavier than in NATO Europe (3.6 percent) with its greater

prosperity. In fact, Poland and Romania--with populations of 57.3 million out of Eastern Europe's 108.8 million--are practically bankrupt. And while up to 1956 the U.S.S.R. exploited Eastern Europe, the shoe is now on the other foot. A recent study by Jan Navous and Michael Marrese¹² arrives at the conclusion that, in 1980 dollars, the U.S. subsidized its six Eastern European associates to the tune of \$7 billion in 1978, \$11.6 billion in 1979, and \$21.7 billion in 1980. In 1981 Poland must have cost the Soviets a pretty amount in goods and hard currency. The subsidies just mentioned refer to opportunity costs, i.e., they include the resources the Soviet Union forwent by selling oil and other goods not to the West but at concessional prices to Eastern Europe. Whether the U.S.S.R. would actually have realized these gains in deals on the world market is another question. If it were true that at the same time the Soviets are fleecing their satellites in sales of military goods and services, the net subsidies would be somewhat lower.

Uncertainty surrounds also soviet subsidies for Cuba. With an allowance for concessional prices in trade with primary products (low for Soviet oil, high for Cuban sugar), Cuba appears to cost the U.S.S.R. annually between \$3 and 3 1/2 billion. Inevitably the U.S.S.R. has had to back the Cuban military efforts in Africa with goods and services; moreover, Castro's proxy role must have given him political clout vis-a-vis the Kremlin and a degree of freedom to pursue his own goals.

Modest Soviet Resources for African Aid Projects

Compared with the resources the U.S.S.R., pursuing its great power aspirations, has been ploughing into its military

establishments and into an orbit requiring succor, its economic aid to Third World countries is paltry; its military aid, answering strategic necessities, is somewhat larger in size. Moscow, of course, does not reveal aid statistics; so we have to rely on Western calculations. The CIA prepares them annually and published them through the year 1979¹³. Since then the information has remained classified as, unfortunately and in our opinion unnecessarily, so many of its previously open reports. Recently the OECD has come out with its own data of economic aid flows¹⁴, while the ACDA continues to publish estimates of arms transfers.¹⁵ All these compilations are in current dollars, which means that a sum totalling up several years with significant inflation would be higher if expressed in purchasing power of the dollar of later years.

Concepts complicate matters still further. As mentioned above, it is important to differentiate between aid extended or committed and aid drawn or delivered. In the four years 1977-1980 DAC, the advanced West's Development Assistance Committee, actually disbursed 80.5 percent of the aid committed, the U.S.S.R according to CIA in the years 1976-1979 32 percent (between 1954 and 1979 45 percent). We do not know the ratio of Soviet aid promised and delivered to sub-Saharan clients. Furthermore, all CIA information on "non-Communist LDCs" excludes Soviet associates such as Cuba or Vietnam but includes the African states currently tied to Moscow. Needless to add, finally, all figures are estimates and in some cases guesstimates.

military aid, subsidized or fully paid, is as old as history and supplied on purely political grounds. International help after catastrophes, natural or manmade, is also time-honored; during and after the two world wars American relief was worldwide. A novel undertaking, however, was President Truman's Point Four program; it started the systematic flow of economic aid from developed to underdeveloped countries. It is a common practice to misrepresent political stratagems as philanthropical; hypocrisy, said La Rochefoucauld, is a homage vice pays to virtue. In the case of American economic aid we could observe the reverse. While political motives were by no means absent, they were stressed to mask generosity; Machiavellian justification was a homage virtue paid to vice so that it did not look naive. A few years later and the program took on a universal scope: between 1954 and 1979 DAC provided gross official bilateral capital flows of altogether 215.9 billion current dollars, of which the U.S. contributed \$94.4 billion. The reasons why this statistic starts in 1954 and not in an earlier year is because at that time the U.S.S.R entered the aid scene with a bang. To the West's unnecessary dismay, it launched "an aggressive program of economic diplomacy."¹⁶ The program allowed the Third World to play East and West off against each other and then, as time went by and the Soviet deliveries remained modest, it provoked spokesman of underdeveloped countries occasionally to criticize Soviet niggardliness. By now the Third World takes aid programs for granted; largess has become a human right.

In the 26 years mentioned the U.S.S.R supplied economic aid valued at 8.23 billion current dollars. Even Mainland China, itself an underdeveloped country with a GNP presently estimated at one-eighth of the Soviet, gave during the same period economic aid of \$2.825 billion, i.e. one-third as much as the U.S.S.R. In 1979 and, of course in the dollar's purchasing power of that year, gross bilateral official capital flows were, according to CIA,¹⁷ \$7.012 billion from the U.S., \$23.351 billion from DAC as a whole, \$3.050 billion from OPEC (which started this type of aid in 1974), \$180 million from the PRC, \$575 million from the U.S.S.R, and \$265 million from Eastern Europe. There was an additional \$12 billion Western-supplied multilateral aid.¹⁸

Turning to sub-Saharan Africa and, first, to the important arms transfers, ACDA reports that in the five years 1975-1979 Soviet shipments amounted to 2.88 billion current dollars, i.e., \$576 million in the annual average. How much of these exports were for cash, on credit, or as grants is not known. Three quarters of this amount or \$2.17 billion went to Ethiopia, Angola, and Mozambique, \$21 million to a Somalia later abandoned, the rest to sundry governments leaning at least for a time toward Moscow (Mali \$110 million, Congo \$50 million, Madagascar \$30 million, Benin \$20 million). Arms the Cubans wielded were probably not all included in these figures but the estimates are very tentative.

Economic aid committed to sub-Saharan states with Soviet ties varying in degree and time is precariously estimated as follows:

The Somali Republic, which came into being in 1960 and sided with the U.S.S.R from 1969 to 1977, received in 1975 Soviet economic aid promises of \$62 million current dollars; it is not known to what extent they were honored. Eastern Europe did not extend economic aid. Since it reversed the alliance, CMEA countries have steered clear of the deviant regime. The Western DAC made bilateral commitments increasing from 29.9 million current dollars in 1977 to \$234.4 million in 1980, with the U.S. contributing bilateral aid rising from \$0.8 to \$74.7 billion.¹⁹ Expressed in 1980 dollars and with a supplement designed to come closer to purchasing power equivalents than conversion with official exchange rates achieves, the Somali GNP was \$666 million in 1960²⁰ and \$856 million in 1980; in terms of per capita product it declined from \$300 to \$244.

Ethiopia was given practically no economic aid, until in 1977 and 1978 Eastern Europe extended 23 and 45 million in current dollars; in 1979 the U.S.S.R, which up to then had refrained from economic aid, committed \$95 million. OECD estimates CMEA's 1978 commitments at \$99.4 million, those for 1980 (no breakdown by donors) at \$37.8 million. The latter amount represents 0.4 percent of the Ethiopian GNP (\$9.2 billion 1980 dollars) or \$1.15 for each of the country's 31.8 million inhabitants. Size and development of the Ethiopian GNP can only be guessed at. Our figures show a slight decline of the real GNP per capita from \$298 in 1974, when the Ethiopian revolution took place (total GNP in that year \$8.4 billion), to \$283 in 1980; in reality it may have receded more. DAC aid rose from \$51.2 million in 1977 to \$79.9 million in 1980 (the U.S. contribution increasing from \$6.9

to 13.4 million); multilateral aid was \$131.1 million in 1977, then declined somewhat and rose again to \$147.3 million in 1980, all aid data in current dollars.

Angola received Soviet economic aid promises of \$20, \$6, and \$1 million in each of the three years 1976, 1977, and 1978, Eastern European promises of \$10 million in 1976 and of \$76 million in 1978. OECD estimates total CMEA commitments at \$0.1 for 1979 and at zero for 1980. DAC aid increased from \$7.4 million in 1977 to \$57.7 million in 1980 (with an American bilateral contribution rising from \$0.2 to \$5.3 million); multilateral aid declined from \$42.2 to \$28.5 million between 1977 and 1980. Angola is one of the retrodeveloping countries. In 1974, the troubled year before it gained independence, the GNP in 1980 dollars was an estimated \$7.725 billion; 1980 it was \$5.889 billion. the per capita GNP declined from \$1,233 to \$850.

Mozambique: Soviet economic aid was extended only in 1976 and 1977 to the amount of \$3 and 5 million, respectively, Eastern European aid in 1977 and 1978 for \$12 and \$2 million in each year. OECD estimated CMEA aid in 1979 at \$0.4 million and in 1980 at \$2.8 million. DAC commitments were in 1977 \$108 million, in 1980 \$123.9 million, including U.S. contributions of \$5.2 and 14.8 million, respectively. In 1979 and 1980 OPEC gave bilateral aid of \$11.4 and \$10.3 million. Then there was multilateral aid rising between 1977 and 1980 from \$29.2 to \$50 million. Mozambique's GNP at 1980 dollars declined in toto from \$7.9 billion in 1974, the year before independence, to \$7.71 billion in 1980 or per capita from \$960 to \$561.

The People's Republic of the Congo received practically no economic aid from the U.S.S.R and Eastern Europe, if we use CIA's data. OECD lists CMEA commitments of \$31.0 in 1977 and \$0.4 million in 1978; afterwards nothing. DAC bilateral commitments: \$30.9 million in 1977 and \$64.0 in 1980, of which the U.S. contributed \$0.8 and \$0.9 million. OPEC committed bilaterally in 1978 and 1980 \$3.6 and \$21.1 million, respectively. Multilateral aid commitments increased from \$16.1 million in 1977 to \$60.2 million in 1980. The Congo's GNP is estimated at 1.137 billion 1980 dollars in 1970, at \$1.47 billion in 1980; in these ten years the per capita GNP moved from \$961 to \$951.

Benin. No Soviet or Eastern European aid worth mentioning. DAC aid rising between 1977 and 1980 from \$12.7 to \$57.8 billion (U.S. share \$0.8 to \$7.9 million). OPEC promised in 1978 \$8.2 million. Multilateral aid fell from \$63.1 to \$45.6 million. GNP in 1980 dollars: 1960, when Benin became independent, \$1.25 billion, 1980 \$2.17 billion in toto. Since the population increased by 70 percent in these twenty years, GNP per capita rose only from \$608 to \$622.

Guinea. In 1974 the U.S.S.R made aid commitments of \$2 million, Eastern Europe of \$80 million. Since then there were no further extensions. DAC commitments rose from \$7.1 million in 1977 to \$12.4 million in 1980, with no U.S. contributions. OPEC added in 1977 and 1979 bilaterally \$6.2 and \$6.9 million. In 1960, when Sekou Toure turned Guinea toward the Communist world, its GNP in 1980 dollars was \$1.65 billion, 1980 \$2.35 billion in toto, or per capita \$538 or \$430, respectively.

Madagascar. According to CIA, Soviet economic aid \$6 million in 1978; otherwise apparently nothing in recent years. OECD lists CMEA aid between 1977 and 1980 as \$14, \$28, \$0.4 million and zero. DAC provided in 1977 \$52.3 million and in 1980 \$95.7 million (U.S. in 1977 \$0.8, in 1979 \$2.1 million in 1980 nothing). OPEC's bilateral contributions, as promised, were \$8.3 in 1977, rising to \$34.2 in 1979 and declining to \$9.4 in 1980. Multilateral aid increasing from \$45.1 to \$132.6 million. Since the Malagasy gained independence in 1960, their total GNP grew from \$4.2 billion to \$6.05 billion; it fell pro capita from \$767 to \$707.

The data, thus assembled, fragile though they are, attest to three hard facts: First, the poor condition of the economies, not only being backward but moving backward in terms, if not of total, then of per capita GNP, only the population expanding. Second, the meager resources they receive from CMEA and the Soviets in particular, with drawings, of course, remaining behind commitments. Third, the by far larger transfers from the West in bilateral and multilateral funds, both of which supported by the U.S.

For the Soviets all of this is not a question of capability but of willingness. They feel that throughout their history they pulled themselves up by their bootstraps; in the process they disparage outside help they actually received. At any rate, the Politburo is not a philanthropic committee, it follows the dictates of power policy (which do not exclude an occasional act of generosity). Thus they are willing to underaid in resources and overaid in ideology, welcoming all the while "capitalist" aid

for their clients in the hope the latter will not be tempted to orient themselves toward the occident.

How useful is the ideological help, i.e. the Soviet example implemented with Soviet advice for sub-Saharan countries? Insofar as the Soviet system conforms to Oskar Lange's famous definition "a war economy sui generis" -- fashioned, in fact, after the ineffective German war economy of the First World War -- it may serve in regions under actual war conditions, and sub-Saharan Africa and still has its share in armed hostilities. But allocation of men and materials according to emergency priorities, regulation of the productive processes, and rationing in distribution are wasteful and invite corruption; they are not a model for economic development, once a degree of quiet is restored. Nor is Stalin's system of comprehensive planning advisable for African countries. It has worked badly in the U.S.S.R even after more than half a century of practical experience; it would create a mess in sub-Saharan countries without the prerequisite statistics and a seasoned administration.

Item, Stalin's policy to raise armaments and armaments supporting industries by throttling personal consumption is not applicable in areas where living conditions are anyhow at rock bottom and the industrial preconditions -- which the Soviet despot inherited from the Tsar -- are completely absent. The ruling party in Mozambique, FRELIMO (Frente de Liberacao de Mozambique) declared at its (nird Congress in February, 1977: "Only by building up heavy industry will our country be able to

insure control of the production processes, free itself from dependence and increase its economic capacity decisively." ²² For Africans this is a castle in Russia. Except in some light and labor-intensive manufactures, industrial investment is rational only where it serves to export low-cost raw materials (oil in Angola, bauxite in Guinea). Such activity, however, does not free a country "from dependence"; it integrates it into the world economy -- a profitable undertaking but not on FRELIMO's prescription.

Africa, with crude birth rates of almost 5 percent among the Soviet clientele and a population growth of about 2 1/2 percent o.a., requires agricultural development; in this respect the U.S.S.R offers the worst model imaginable since the country, with an almost stagnant population (outside its Muslim realms) is not able to feed itself in a modern fashion. Its mechanized state and collective farms require irrationally heavy investments far beyond African means, and at the same time Soviet farm equipment is rusting in the fields -- as has also been the case where African collectives received tractors and related implements of Eastern manufacture. Poland, with a combination of food shortages and inefficient industries is an example of what happens to an even highly educated population forced to introduce the Soviet system.

Regimes politically and ideologically close to Moscow imitate Soviet patterns not only because the U.S.S.R urges them on. Their leaders are either fanatic in their beliefs -- which need not be shared by their peoples -- or sycophants. In their desire to please their overlords, they sometimes out-Kremlin the

Kremlin. In such cases Moscow has to brake their enthusiasm, fearful that they have to be bailed out. Stalin told Bulgaria's Dimitrov to go slow on farm collectivization; Cuba received warnings during the Guevara experiments, and Angola was advised²³ "not to excel Portuguese businessmen and specialists." All this is a question of degree and the results cannot always be foreseen. For Angola, retrodeveloping and recently pinched by lower world market prices for oil, ties to the West have indeed been vital. Its leader, President Dos Santos, is a flexible man; we even witnessed the spectacle of Portugal's President General Eanes invited to Luanda only seven (lean) years after Angola's break with Lisbon. Dos Santos, after mentioning the country's socialist oath, drank a toast on "friendship and cooperation" between the two peoples and "to the health of his Excellency the President of the Portuguese Republic."

Much will depend not only on Angola's leadership but also on the international situation. Up to now, as the preceding survey by country shows, the West has been willing to help Soviet clients in sub-Saharan Africa in the hope that they might still reverse their association. If East-West tension should further increase and sub-Saharan Africa's geopolitical position grow in importance in the light of Latin American developments, the West might, as a minimum, reduce its aid and trade cooperation with Soviet clients (at least in bilateral dealings; multilateral agencies have achieved quite a degree of independence -- a political problem in itself). In such an eventuality the U.S.S.R. would have to step up its economic--and also military--aid to

African clients. The Kremlin would not shy away from expenditures provided it expects the strategic advantages to match the cost. The second largest economy in the world with apparently the largest military budget in the world could afford the resource outlay -- smallish compared with its other preparedness expense -- as much as France could have sent some ecus to Graubunden 3 1/2 centuries ago if Richelieu had prevailed over the royal treasury. The issue is not the economy but politics, foreign and domestic.

III. TRADE

Smallish with Soviet Export Surplus: Guns For Coffee

The transfers of military and civilian goods described in the preceding section are -- or should be -- reflected in the trade statistics of donors and recipients except that commercial statistics are unreliable in backward countries and often also in advanced countries. Arms flows in particular are frequently veiled or remain unrecorded in public. If, for instance, in 1981 the U.S.S.R shipped goods valued at 136.2 million rubles to Ethiopia while importing merchandise for 20.1 million rubles, there can be no doubt that the exports were made up chiefly of military supplies and to a lesser degree (judging precariously by the 1980 economic aid commitments) of civilian goods on concessional terms or otherwise. Military aid apart, trade of the U.S.S.R and its CMEA partners with Soviet clients in Africa has been as inconsiderable as their economic aid. After their conversion to the Soviet-oriented path, African governments proclaimed their intention to greatly strengthen their commercial

dealing with CMEA. Ethiopia even obtained observer status in that organization, but there is not much to observe, and other countries that were not admitted (for instance, Mozambique) have not missed a lot. CMEA has already several ailing members and is not eager to become a nursing home for the chronically ill. The client states, in turn, have become quite pragmatic themselves and have continued their economic relations with "capitalist" nations including their former colonial overlords and even with South Africa. In the context of their total exports and (civilian) imports the role of the U.S.S.R and other CMEA countries is smallish. This, as is hardly necessary to add, makes them more vulnerable to possible control measures by "capitalist" trading partners while, on the other hand, it would facilitate a break with the Soviet camp along the lines of Somalia's reversal of alliances.

Viewed from Moscow -- and this is the concern of the present chapter -- trade with the African clients is utterly insignificant. Given the world-wide sellers' market for weapons, even the Soviet arms could probably be sold to other shoppers on more advantageous terms. Nor is the U.S.S.R particularly interested in export goods from Africa. Angola, for instance, offers three main export commodities, petroleum, diamonds, and coffee. The U.S.S.R itself exports both oil and diamonds; faute de mieux it imports Angolan and also Ethiopian coffee -- a consumer good Moscow assigns a very low priority, whatever the opinion of Soviet citizens. Grain cannot be bought in sub-Saharan Africa; it is a deficit article both in Africa and in the

Soviet Union. If Guinea would have remained closer to the U.S.S.R, it would have been a major exception: the U.S.S.R, purchasing Guinean bauxite, imported in 1981 merchandise for 63.1 million rubles while exporting only 20.9 million rubles worth of goods to that country. The Soviet clients, having little to offer that interests Moscow, have import surpluses with the U.S.S.R, a situation that does not please the Soviets.

This then is the record, as expressed in Soviet trade statistics: The values are in current rubles; they reflect--not, of course, domestic Soviet prices but--world market prices, rising throughout recent years, minus the depreciation of the dollar in terms of the official ruble-dollar rate. Merchandise movements are sanitized to protect Soviet strategic interests, e.g., in regard to arms shipments.

Soviet exports to Ethiopia amounted to only 2.6 million rubles in 1974, the year the emperor was ousted; they climbed to 136.2 million in 1981, obviously as the result of such deliveries as the Soviet government saw fit to acknowledge. Imports rose from 3.6 million to 20.1 million rubles, a coffee break for the Soviet consumer.

Trade with Angola began with exports of 14.4 million rubles; they increased to 107 million in 1981. Imports are given as 2.2 million rubles in 1976 and a mere 8.1 million in 1981; they filled a few more Soviet coffee cups.

Mozambique became the U.S.S.R's trading partner in the same year 1976. Soviet exports did not reach 4 million rubles; they rose to 35.7 million in 1981. Imports are given for 1978 as 0.8 million rubles; in 1981 they were still as low as 1.3 million.

Benin: trade was miniscule in the mid-1970s as well as in 1981, when the U.S.S.R. exported for 1.6 million rubles and imported 0.4 million.

Congo: Soviet exports 1976 2 million rubles, 1981 6.9 million; imports 1976 2 million, 1981 5.5 million rubles.

Madagascar: insignificant except for slightly increased Soviet imports temporarily in 1976 and 1977.

Somalia: Soviet exports reached a maximum of 22.2 million in 1975 while imports amounted to only 4.3 million rubles. Trade was discontinued in 1978.

Adding Eastern European trade to the Soviet record would change the picture only marginally. It is a picture of Soviet bloc export surpluses reflecting military and economic aid with insufficient offsets through African merchandise, all this on a miniature scale. As a share of the U.S.S.R.'s total exports trade with Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, Benin, and the Congo amounted to less than 0.4 percent; imports were only 0.2 percent of the Soviet total.

Nor is there room for much expansion in real terms. In theory the economies are complementary: Africa could supply the U.S.S.R. with tropical products in exchange for Soviet manufactured goods, particularly machinery and vehicles and, of course, arms. In practice the Africans prefer Western articles and the U.S.S.R. has no resources to spare for luxuries such as coffee or tropical fruit. Only in the hypothetical case that political conditions were to isolate African clients from the world outside the Soviet bloc would trade increase by necessity

but the assumption might never become reality. If, on the other hand, sub-Saharan clients were separated from commerce with the Soviet bloc, they could continue their actual dealings with Western countries. This they could do by severing or at least deemphasizing their relations with the Kremlin without necessarily abandoning some sort of socialism, Marxist or otherwise. Politics has and will continue to have a clear-cut priority in the Soviet connection of African states.

FOOTNOTES

1. From the Report of the First Congress of the MPLA (Movimento Popular para a Liberacao de Angola) quoted in the stimulating volume The New Communist Third World, edited by Peter Wiles, on p. 76 of Nicos Zafiris' essay on "The People's Republic of Angola: Soviet-Type Economy in the Making," New York, 1982.

2. Books aside, much of the Soviet discussion has taken place in scholarly journals such as Narody Azii i Afriki (Peoples of Asia and Africa), issued by the two institutes of Oriental Studies and of Africa, and Aziya i Afrika Segodnya (Asia and African Today), also published by the Oriental Studies Institute. Professor Elizabeth K. Valkenier, Russian Institute, Columbia University, prepared a valuable paper on "Soviet - Third World Relations: 'The Economic Bind,'" of which a condensed and updated version appeared in Problems of Communism, July-August 1979 under the title "The USSR, The Third World, and the Global Economy." In its Analysis Report (FB 81-10010) of 12 March 1981, "Soviet Guidelines for Third World Regimes: Political Control, Economic Pluralism," the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) provides both useful comments and bibliographical references.

3. Quoted from FBIS Trends, USSR-Ghana, 31 March 1982, p. 10.

4. From an article by Yuriy N. Rozaliyev on "State Capitalism and the Developing Economy" in Narody Azii i Afriki, 1980, No. 1. Rozaliyev, of the Institute of General History, is one of those "orientalists" who believe that African states should make use of the "capitalists."

5. Cf. FBIS, 12 March, 1981, *loc. cit.*, on Karen Brutents and his book Osvoobodivshiesya Strany v 70-ye Gody (The Liberated Countries in the 1970s), published in 1979. Brutents, a Soviet government official whose general outlook is similar to that of the previously quoted Rozaliyev, made the distinction between "native" and "dependent" capitalists.

6. Quoted in Carl J. Burckhardt's monumental biography Richelieu, Vol. 3, Munich 1966, p. 265/66.

7. Quoted in Soviet Economic Aid by Joseph S. Berliner, New York 1958, p. 147.

8. National Foreign Assessment Center, Communist Aid Activities in Non-Communist Less Developed Countries, 1979 and 1954-79, ER 80-10318U, October 1980. Previous issues of the same publication were also used for the present paper.

9. National Foreign Assessment Center, *loc. cit.*, Table A-5.

10. Thad P. Alton and his associates published their latest estimates in the Occasional Paper No. 65, Table 14 of their New York based Research Project on National Income in East Central Europe.

11. U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1970-1979, Washington, D.C., March 1982, Table III.

12. From the Discussion Paper No. 80-32 "Implicit Subsidies in Soviet Trade with Eastern Europe," Department of Economics, The University of British Columbia, September 1980. Dr. Vanous

supplied the writer with slightly revised figures for 1979 and 1980 in the last column of Table 4.

13. See p. 13, FN 1.

14. Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development, Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Developing Countries, 1977/1980, Paris 1981. This is the second issue of a new series.

15. U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1970-1979, Washington, March 1982.

16. Joint Economic Committee, Dimensions of Soviet Economic Power, Washington, 1962, p. 416.

17. Handbook of Economic Statistics 1981, NF HES 81-001, November 1981, Table 73. The report mentioned on p. 12, FN 1, has slightly different estimates for the USSR (\$500 million), Eastern Europe (\$255 million), and the PRC (\$160 million); all these figures should be viewed as indicating general magnitudes.

18. OECD, loc. cit., p. 231.

19. All DAC data from OECD publication quoted on p. 14, FN 2.

20. See the author's annual report on "The Planetary Product," distributed by the Department of State.

21. Western experts are as able to gum up their own activities as those of the USSR. The following quotation from the report by the Executive Director of the UN World Food Council (WFC/12/4/Part I, 22 February 1982) describes how advice squads of international agencies descend on a helpless country discombobulating its already overtaxed government: "For example,

Upper Volta can hardly cope with the number of assistance projects that it is receiving. For 1981 there were 340 external assistance missions, and the government was not always able to keep up with the management and coordination requirements, with resulting confusion at all levels and a loss of resources and efficiency. Many of these missions give an impression of less than full effectiveness."

22. Wiles, loc. cit., p. 129.

23. Elizabeth K. Valkenier, Soviet-Third World Relations: "The Economic Bind," p. 19, Final Report to the National Council for Soviet and East European Research, referred to on p. 7, FN 1.

U.S.S.R. and ISLAM

**Soviet Islam, Asset or Liability for the
Soviet Strategy in the Muslim World**

Alexander Bennigsen

MOSCOW AND ISLAM

Introduction

Islam: Asset or Liability for the Soviet Strategy in the Third World?

In this chapter we will attempt to analyze the complex mechanism of the relationship between the Soviet Government and the Official Islamic Establishment during the Brezhnev's era (1964/1982...) the result of the so-called "Islamic Strategy" devised by the Soviet Government to be applied within its own territories and in the Muslim world abroad.

Following Nikita Khrushchev's effort of more than ten years to radically eliminate all religious survivals -- including Islam -- the Brezhnev administration, for the first time since the Revolution, reversed Soviet policy towards Islam spectacularly and started a close cooperation with the Official Islamic Establishment headed by Chairman of the Muslim Spiritual Board of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, the Mufti Ziautdin Babakhanov.

This cooperation is based on mutual concessions. It had been voluntarily accepted by Muslim religious leaders, not forced upon them. Those leaders are treated by the Soviet authorities as partners, not as agents or tools. The Soviet muftis enjoy a greater measure of security than Mgr. Pimen, the Moscow Patriarch, in their dealings with the Soviet Government; they also possess a larger manuevring field being more useful to the

authorities than the Orthodox Church. The relations between the Soviets and the Islamic clerics are somewhat like a complicated oriental bargaining procedure, in which both sides believe that they can and eventually will - outwit their opponents, because "time is working for them." In the opinion of the Soviet authorities, Islam, even when useful, tamed and "domesticated", is nevertheless an obnoxious survival of the past doomed to disappear sooner or later. In the opinion of Muslim religious leaders, on the other hand, Islam is Eternal Truth, while Marxism/Leninism is, at the best, a temporary error.

The "Islamic Strategy" has undoubtedly provided the Soviet Government with an excellent trump card. In the course of the last sixteen years, it has served to increase Moscow's prestige and has assisted Soviet penetration into the Muslim world abroad but this strategy was not without danger and there are some indications that the Soviet Government may be discarding it, either for the time being or for good.

When analyzing the Soviet/Muslim relations, two fundamental factors must be constantly kept in mind: the demographic evolution of Soviet Islam and the changing policy of the Soviets towards Islam since 1917.

The Demographic Factor

According to the figures provided by the latest Soviet census carried out in 1979, Muslim nationalities numbered a little over 43 million, i.e., 16.4 percent of the total population of the Soviet Union of 262 million.² At present (in

1982), the number of these Muslim nationalities has probably increased to 47 million, of which 30 million live in Central Asia, 9 million in the Caucasus and 8 million in the Middle-Volga/Urals area. They also form diaspora colonies all over the territory of the U.S.S.R.

These communities are rapidly expanding. Between 1959 and 1970, they registered an increase of 45%, whilst during the same period the total population of the U.S.S.R. had increased by 16 percent and the Russians by 13 percent only. Between 1970 and 1979, the total increase of the population of the U.S.S.R. was 8.4 percent, that of the Great Russians 6.5 percent, while that of the Muslims 23.2 percent. By the turn of the century, the Muslims will number between 65 and 70 million, and account for approximately 22 percent of the entire population of the Soviet Union.

Historical Background

The Soviet Government's policy toward Islam was far from uniform. Between 1917 and 1980 it showed seven spectacular variations:

1. October 1917-1920 - Period of "War-Communism"

characterized by "cavalry raids" and an indiscriminating and brutal anti-Islamic campaign led by the local Bolshevik organizations which left a deep and lasting imprint on the Muslim population. It is during this period that two major uprisings took place against the Soviet authorities, under the banner of the "Holy War": the Basmachi movement in

Central Asia (1918-1928) and the revolt of the North-Caucasian Mountaineers (Daghestanis and Chechens) led by the Naqshbandi Sufi brotherhood.

2. 1920-1928 - Period of "National Communism" in the Muslim republics, when Islam enjoyed a comparatively favorable position. Muslim intellectuals who joined the Russian Communist Party hold responsible positions in the administration of their republics though their services were never required in the Muslim world beyond the Union's frontiers. A new anti-religious campaign started around 1925.

3. 1928-1943 - Pre-war Stalin's era. Period of violent anti-Islamic and anti-nationalist persecutions corresponding to the first attempt of the Soviets to destroy Islam. An "iron curtain" is drawn isolating Central Asia from the outer world. The pre-revolutionary Muslim elite is liquidated. The ear period is marked by an uprising in Northern Caucasus and, in 1943, by the deportation of over a million Muslims.

4. 1943-1953 - Post-war Stalin's era. Period of relative religious tolerance but at the same time of anti-nationalist pressure. The main events marking this era are the creation of an Official Muslim Administration (the four Muslim Spiritual Boards), loyal towards the Soviet regime, the opening of new mosques and the foundation of the medressah Mir-i Arab. The anti-religious propaganda is toned down. Soviet Islam and the outside Muslim world have few contacts and the leaders of Soviet Islam are not used for service abroad.

5. 1953-1964 - Krushev's era: new anti-religious campaign. The number of "working" (active) mosques drops from around 1500 to less than 500. Anti-religious propaganda is violent and focused mainly on the North Caucasus.

6. 1964-1980 - Brezhnev's era: a new period of comparative religious tolerance. The adoption of an "Islamic strategy" results in the opening of the Muslim republics to foreign Muslim visitors and in cooperation with Muslim leaders within the U.S.S.R. and abroad.

7. 1980... (?) - "Post-Kabul era". This is new period of isolation for Soviet Islam (?) which could be the first step before a new offensive against the Muslim world abroad.

There is less cooperation between the Soviet authorities and the Muslim leaders and a new wave of anti-Islamic propaganda has been launched, focused on Central Asia.

I. "ISLAMIC STRATEGY", 1964-1980 - THE ASSETS

1. The Aims of the "Islamic Strategy"

The objectives pursued by means of the "Islamic Strategy" can be classified as follows:

A. On the domestic level the Soviet authorities have endowed the Muslim Religious Establishment with a well structured ecclesiastical hierarchy, within which the mufti of Tashkent, Ziautdin Babakhanov, plays the role of a kind of "Muslim archbishop" with maximum prestige and authority. This "Official Islamic" hierarchy is loyal to the Soviets and controls all the

) "working" mosques (500 at the utmost), the two active medressahs of the Soviet Union and all the "registered clerics" (maximum 3000). It is meant to ensure the loyalty of the believers toward the Soviets. The sermons during the Friday religious services (Khutbe), the fetwas (legal pronouncements of the Muftis on religious doctrine), the editorials of the only Muslim periodical published by the Mufti of Tashkent - "The Muslims of the Soviet East" (quoted hereafter as English version MSE or MOS French version) - and, though more seldom, radio broadcasts from Moscow, Tashkent and Baku are the channels that enable the religious authorities to reach the believers and to impress on them the idea that the Soviet regime is the best in the world.

) B. On the International Level, religious authorities were encouraged to develop relations with the ruling elites of the Muslim World abroad, especially with those of the conservative countries, such as Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Kuwait, the Gulf Emirates, Lebanon and Egypt, which have little or no diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. and are so far immune to the political influence of the Soviets. Simultaneously, Muslim territories of the U.S.S.R. formerly closed and protected by the Iron Curtain, were around 1968 opened to foreign Muslim visitors and utilized as showcases to prove the superiority of the socialist system. The part played by the religious leaders within the framework of the "Islamic Strategy" has been very important: they helped to mobilize the public opinion of the Muslim world against the "U.S., Chinese,

Israeli...Imperialism" and to advertise the U.S.S.R. not only as the best friend of Islam but also as a Muslim power, belonging to the "World of Islam" opposed to the hostile world of the "Infidels" as typified by the Americans ("Us" Muslims versus "them"); they have participated actively in Soviet propaganda, stressing the religious tolerance of the Soviet Government and exalting the happiness and freedom of the believers. In one word, they have acted as the introducers, middlemen and propagandists of Soviet ideology, being more acceptable and enjoying a larger audience than the Russian Communists who are still handicapped in the opinion of the oriental elites by the double disadvantage of being Europeans and atheists.

II. MECHANISM OF THE "ISLAMIC STRATEGY"

The "Islamic Strategy" was inaugurated at the end of 1962 with the creation of the Department of International Relations of the Muslim Spiritual Boards in Moscow. The Department is chaired by Azam Aliakbarov (and Azeri) who played a major role in the development of friendly relations with foreign countries (MOS, 4/1976, p. 3) (3 bis), but it is only in 1968/1969 that Soviet Muslim clerics made their appearance, in substantial numbers, in the Muslim world abroad and that foreign delegations began to visit Central Asia regularly.⁴

There are three different aspects to the "Islamic Strategy":

A. Exchange of Friendly Delegations.

1. Foreign Delegations to U.S.S.R. - Visits of the Soviet Union by foreign Muslim delegations follow an unvarying, uniform pattern: an invitation is issued by the Mufti of Tashkent, Ziautdin Babakhanov, Chairman of the Spiritual Board for Central Asia of Kazakhstan (4 bis) addressed in priority to the ministers (or directors) of the Waqfs and Religious Affairs (who belong simultaneously to the religious and administrative spheres), then to the leading religious personalities (chief muftis and qadis, to leaders of International Islamic Organizations, also, though more seldom, to a few selected journalists.

In Tashkent, the delegations are welcomed by Ziautdin Babakhanov. The delegates assist at a Friday prayer in one of the "working" mosques of Tashkent ("Tilla Sheikh" or "Hoja Alambardar") and pay a visit to the High Theological Institute "Imam Ismail al-Bukhari". If the delegation is politically important, it may be invited to a reception organized by the Government of the Uzbek Republic or, at a lower level, by the Gor-Soviet of the city of Tashkent. Afterwards, the delegates visit Samarkand, Bukhara (where a reception is organized at the medresseh Mir-i Arab). Some delegations also visit Dushanbe and the Ferghana Valley (Namangan, Andizhan, Osh). Alma-Ata, capital of Kazakhstan and Frunze, capital of Kirghizia, being purely Russian towns where the native population has been reduced to the state of a small minority and Ashhabad, capital of Turkmenistan, where all mosques have been closed, are seldom visited. The

Central Asian tour obviously also includes a visit to a model Kolkhoz and to an industrial plant where the directors are Uzbeks.

After Central Asia, the foreign delegations are generally received in Baku by the Shia Sheikh ul-Islam, chairman of the Muslim Spiritual Board of Transcaucasia. There is a prayer at the "Taze-Pir" cathedral mosque and a party is given by the Gor-Soviet of Baku. Some delegations also visit Ufa, the capital of Bashkiria, siege of the Muslim Spiritual Board of European Russia and Siberia.⁵ The tour ends in Leningrad and Moscow with a visit to the "working" mosques. In Moscow, the most important delegations are welcomed by Kuroedov, the chairman of the Council for Religious Affairs of the Council of Ministers of U.S.S.R. The less important delegations are received by Abdullah Nurulaev (an Uzbek), vice-chairman of the said Council and head of its Muslim Department.

The following, incomplete, list of the most important foreign delegations having visited the U.S.S.R. might give an idea of the extent of these friendly exchanges:

-- 1972 - A delegation of Moroccan ulema of the Qarawiyyin University-Fez - led by Sheikh Mohammed al-Kattani (Mos, 2/1974, p. 26) came to Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara.

-- 1973 - A group of Pakistani ulema, led by Sheik al-Kasemi, deputy-chairman of the World Association of the "readers of the Quran" (Kari) and chairman of the Jama'at-i Ulama-i Islam, came to Tashkent and Moscow and was received by Barmenkov, deputy-chairman of the Council for Religious Affairs. The

reception was an occasion for denouncing Zionism and U.S. Imperialism (MSE 1/1974, pp. 18-20).

-- Winter 1973 - 1974 - Delegation of the Young Muslim Society of Egypt, led by Ibrahim al-Tahavi and Yahya Ramazan Secretary-General of the Society, visited Tashkent, Moscow, Ufa, Baku, Sochi (MSE, 1/1974, pp. 20-21).

-- Winter 1973-1974 - A group of Singapore Muslims, headed by Mohammed Khan ibn Khan Mohammed, Chairman of the Qaziyat of Singapore, visited Moscow, Ufa, Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara (MSE, 1/1974, p. 22).

-- Winter 1973-1974 - Several visitors to Tashkent were received by Ziautidin Babakhanov: Sharif Ahmad, Vice-Minister of Information of Malaysia; Faruh Omer, a Kuwaiti historian; Hamza Bubaker, rector of the Theological Institute of the Paris mosque (MOS, 2/1974, p. 22-23).

-- May 1975 - Abdul-Razzaq Mohammed, Deputy-Prime Minister of Mauritius, visited Tashkent, Bukhara, Samarkand; a solemn reception was given by Ziautdin Babakhanov (MOS, 3/1975, pp. 16-17).

-- May 1975 - A group of ulemas from Somalia led by the sheikh Ali-al-Sufi, came to Tashkent and Baku (MOS, 3/1975, pp. 18-19).

-- 3 to 17 May 1976 - An important Jordanian delegation headed by Dr. Abdul Aziz al-Hayat, Minister of the Waqfs, of Religious Affairs and of the Holy Shrines and Sheikh Mohammed Abdul Hashim great Mufti of Jordan and the Sheikh Asa'd Bayud al-Tamimi, Imam of the Al-Aqsa mosque (Jerusalem), came to Tashkent,

Bukhara, Samarkand, Baku, Leningrad and Moscow. A reception was given by A.A. Nurulaev, Deputy-Chairman of the Council of Religious Affairs. Dr. al-Hayat made an enthusiastic statement: "...Soviet Muslims are enjoying full civil rights and freedom granted to all people by the Soviet Constitution". (MSE, 3/1979, p. 8).

-- May 1976 - An Afghan delegation led by the sheikh Inayatollah Iblagh, visited Tashkent, Samarkand, Moscow, Leningrad and was received by A.A. Nurulaev. Sheikh Iblagh expressed extreme enthusiasm (MSE, 4/1976, p. 20).

-- May 1976 - Abdurrahman Ali Shakir, Chief Editor of the Journal Rose al-Yusef of Cairo, invited by Ziauddin Babakhanov, visited Tashkent and Moscow (MSE, 4/1976, p. 20)

-- 10-16 July 1976 - Ahmed M. Zabara, Great Mufti of Yemen came with family to Tashkent (MSE, 4/1976, p. 20).

-- Spring 1977 - A Mauritanian delegation headed by Hamdan Ould Taha, Minister of Religious Affairs, visited Tashkent, Bukhara and Samarkand (MSE, 3/1977, pp. 21-22).

-- September 1978 - A Turkish delegation led by Lutfi Dogan, Minister of State and Tewfiq Ersen, Director of Department of Religious Affairs, came to Tashkent, Bukhara, Samarkand, Baku and Moscow. They were given the red carpet treatment by the Uzbekistan Government and by Kuroedov, who organized a reception for them in Tashkent and Moscow respectively (MSE, 4/1978, pp. 2-5)

-- May 1979 - A delegation from South Yemen headed by the mufti Abdallah Mohammed Hatem, director of the Department of

Religious Affairs paid a visit to Tashkent and Dushanbe. On this occasion, "imperialist calumnies" on the absence of freedom in U.S.S.R. were denounced (MSE, 3/1979, p. 23).

-- September 1979. An Afghan delegation led by Abdal-Aziz Sadeq Chairman of the Council of ulema of Afghanistan visited Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Dushanbe, Moscow and Leningrad (MSE, 4/1979, p. 27).

Since the occupation of Kabul only two foreign Muslim delegations have been invited to U.S.S.R.

-- August/September 1980, an Afghan "public-opinion" delegation including some ulema and imam-khatib visited Tashkent, Namangan, Samarkand and Bukhara and was received by Ziautdin Babakhanov.

-- June 1981, a delegation of Iranian religious personalities headed by the Ayatollah Sadegh Khalkhali was invited by the Sheikh ul-Islam of Baku, Alla-Shukur Pasha Zade, Chairman of the Muslim Spriritual Board of Transcaucasia and visited Baku, Moscow, Leningrad, Samarkand and Tashkent (Le Monde, June 19, 1981, quoting Tass, June 17, 1981). It was the first time that a foreign delegation visited the U.S.S.R. on the invitation of the Baku Spiritual Board.

After their visit, foreign delegates are asked to give their impressions for publication in the Muslims of the Soviet East. Generally their impressions are excellent: the visits are rapid and the visitors' contacts are limited to the representatives of the Soviet Government and of the Spiritual Boards, the entertainments are lavish, numerous believers attend the Friday

prayers and Islam appears prosperous, happy and free. Everything is fine, el-Hamdullah...

However, it sometimes happens that a visitor, shrewder than the average, refuses to accept the "Potemkin village" aspect of Soviet Islam at its face-value and publishes an unpleasant report upon his return. In such a case, the religious authorities are asked to denounce the "slanderer" vigorously. Nearly all the issues of the Muslims of the Soviet East contain a special column headed "For Truth's sake", signed by Ziautdin Babakhanov himself or by one of his deputies: Abdulgani Abdullaev or Yusufkhan Shakirov. For instance:

-- MOS, 1/1974, pp. 23-26, "Woe to the falsehood mongers", denouncing an American journalist, Thomas Abercrombie (incidentally: a Muslim) for his slanderous photos of Central Asia in the National Geographic Magazine.

-- MOS, 2/1974, pp. 25-29, "For Truth's Sake" by Abdulgani Abdullaev, deputy-chairman of the Tashkent Spiritual Board denouncing a Moroccan journalist, Dr. Ali al-Muntasir, for his article in Da'wat al-Haqq.

-- MSE, 1/1975, pp. 8-13, an article signed by Ziautdin Babakhanov himself, attacking several Pakistani visitors, particularly Abdulhafiz Abdurabbuh for his article in Akhbar al-Alam-i Islami, "Communist Terror against Islam".

-- MSE, 3/1977, pp. 18-20, "A biased judgement", an article by Abdulgani Abdullaev, attacking other Pakistani visitors (Pakistani visiting Central Asia seem to be the most astute observers of Soviet Affairs).

-- MSE, 3/1978, pp. 8-11, "Truth about Soviet reality" by Yusufkhan Shakirov, Deputy-Chairman of the Spiritual Board, denouncing an Iranian visitor, Manuchehr Azum, who wrote in the journal Views of Islam (No 35-36) of Tehran, that "in the U.S.S.R., personal dictatorship has replaced the dictatorship of the proletariat".

-- MSE, 4/1978, pp. 15-19, an article signed by Gulam Qadir Mirza Yakubov, denouncing the anti-Soviet character of the Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs of the "King Abdul Aziz University" (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia).

2. Soviet Delegations Abroad

After visiting the U.S.S.R., foreign personalities (Ministers, directors of wagfs, grand muftis, chief qadis) often return the courtesy by inviting the Soviet religious authorities to their respective countries. Since 1969, Soviet ulemas have been constantly touring the Muslim world. They are generally headed by Ziautdin Babakhanov and one (or both) of his two deputies, Abdulhani Abdullaev and Yusukhan Shakirov. Until 1980, none of the chairmen of the other three Spiritual Boards had led delegations abroad. In 1981, for the first time a Soviet delegation to North Yemen was headed by Mahmud Gekkiev, the mufti of Daghestan.⁶

Visits abroad are among the best means of advertising the "Muslim face" of the U.S.S.R. Soviet delegates are excellent scholars. When received by foreign rulers (such as the kings of Saudi Arabia and Jordan for instance), when delivering a

theological talk of Saudi Arabia and Jordan for instance), when delivering a theological talk or giving interviews to the local press, they appear as true representatives of Dar ul-Islam, as "Us" - Muslims, versus the "alien Americans".

For the last twelve years, Soviet delegations have visited the entire Muslim world, giving special attention to the conservative countries - Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco have been their special targets,⁷ as shown by the list below (which enumerates only the most important delegations):

-- 1969 - Ziautdin Babakhanov, Mufti of Tashkent visited Morocco.

-- 1972 - Delegation of Soviet ulema headed by the Sheikh I. Sattiev went to Morocco.

-- March 1974 - Important group of ulema headed by the Mufti Ziautdin Babakhanov, Abdulgani Abdullaev, the Deputy-Chairman of the Tashkent Spiritual Board and Azam Aliakbarov, Chairman of the Department of International Affairs of the Islamic Organizations of U.S.S.R. visited North Yemen, Saudi Arabia (where a reception was organized for them by King Faysal) and Abu Dhabi (where they were received by the Sheikh Zayed b. Sultan al-Nahyan, President of the Union of the Gulf Emirates).

-- February 1975 - Another important Soviet delegation headed by Ziautdin Babakhanov, Yusufkhan Shakirov and Azam Aliakbarov went to Bagdad for a conference on "The mobilization of all efforts in the struggle against Zionism, Imperialism and their running dogs"; the delegation then proceeded to Jordan (where it was received by King Husein, Abdullah Gosha, Chief Qadi

of Jordan and by Dr. Abdul Aziz Hayat, Minister of the Waqfs), to Egypt where a reception was organized at the University of al-Azhar), (MOS., 3/1975, pp. 10-12), to Syria (with a reception organized by the Sheikh Abdul-Sattar, Minister of the waqfs). MOS, 2/1976, p. 16.

-- September 1975 - Soviet delegation headed by Ziautdin Babakhanov to the International Conference in Mekka on the "mission of the mosques" (Babakhanov received by the King Khalid, MOS, 4/1975, pp.3-5).

-- October 1975 - Soviet delegation to the International Symposium on "Islamic Education" in Lucknow, India (invited by Abdul Hasan al-Husni al-Nadavi, Chairman of the Nadvat ul-ulema Society of India, MOS., 2/1976, p.17)

-- October-November 1975 - A group of Soviet ulama, led by Yusufkhan Shakirov paid a visit to Somalia and Mauritius (MOS., 1/1976, pp. 6-8).

-- 1-6 February 1976 - A Soviet delegation headed by Abdulgani Abdullaev and by Azam Aliakbarov took part in the Muslim/Christian dialogue in Tripoli (reception by Colonel Qadhafi, MOS., 2/1976, pp. 4-7).

-- January-February 1977 - A Soviet delegation headed by Abdulgani Abdullaev took part in the International Conference in Ouargla on "Islamic Thought", Algeria, (MOS., 3/1977, pp. 22-23).

-- March 1977 - A Soviet delegation headed by Abu Turab Yunus Imam-Khatib of the "Tilla Sheikh" mosque of Tashkent took part in the International Symposium on the "Muslim P edication" in Bangladesh (MSE., 3/1977, p. 24).

-- March 1977 - A Soviet delegation headed by Ziautdin Babakhanov took part in an International Congress in Mekka on the "Problems of the Mosques", (MSE., 3/1978, pp. 3-5, full text of Babakhanov's report).

-- April 1977 - A group of Soviet clerics headed by Ziautdin Babakhanov went to Nuakshot, Mauritania (MSE., 3/1977, p. 21).

-- July 1978 - An important Soviet delegation headed by Ziautdin Babakhanov attended the International Conference on the "Propagation of Islam" in Karachi. Babakhanov is received by the General ul-Haqq and gave several interviews to Pakistani newspapers (MSE., 4/1978, pp. 5-6).

-- Summer 1978 - A group of Soviet clerics headed by Abdulgani Abdullaev visited Niger (a reception was organized by Omar Ismail, chairman of the Islamic Association of Niger), and also Mali and Senegal (MSE., 4/1978, pp. 7-8)

-- November 1978 - A Soviet delegation headed by Ziautdin Babakhanov attended the International Conference in Istanbul on "Hegira calendar" (MSE., 1/1979, pp. 2-4).

-- December 1978 - A Soviet delegation attended the International Conference on the "Islamic Thought" in Batna, Algeria, (MSE., 1/1979, pp. 4-9).

Since the invasion of Afghanistan, only two Soviet delegations have been sent abroad, if we do not take into account the several groups of Soviet clerics who visited Afghanistan.

The two delegations were:

-- Winter 1980 - A Soviet delegation headed by Abdulgani Abdullaev to Syria. The delegation was given red carpet treatment and was received by Hafez Assad, Mohammed al-Khatib, minister of the waqf and Ahmed Quftari grand mufti of Syria. The delegation also paid a visit to Jordan where it was received by Kamil al-Sharif, minister of the waqf. (MOS., 2/1980, pp. 15-16).

-- December 1979, January 1980 - A group of Soviet ulemas, headed exceptionally by Mufti Mahmud Gekkiev, Chairman of the Spiritual Board of Daghestan and Northern Caucasus visited the Arab Republic of Yemen where it was received by the Grand Mufti Ahmed Zabara and by the Government of Yemen. (MSE, 2/1981, pp. 12-14).

B. International Conferences Organized by the Mufti of Tashkent

The international conferences organized in Central Asia (Tashkent, Samarkand, Dushanbe) by Ziautdin Babakhanov on various spiritual and political topics undoubtedly constitute one of the most successful channels for projecting the image of "U.S.S.R. - best friend of the Islamic World", for advertising the prosperity of Soviet Islam and its unconditional support of Soviet policy, as well as for denouncing various imperialisms: U.S., Israeli, Chinese, South African, etc... These conferences have been attended by numerous delegations from the entire Muslim World, including those from countries that have no diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. The reception is always lavish and as a rule, foreign visitors are impressed.

-- 6-8 October 1970 - Conference in Tashkent on the theme: "Unity and cooperation of Muslim people in the struggle for Peace". It was chaired by Z. Babakhanov and attended by a hundred Soviet ulema and by representatives from 24 Muslim countries. Violent attacks were made against U.S., Israeli and South African "Imperialists" (MOS., 2/1974, p. 7 - 3/1975, p. 14 - MSE., 4/1976, p. 3).

-- 1973 - Conference in Tashkent on the theme of "Soviet Muslims support the just struggle of the Arab people against Israeli imperialist aggression", (MOS., 2/1974, p. 7 and MES., 4/1976, p. 3).

-- August 1974 - An important conference organized in Samarkand to commemorate the 1200th anniversary of Imam Ismail al-Bukhari, was attended by high ranking personalities from 27 countries, including Sheikh Mohammed Safat al-Sakkah al-Amini, Deputy Director of the "World Muslim League", Sheikh Mohammed Abdurrahman Bisar Pro-Rector of the University of Al-Azhar, Hasan Khalid, grand mufti of Lebanon, Abdullah Gosha, chef qadi of Jordan, Dr. Awn al-Sharif Kassim, minister of the waqfs of Sudan, Dr. Nafeh Kassim, minister of the waqfs of Iraq, Dr. Ibrahim Tewfik al-Tahawi, secretary general of the Muslim Youth Union (sieve in Cairo) and delegates from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Somalia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Sri Lanka, North Yemen, Senegal and Bulgaria... (MSE., 4/1974).

-- October 1976 - An International Congress organized in Tashkent to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the creation of the Central Asian Spiritual Board was attended by

distinguished representatives from Syria, North Yemen, Morocco, Jordan, Tunisia, India, Pakistan and Lebanon. Among others, the following personalities attended the Congress: Mohammed al-Fassi (Morocco) chairman of the association of Islamic Universities; Abu Bakr Hamza, rector of the Islamic Institute of Paris, Ahmed al-Quftari, grand mufti of Syria; Abdul Aziz Hayat, minister of the waqfs of Jordan, the sheikh Ahmad Zabara, grand mufti of North Yemen, etc... The final resolution - "an appeal to all men of good will" - was a violent attack against Israel and the U.S.A. (MOS., 1/1977, pp. 2-7)

-- July 3rd, 1979 - An international conference in Tashkent to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the journal Muslims of the Soviet East. The conference was chaired by mufti Babaknanov and attended by high-ranking delegates from Jordan, Iraq, India, Turkey, Tunisia, Pakistan, Kuwait, Iran, Lebanon, Japan, Bulgaria and Ethiopia. The final declaration - signed by all the delegates, including those from pro-Western countries - contained malicious attacks against "Israeli, U.S.A., South African and Chinese imperialisms". (MSE, 2/1979).

-- 6-10 June 1977 - The "World Inter-Religious Conference for long-lasting Peace, Disarmament and equitable Relations among Nations" held in Moscow. It was attended by 650 delegates from 107 countries, 98 delegates among them being from 40 Muslim countries. Some of the guests present had already attended various conferences organized by mufti Babakhanov previously: Dr. Abdul Aziz Hayat (Jordan), Ahmad Zabara (Yemen), Dr. Imamullah Khan, secretary-general of the "Muslim World Congress"

(Pakistan), Dr. Kamal al-Sharif member of the Constituent Council of the "World Islamic League", etc...

-- September 1979 - An international symposium was convened by the Central Asian Spiritual Board at Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, to discuss "The contribution of Muslims of Central Asia, of the Volga and of the Caucasus to the development of Islamic thought, to the cause of peace and social progress". It was attended by delegates from 30 Muslim nations: India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Algeria, North Yemen, Tunisia, Lebanon, Turkey, Afghanistan, Iran, Bulgaria, Lybia, Kuwait, Tchad, Guiana, Mali, Mauritania, South Yemen, also from Austria, France and England. Mufti Babakhanov took the opportunity of denouncing once more "Israeli, U.S. and South African imperialism". (MSE, 4/1979, pp. 1-2: text of the final communique).

It is still too early to decide whether the invasion of Afghanistan has not marked a turning point in the relations between the U.S.S.R. and the Muslim world at large. However, there is no doubt that it was the reason for the first major setback to the "Islamic Strategy": the failure of the International Conference of Tashkent in September 1980.

The Conference was organized by the Spiritual Board of Central Asia on the theme: "The XVth century Hijri must be a century of peace and friendship among the Nations". It was forecasted by the Soviet mass media as one of the most important post-war political meetings of the Muslim World and according to numerous preliminary announcements it was expeted to be the

starting point of a massive "anti-imperialist" campaign. 500 personalities from all Muslim countries were invited (MOS 2/1980, p. 9). The failure of the Conference was dramatic. 24 of the most important Muslim countries refused to attend (Saudi Arabia, Iran Gulf Emirates, Egypt, Indonesia, India, Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania, Iraq, Bahrain, Somalia, Oman, Cameroon, Djibouti, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Malaysia, Haute-Volta, Tchad, Maldives, Qatar). Out of the 32 foreign countries represented in Tashkent, seven were non-Muslim: Austria, DDR, Mongolia, Finland, France, Japan and Switzerland) while four were ruled by Communists: Afghanistan, Bulgaria, South Yemen, Ethiopia. Three of the Communist countries - Yugoslavia, Romania and Poland - were not represented. Pakistan, Guinea, Bangladesh, Benin, Tanzania, Lebanon and Algeria were only represented by a few journalists. Only the following 14 Muslim or partly Muslim independent countries were represented in Tashkent by officials of high (ministerial) or relatively high level: mufti, qadi: Ghana, Jordan, North Yemen, Cyprus, Kuwait, Libya, Mauritius, Mali, Senegal, Syria, Sudan, Togo, Turkey, Uganda, Sri-Lanka. On the other hand - and this was even more unpleasant - some delegations (in particular the Sudanese) adopted a marked anti-Soviet attitude. The obvious failure of the conference showed the weakness of the "Islamic Strategy" and Soviet "mass-media" did not even attempt to hide it. No final communique was published and the foreign delegations were invited to leave the country as quickly as possible. The Soviet press and radio gave no explanation and the official journal Muslims of the Soviet East, published only a few comments.⁸

The list of services rendered by the Muslim Spiritual leaders to the Soviet Government would be incomplete, if we do not mention propaganda broadcasts by Soviet muftis and other representatives of the Islamic hierarchy. These broadcasts, in Arabic, Persian, Pashto and Turkish grew more frequent during 1978-1979. Their themes have not been very different from those of the standard Soviet propaganda but voiced by high religious authorities, they tend to have a greater impact on foreign Muslim audience. They condemn Israeli, Chinese, American and South African "imperialism", call for political harmony between Islam and Communism, proclaim the "freedom of religion in the U.S.S.R.", denounce numerous "enemies" including Soviet Muslim emigres (especially those working for Radio Liberty) and (lately) exhort the Afghan people to resist "wicked fanatics". The following excerpt from a broadcast by Ziautdin Babakhanov is typical:

"For centuries, the Muslims of Afghanistan had suffered from the oppression of the foul order of feudalism; now they have chosen the independent path of growth and progress. They are supported by all peace-loving forces, first and foremost by the friendly people of the Soviet Union... But the counter-revolutionary elements in Afghanistan deprived of their privileges as a result of the April revolution are trying to restore the regime of injustice condemned by Islam itself. The glorious Quran says: "God orders justice and decency". U.S. imperialism has embarked on activities

against Afghanistan and tries to distort the ideas of the revolution and to cast aspersions on the friendship and mutual assistance between Afghanistan and the U.S.S.R.

American imperialism is arming the rebels, interfering in the internal affairs of a sovereign state and causing bloodshed condemned by God... We, Muslims of the Eastern Soviet republics, in accordance with our religious duty and our conscience, cannot remain indifferent about events in a neighboring Islamic country; we give complete support to the people of Afghanistan in its fight for freedom and against imperialism. We demand resolutely that the interference of the U.S. imperialism and Chinese militarism in the internal affairs of Afghanistan should be stopped. We ask all our co-religionists in the countries neighboring Afghanistan not to listen to the lies of the imperialists and to make efforts to avoid bloodshed among Muslim peoples".¹⁰

However since 1981, after the failure of the last Tashkent conference, broadcasts by Soviet Muslim leaders have practically stopped.

Finally, the Soviet religious leaders participate in the Agitprop campaign by publishing editorials and political articles in the Muslims of the Soviet East, backing the Government attacks against Israel, the United States, China, and South Africa..., claiming that religious freedom and prosperity prevail in Soviet Islam and promoting the struggle of Palestinians, etc., etc.¹¹

3. The Positive Results of the "Islamic Strategy"

A. On the International Front. The positive aspect of the "Islamic Strategy" is particularly spectacular on the international front. Several reasons account for its success:

a) Soviet religious (Muslim) leaders are eager to cooperate sincerely with their partners -- the Soviet authorities.

With the sole exception of Ziautdin Babakhanov, who belongs to the older generation, the leading Muslim clerics are young people, born and bred under the Soviet regime. They are "Soviet men" (Sovetskie ludi) which means that they are loyal citizens even if not enthusiastic "Soviet patriots".

Moreover, the dream of hypothetical cooperation with the Russians for the benefit of Islam is an old tradition among Russian Muslims. Already at the end of the XIXth century, Ismail bey Gasprinski, the "father of Russian jadidism" offered the Russian Governments a bold plan of Russian - Muslim partnership, for the liberation of the Middle East from British and French "imperialism". Later on, in the early XXth century, similar proposals of cooperation were made by the moderate jadid leaders (for instance Yusuf Akchura) to the Russian liberals (K.D. Party), by the leaders of the left wing jadidism (Ayaz Ishaki) to the Russian Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries and, finally in the 1920s by the former radical Muslim nationalists who had joined the Russian Communist Party (Sultan Galiev) to the Bolsheviks. All of them believed that Islam had more to gain than to lose from such a partnership.

Needless to say that these openings were either ignored or rejected. No one in Russia ever believed that the State could benefit from such a cooperation.¹² Brezhnev's administration was the first Russian Government to accept (if not to initiate) a cooperation with the Muslim religious leaders.

It is possible that Muslim leaders are eager to cooperate with their Russian partners in becoming their middlemen in the Muslim world abroad (especially in conservative pro-Western States) as an insurance policy against any anti-clerical drive within the U.S.S.R.¹³ Thus their Middle East connections protect them from their partners in Moscow.

b) As already stated, Soviet ulema visiting the Middle East, far from being bogus, are authentic Islamic scholars. They speak excellent classical Arabic¹⁴ and are well trained in the best Muslim universities: Al Azhar (Egypt), Qarawiyyin (Morocco), al-Baidha (Lybia), University of Damascus...In appearance, they are prosperous, smart, often charming and present a clever blend of traditional conservative scholarship with the most progressive modernism. Their message to their brethren abroad, even though similar to the unsophisticated official Agitprop is more acceptable presented, as it is, by authentic theologians. "Show tours" of the Muslim republics of the U.S.S.R. are well prepared and very impressive, the mosques well kept, the believers numerous...

c) As a rule, the Arabs, especially the Syrians, Lebanese and Palestinians have an old tradition of good will towards Russia. This tradition goes back to the time of the Tsarist Empire - contrary to the Turks and the Iranians, they have never yet tasted Russian colonialism or been threatened by Russian imperialism. This long standing Russian-Arab friendship facilitates the role of the Soviet religious leaders in the Arab countries.¹⁵

The "Islamic Strategy" did more than mobilize the public opinion of the Muslim World against the West and in favour of the U.S.S.R. Its main achievement was the creation of a solid network of staunch and reliable friends in numerous Muslim countries, constituting what may be called a "Muslim party" (which is usually ignored or unnoticed by the Western observers) distinct from the "Communist party" or the "Russian" party. These "foreign friends" have visited the Muslim republics of the U.S.S.R. usually on several occasions and have welcomed the Soviet religious leaders in their respective countries. It would be an exaggeration to claim that they have all been brain-washed but it is nevertheless obvious that they tend to identify the U.S.S.R. with Soviet Islam and to assume that the freedom and prosperity of Soviet Islam depends on the might and success of the State; they have also an exaggerated idea of the political importance and independence of the Official Islamic Establishment in the U.S.S.R. Their attitude is somewhat similar to that other common attitude which confuses the notion of "Holy Russia" with

U.S.S.R. It should be noted that the "Muslim Party" network covers the entire Muslim World, pro-Soviet countries (Syria, Lybia, Algeria, South Yemen) as well as pro-Western countries (Morocco, Kuwait, Tunisia, Jordan, North Yemen).¹⁶ It is manned by prominent religious personalities, usually politically conservative, some even hostile to Communism in their country. It is through these respected notables that Soviet influence is relayed to Dar ul-Islam, a fact which greatly enhances its efficiency.

The following statement by Sheikh Ahmed Zabara, Grand Mufti of the Arab Republic of North Yemen, published in the Muslim of the Soviet East (3/1976, p. 7) is a typical example of the part that the "Muslim party" is playing in promoting the Soviet's "Islamic Strategy": "... Now I know the truth. There is complete freedom of religion in the U.S.S.R. The freedom of faith is guaranteed by the Constitution of the U.S.S.R."

"During my last visit to the U.S.S.R. (in 1975)... I learned a second truth: all religions are equal in the U.S.S.R.: Muslims, Christians, Jews, and others enjoy equal rights..."

"It is clear that without the Soviet aid, many countries could not have liberated themselves from colonialism..."

B. On the Domestic Front

For various reasons, the results of the "Islamic Strategy" on the domestic front have been less dramatic. It seems that the leaders of Soviet Islam are unable or reluctant to fulfill the role assigned to them - that of the "moderators" responsible for the believers' loyalty to the Soviet Government.

a) They are unable to fulfill the assignment because Sunni Islam has no ecclesiastical hierarchy and no "clergy". In spite of all the efforts of the Soviet authorities to treat the mufti chairmen of the four Spiritual as "Muslim Archbishops" and Ziautdin Babakhanov as a "Muslim Pope", their authority is limited to purely administrative affairs and does not extend to the spiritual and political spheres. When Ziautdin Babakhanov expresses his loyalty to the Soviets and proclaims the freedom and happiness of the Soviet Islam, he is not speaking on behalf of the believers, but only committing himself.

b) They are unwilling, because the allegiance of the majority of the religious leaders to Islam is stronger than to the Soviet Government. However eager they may be to cooperate abroad, Muslim leaders are nevertheless reluctant to fully commit themselves on the side of the Soviet regime. Their pro-government activity has been limited to rather cautious expressions of platonic solidarity. Up to now, they have stubbornly refused to condemn ex cathedra the "Parallel" (Sufi) underground Islam, in spite of its "fanatical" anti-Soviet character.¹⁷

The most astute Soviet experts of anti-religious propaganda are aware of the dubious and unreliable attitude of the leaders of Official Islam who accept to cooperate with the authorities so long as this cooperation helps promoting the revival of religious feeling among the masses.¹⁸

It is interesting to compare the relative independence of the Muslim leaders towards Moscow with the submissiveness of the supreme leaders of the Russian Orthodox church. Soviet muftis are better protected than Russian bishops against their own governmental authorities. A strong anti-religious and anti-clerical pressure would endanger the existence of the "Muslim party" which it took the Soviets fifteen years to establish and within U.S.S.R. it would drive the believers not toward the official atheism but toward underground Sufi Islam. It is also to this game "parallel" Islam that believers would turn should their leaders display an exaggerated submissiveness toward the Godless Soviet regime.¹⁹

THE LIMITS AND THE DANGERS OF THE "ISLAMIC STRATEGY"

The "Islamic Strategy" has its limitations because of the dangers that cooperation with Muslim religious leaders presents for the Soviet Government. For the last two years - 1980-1981 - the Soviet sources have been stressing the "liability" aspect of Islam.

It is possible to classify these liabilities into three main categories:

1. liabilities due to the traditional character of Soviet Islam
2. liabilities due to the backlash of the "Islamic Strategy"

3. liabilities due to the influence of a destabilized Middle East on Soviet Islam.

1. Liabilities Inherent to the Traditional Character of Soviet Islam

Several historical, social and cultural factors explain why Soviet Islam, while providing Moscow with certain trump cards, may at the same time become a major handicap for its foreign strategy. The following factors seem particularly important:

a) In the Muslim republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus, the native population and the Russian immigrant colonies do not mix. The post-war policy of intense cultural and biological assimilation (Sblizhenie: "getting nearer" and sliyanie: "merging") ended in failure and has practically been given up today. Mixed marriages between Russians and Muslims remain exceptional, no "Soviet culture" and no "new Soviet man" have emerged. The two communities cohabit in a climate of deeply rooted mutual hatred. The natives see the Russians, as "Infedels," descendants of Tsarist conquerors whilst in the eyes of the Russians. Muslims are sub-human "black-bottoms" (chernozhopye).²⁰ The Soviet official line is that inter-ethnic xenophobia is a thing of the past and that a climate of "Lenin's friendliness" is characteristic of present day relations. However, this official optimism is often contradicted by other Soviet sources, less optimistic but more realistic.

b) The recent history (XIXth and XXth centuries) of the Muslim peoples of Central Asia and Caucasus has been marked by numerous anti-Russian rebellions led under the flag of Islam.

These events are still remembered today by the local people as part of their heroic saga. These include the Murid movement in Northern Caucasus which lasted for nearly a century (from Imam Mansur in 1783 to the Daghestani uprising in 1877/78), the Andizhan revolt in 1894, the great uprising of the nomadic tribes in 1916, the Daghestani-Chechen revolt (1920-1923), the Basmachi movement (1920-1928), and the Chechen revolt (1941-1943). All these revolts were crushed by armed forces and were followed by pitiless reprisals (in the case of 1941-43 Chechen revolt, over a million North Caucasian mountaineers were deported to Siberia and Kazakhstan).

c) The massive post-war Russian and Ukrainian colonization of Central Asia threatened to submerge the native population in the 1950s. In Kazakhstan, the Muslims have been reduced to the rank of a minority. In 1979, the non-Muslims numbering 10 million, represented 25% of the total population of Central Asia and Kazakhstan. This invasion is still considered by Muslim natives as a deadly threat to their existence.

d) Between 1928 and 1938, the entire pre-revolutionary Muslim intelligentsia was liquidated in the bloody campaign against "nationalist deviations"; the major part of the Muslim clerics also disappeared during this period. In Kazakhstan, over a million Kazakhs vanished from the demographic statistics between 1926 and 1939 censuses, starved to death as a consequence of the brutal sedentarization of the nomads. Those mass slaughters are well remembered and can well explain the hostility of the natives towards the Russians as well as the deep mistrust

of the latter towards the Muslim intelligentsia -- members of the Communist Party included.

e) Ever since 1928, the Soviets have tried to destroy the Islamic religion systematically though unsuccessfully. Two anti-Islamic campaigns have been especially harsh: 1929-1942 and 1954-1964. After the downfall of Nikita Khrushchev, administrative and police measures were somewhat lightened but ideological propaganda remained as strong as ever, particularly since 1980-1981. It is difficult to make use of a religion abroad while trying to eradicate it at home. According to recent Soviet sources, religious life in the Muslim republics has been more active than ever during the last ten years.

f) One official "ideology" overwhelms the political and intellectual life of Soviet Muslim republics: Marxism in its Russian form - the least attractive. It tolerates no "Muslim way" to socialism. Central Asian intellectuals who are the heirs to thirteen centuries of brilliant culture, are supposed to blindly adhere to an alien ideology in which no one in the U.S.S.R. believes any more. As a result, an "ideological void" characterizes the Weltanschauung of Soviet Muslim intellectuals today. They look to the past for ideas, programs and doctrines - hence their rediscovery of Islam - and beyond the frontiers of the Soviet fatherland - hence their "vulnerability" to any ideology emanating from the Muslim world abroad, be it the wildest or most radical. In an era of radio broadcasts and transistors, no iron curtain can protect the Soviet Muslim republics from outside contamination.

g) The Muslim elite in the U.S.S.R. has gained a high level of economic, professional and intellectual development but has still no access to decision-making positions. Even if they are relatively prosperous and developing fast, Muslim republics are neither independent nor sovereign states (while South Yemen, Somalia and Uganda are).

h) Finally, it is necessary to mention the traditional hostility of the Turks of Turkey and of the Iranians of Iran towards the "Moscowites" - the "Northern barbarians" - who, since the XVIIIth century threaten the very existence of their countries. Undoubtedly, Communism would have made greater progress in these two countries had it not been presented under a Russian flag.

With such a background it is difficult to use the Muslim Republics of the Caucasus and Central Asia as springboards for expansion in the Muslim world abroad. That is why only a few selected and trusted religious leaders cooperate in the "Islamic Strategy". In general, Soviet Muslims are not assigned to diplomatic, economic, technical or military posts abroad. Only two or three of them had attained the ambassadorial rank (N.A. Muhitdinov, the former First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan was the Soviet ambassador in Damascus in the 1960s, the present ambassador in Kabul is a Tatar). In foreign Muslim countries, Soviet Muslims are generally only employed if at all in a subordinate capacity, as technicians, interpreters, or auxiliary staff (cooks, drivers).

2. Liabilities Due to the Backlash of the "Islamic Strategy"

The "Islamic Strategy" is dangerous in that it might ultimately threaten the stability of the Soviet Union. The dangers lay in two directions:

a) The religious partners of Moscow must be "paid cash" for services rendered by serious concessions such as the opening of new mosques (an average of 5 to 8 every year in the late 1970s), the foundation of a new high Theological Institute (the madrassah "Imam Ismail al-Bukhari" of Tashkent founded in 1971), new religious publications, new editions of the Quran, publication of Hadith by Ismail al-Bukhari (in 1970 and 1973) and, above all, an abatement of anti-religious propaganda in quantity and content (i.e., "scientific atheism" in lieu of the violent anti-clericalism of Khrushchev's era). All such measures are partly responsible for the revival of religious feelings among the Muslim population of the U.S.S.R.

b) The possibility of "contamination" of the Soviet Muslims by foreign Islam should not be overlooked. Through increased contacts with active religious and political centres abroad, Soviet Muslims might discover that they belong not only to the Soviet nation but to the Dar ul-Islam and to the Muslim Umma - a community of over seven hundred million believers. The danger of such a discovery is obvious: the allegiance of Soviet Muslims may split and it is far from certain that the attraction of Marxism-Leninism would have the upper hand in this ideological battle. Today Islam is a highly dynamic ideology while Marxism in its Russian Marxist-Leninist form is an aging, decadent doctrine.

3. Liabilities Due to the Influence of a Destabilized Middle East

In the 1970s Moscow cautiously opened a few channels for communication between Soviet and foreign Muslims, on the probable assumption that the technical and intellectual achievements of Soviet Muslims and the grand front of Soviet Islamic institutions would impress the Muslim world abroad. However, after decades of enforced conformity to stale Russian Marxism, Soviet Muslims have nothing to export in the political domain. On the contrary: it is they who are likely to be influenced by ideas, programs and ideologies - perhaps even by models of political and guerrilla warfare from a "destabilized" and radicalized Middle East. These ideas, whether conservative religious fundamentalism or revolutionary radicalism, share one common characteristic: the potential to destabilize Soviet Islam and thereby undermine the unity of the U.S.S.R.

a) The Backlash of the Afghan War

In April 1978, for the first time, the Soviet authorities decided to go beyond the "Islamic Strategy" (which is based on cooperation only with religious leaders) by using Central Asians as political and administration cadres in Afghanistan. To help the friendly Marxist regime in Afghanistan and prevent the total collapse of its administrative wrecked by successive purges within the ruling Khalq (People's) party, the Soviet Union undertook to send there large numbers of administrative and technical cadres. As there were few Russians with sufficient

knowledge of local conditions and languages, the Soviet authorities were forced to employ Central Asians (mainly Uzbeks and Tajiks) for this purpose. By late 1979, there were several hundred Soviet Muslims occupying positions at all levels of the Afghan administration, from the lowest posts to that of deputy minister. The invasion of December 1979 served to increase their number. Moreover, the rank and file of the invading Soviet forces included a fair percentage of Central Asian soldiers even though the officers in command were Slavs.

Soviet Muslims sent to Afghanistan as administrative cadres were able to establish direct contacts freely with the native population - a thoroughly new experience in the history of the Soviet Union.

The experiment failed. In February 1980, the majority of the Central Asian soldiers were recalled from Afghanistan and later on Soviet Muslim cadres were systematically replaced by Russians. We do not know for certain what was the behavior of Central Asian Uzbeks and Tajiks in Afghanistan but the least we can presume is that they proved so unreliable that the authorities decided that contacts between Central Asians and their Afghan cousins were more dangerous than useful.²¹

It is too early to analyze the impact of the Afghan war on Central Asian Muslims, but it must not be forgotten that in present day conditions no Iron Curtain can efficiently protect the Soviet lands from foreign influence. Thousands of Central Asians still remain in Afghanistan while thousands of Afghans (students, officers, engineers) are staying in the U.S.S.R.²²

Central Asians are able to follow the evolution of the war through numerous channels, including foreign broadcasts and transistors. The success of the Afghan resistance cannot be hidden and it may well become a model of heroism for Central Asians and the proof that the Russian "Elder Brother" is not invincible. The spectacular change of style of the Central Asian mass media shows that the Soviet authorities are taking the possibility of an Afghan backlash quite seriously.

In 1980-1981, Central and local authorities have repeatedly warned the population against the dangers of foreign subversion and the resurgence of local nationalism. These warnings are generally accompanied by appeals to the vigilance of the KGB and the Border Guards and by the exalting of the Armed Forces, with numerous references to the victory of the Red Army over the Basmachis in 1920-1928. This last message has a perfectly clear meaning: "In the 1920s, when Soviet power was still weak and vulnerable, it has successfully defeated a powerful and well organized rebellion; now the Soviet Army - the strongest in the world - could easily crush the Afghan rebellion". As to the constant references to the ability of the "Elder Brother" to maintain order and to eliminate various domestic and foreign "traitors and spies", its meaning is also crystal clear: "We have beaten you before, if necessary, we will beat you again."

b) The Spillover of the Fundamentalist Revolution in Iran

The attitude of the Soviet Government towards the new regime in Iran is officially friendly enough and the Tudeh (Orthodox Communist) Party, is, paradoxically, giving its support to the

fundamentalist ayatollahs. Unofficially, however, the possible spillover of the Iranian Islamic Revolution is considered by the Soviets as potentially more dangerous than the backlash of the Afghan war. Several warnings against the possibility of such a spillover issued recently by responsible Soviet leaders show that Moscow gives very serious attention to events in Iran.

Most significant was the report of the Major-General Zia Yusif Zade, chief of the Azerbaijan's KGB, published in Bakinski Rabochii, on December 19th, 1980, denouncing "Imperialist spies, agents and saboteurs... who cross Soviet borders and establish contacts with... anti-social elements..." Among the latter, the General listed "the sectarian underground" and the "reactionary Muslim clergy" (terms generally used when denouncing Sufi tariqa).

In Turkmenistan, warnings against "religious extremists and fanatics" (another way to designate the adepts of Sufi brotherhoods) and against the abusive use of Islam by foreign propaganda were given by the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkmenistan, Mohammed-Nazar Gapurov, in a report presented to the Republican Partaktiv in March 1981 (Turkmenskaia Iskra, Ashhabad, March 18, 1981).

The victory of the Iranian fundamentalists, viewed from the Soviet Muslim Republics, has demonstrated three facts":

- o Western imperialism (and this includes the Russian as far as Muslims are concerned) may be defeated by a popular movement inspired by Islam;

- o Islam appears more dynamic with a stronger mobilizing power than Marxism/Leninism.

- o The conservative trend in Islam is stronger today than the modernist reformist trend. This "discovery" is especially ominous (for the Russians) in the case of Caucasian Islam, already dominated by fundamentalist conservative Sufi tariga.

- c) Other Potentially Dangerous Influences

Various Arab countries could also exercise a dangerous attraction for Soviet Muslims:

- The Pro-Western Conservative Arab States (Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Gulf States...) economically well developed but at the same time deeply religious demonstrate by their prosperity that, contrary to the claims of Soviet propaganda, it is possible to be simultaneously modern and Islamic, and that Islam is not an obstacle to economic and social progress. Moreover, the powerful radio broadcasts from the Gulf States cannot be silenced in Central Asia and the Caucasus so that Soviet Muslims can listen regularly to the reading of the Quran.

- The Friendly Pro-Soviet Radical "Socialist" Arab States: (Libya, Syria, Algeria...) claim to build a "Muslim Socialism" and to follow the "Muslim way to Socialism" in which Marxism is relegated to a subordinate capacity by Islam. They advance that it is possible to build Socialism without following the Russian model - the worst heresy as far as the Soviets are concerned. They are also bringing back to life the old but never quite

forgotten and always dangerous theories of National Communism elaborated by the Soviet Muslim leaders, liquidated by Stalin in the 1930s. The danger of such doctrines for Soviet Islam is obvious.

CONCLUSION

In the course of the last fifteen years, the Muslim religious hierarchy has been a loyal, sincere and efficient partner of Moscow, in helping the Soviets to penetrate the Muslim East. It is likely that the religious leaders are still willing to continue their cooperation with the Soviets. But it seems that the Soviet Government is less eager to pursue this cooperation. In 1980, a new and unexpected wave of intense anti-Islamic propaganda was launched throughout the Muslim republics - a campaign comparable to the last anti-religious drive under Nikita Khrushchev. In 1980, 154 books and pamphlets were published in the U.S.S.R.: out of this total, 27 (i.e., 17.5 percent) dealt with Islam. In 1981, the anti-Islamic drive was reinforced: out of 195 books, 44 were specially directed against Islam (22.6 percent).²³

Since the failure of the Tashkent Conference in October 1980, only a few Soviet Muslims have been sent abroad to the Middle East and even fewer foreign religious delegates have visited Central Asia and the Caucasus. It would be foolhardy to try and predict the future. The Soviet Government may still play the Muslim card but it may just as well give up this bold offensive strategy for a more cautious and defensive one, should

it decide that the advantage of the "Islamic Strategy" are counter-balanced by disadvantages on the domestic front.

Islam could remain an asset for Moscow, but frequent contacts between Soviet Muslims and their co-religionists abroad might become too dangerous to be maintained. Soviet Muslims may well decide that their future is linked to the Muslim world abroad, with its seven hundred million people rather than with their Russian Elder Brother (a mere hundred and forty million only), remembering the words of Napoleon: "les gros bataillons ont toujours raison". In such a case, Islam which has been a major asset for Soviet foreign policy, may well become a serious liability in the near future.

Footnotes

1. This chapter is based essentially on the official quarterly publication of the Muslim Spiritual Board of Central Asia and Kazakhstan in Tashkent, Muslims of the Soviet East. It appeared in 1969 in two different versions: Arabic, Al-Muslimun fi al-Sharq al-Sufiyati, and Uzbek in Arabic script, Soviet Sharkining Musulmanlari. In 1974 two new versions were added, in French, Les Musulmans de l'Orient Sovietique and in English. In 1980, a Persian version was added. We are using the English (abbreviation MSE) and the French (abbreviation MOS) versions.

2. The term "Muslim" is still commonly used in Soviet Union. It has a national rather than a spiritual meaning.

3. In Sunni Islam, there are no middlemen between God and His creatures, therefore no ecclesiastical hierarchy and no "clergy". The so-called "Muslim clerics", muftis, qadis, etc., may have an administrative but no spiritual or political authority.

4. Only a few religious delegations have visited Central Asia before, among them was a group of Moroccan theologians headed by Allal al-Fassi who visited Central Asia as early as 1960 (MOS, 2/1974, p. 25).

(4bis) However in 1981, a group of Iranians was invited by the Shia Sheikh ul-Islam, Chairman of the Spiritual Board of Baku.

5. According to MOS 3/1975, p. 19-21, 4 to 5 foreign delegations have visited Ufa between 1970 and 1975; among the most important personalities were: Hasan Khalid, grand mufti of Lebanon; Abdullah Hatim, Counsellor at the Ministry of Justice and of the Waqfs fo South Yemen; Nafih Kassem, Minister of Waqfs of Iraq; Kamal Tarzi, head of the Department of Religious Affairs of Tunisia; Rashid Abdallah B. Farhan, Minister of Waqfs of Kuwait; Ahmad Zabara, great mufti of North Yemen; Mukdi Ali Abdallah, Minister of Waqfs of Indonesia; Dato Haji Ismail Panjang, Secretary-General of the Department of Islamic Affairs of Malaysia; Mohammed Kettani Hassani, professor at the University of Qarawiyyin; Mohammed B. Gali, professor at the University of Tripoli (Libya), etc...

6. In 1980, the two old scholars who chaired the Spiritual Boards of Ufa and Baku were dismissed and replaced by very young (34 and 35 years old) aparatchiki, Tolgat Taziev in Ufa and Alla-Shukur Pasha Zade in Baku. Both have been trained in Al-Azhar and speak fluent Arabic. It is possible that in the future they will also lead Soviet delegations abroad.

7. Besides these special visits, Soviet Muslim dignitaries used to visit Saudi Arabia and Egypt regularly every year on the occasion of pilgrimages to the Holy Places. Every year, two chartered flights bring some 40 to 60 Soviet hajis to Saudi Arabia, in majority executives of the four Spiritual Boards.

8. By Yusuf Khan Shakirov in MSE 2/1981, p. 17. the conference was attended by 500 persons including Soviet ulemas. Under the heading "Our host talks", in Muslims of the Soviet East

listed the favourable impressions of seven of the foreign guests: Ahmed Qurtari, grand mufti of Syria; Abdul-Rahman al-Wilayati, a Kuwaiti journalist; Erkin Said Ahmed, an executive at the Direction of waqfs of Turkey (in MOS 4/1980); Sheikh Abdul-hamid al-Saih, Chairman of the Committee for the Salvation of Jerusalem; Khalili Fazl-Mansur, Minister of Justice of South Yemen; Ibrahim Abdusalam, Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Muslim Council of Ethiopia and the gadi Hasan Tamimi of Lebanon.

9. However, Yusuf Khan Shakirov, Deputy-Chairman of the Tashkent Spiritual Board declared (MSE 2/1981, p. 17) that the Board has the intention to invite in 1981 delegations from Algeria, Jorda, Kuwait, North Yemen and South Yemen and to send Soviet delegations to Afghanistan, Libya, Turkey and Saudi-Arabia; and also to attend the Islamic International Conferences in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Saudi Arabia.

10. Radio Moscow in Pashto, January 29, 1980 (Ziautdin Babakhanov's talk at the Tashkent Central Mosque on the occasion of the Mawlud (the Prophet's birthday).

11. For instance, MSE 2/1976, pp. 3-4. Appeal signed by the four muftis against Israel; MSE 1/1979, pp. 13-14, an article signed by Bashir Rasul "a Syrian friend" denouncing "imperialist slanderers" who claim that Islam is not free in U.S.S.R."; MSE 2/1979, pp. 7-9, a violent attack against the U.S., Israel and Egypt by Haji Baba Muhammedov, deputy editor of the MSE; MSE 2/1981, pp. 3-4, "Palestine for Palestinians" - a letter of Z. Babakhanov to the Secretary General of the World Mulim League, etc....

12. On this subject, Cf. A. Bennigsen and S.E. Wimbush, Muslim National Communism in the Soviet Union - A revolutionary Strategy for the Colonial World, Chicago, 1979, especially pp. 3-15.

13. Their position may be compared to that of the Tatar traders who in the XVIIIth and in the first half of the XIXth centuries served as middlemen between St. Petersburg Government and Central Asia still closed to the Russians. In exchange for their services abroad, Tatar Muslims gained a favourable treatment from the Russian authorities.

14. The Tashkent Conference of September 1980 was conducted entirely in Arabic.

15. For the same reason, the Russian Orthodox Church entertains specially friendly relations with the Arab Orthodox Church of Antiochia.

16. Among these Middle Eastern authorities who during the last years appeared as the most pro-Soviet, we find the sheikh Ahmed Zabara, grand mufti of the Arab Republic of Yemen; Abdullah Gosha, the chief qadi of Jordan; Hasan Khalid, mufti of Lebanon; Dr. Abdul Aziz al-Hayat, the Minister of waqfs of Jorda, the sheik Ahmed Quftari, grand mufti of Syria, etc...

17. The Fetwas published by the mufti of Tashkent condemn some marginal aspects of the Sufi brotherhoods, not Sufism as such; for instance, in 1958 a fetwa condemned the pilgrimage to the "Throne of Suleyman" (the most popular Holy Place in Central Asia in the neighborhood of the city of Osh in Kirghizia); another fetwa of the same mufti, in February 1959 against the

pilgrimage to the Holy Places in general; another fetwa against the Cult of the Saints, winter 1981 (MSE 2/1981, pp. 18-19).

18. Cf. especially the works of Nugman Ashirov, Evolutsiya Islama v U.S.S.R. (The Evolution of Islam in U.S.S.R.), Moscow, 1973; Islam i Natsii (Islam and the Nations), Moscow, 1975; Musul'manskaya Propoved' (The Muslim Predication), Moscow, 1978 and Nravstvennye poucheniia Sovremennogo Islama (The moral teachings of Contemporary Islam), Moscow, 1977.

19. At least those are "firm believers" and "believers by tradition" who according to the most recent Soviet surveys represent between 25 and 35 percent of the total Muslim population.

20. Cf. on this subject that excellent article by Rasma Karklins, "Islam, how strong is it in the Soviet Union?", Cahiers du Monde Russe et Sovietique, XXX-1, Janaury-March, 1980, pp. 66-81, based on interviews with Soviet Germans repatriated from Central Asia.

21. Fraternization with the local population, uncensored contacts and intense black market of Qurans; some cases of desertion of Soviet soldiers and the general reluctance of Central Asians to take an active part in the genocide of their brethren and co-religionists.

22. In winter 1982, there were 20,000 to 30,000 Afghan students in the U.S.S.R. Only a few of them are devoted communists.

23. Cf. Kniznaia Letopis': out of the total of 44, 22 were in Russian, 8 in Uzbek, 1 in Kazakh, 1 in Uyghur, 4 in Azeri, 1

in Karakalpak, 2 in Turkmen, 3 in Kirghiz; 10 were published in Moscow, 7 in Alma-Ata, 5 in Baku, 1 in Samarkand, 2 in Dushanbe, 1 in Nukhus, 3 in Ashhabad, 5 in Frunze, 8 in Tashkent, 1 in Cherkesk and 1 in Kazan.

GEOPOLITICS AND SOVIET STRATEGY

by Amnon Sella

I. INTRODUCTION

For lack of an operational definition of the Third World, any rational analysis of this loose organization must take into consideration a wide variety of economic, political, cultural, geographic, geostrategic, and military phenomena. While this paper is an attempt to describe the anatomy of U.S.S.R. relations with Third World countries, it will also examine aims and goals of Soviet foreign policy. The concept presented here is that the foreign policy constraints of the Soviet Union may be coherently identified despite the marked diversity of the Third World countries.

This paper focuses on several countries in Africa and Asia, but does not touch upon Latin America, with the exception of Cuba given its involvements in Africa and Asia.

II. U.S.S.R. Goals and Aims in the Third World

A. Strategic Goals

1. Pushing forward the defense perimeter of the U.S.S.R.
Until the dawn of Soviet nuclear strategy in the mid-1950s, the Soviet Union had been basically an introverted land power. Even today, notwithstanding its growing capability for global power projection, the U.S.S.R. must be considered a land power, compared to the United States. Soviet global strategy has evolved in tandem with perceptions of threat and historical opportunities so as to modify the Soviet strategic, political,

and commercial posture. During the post-war years, until about 1955, Soviet perception of the American threat fixated on the possibility of attack on Soviet territory by atom-bomb carrying aircraft that would take-off from aircraft carriers. To meet this threat the Russians built scores of simple, cheap fighters and many coastal submarines.

On the strategic-political as well as technical-tactical levels, efforts to undermine America's 'policy of containment,' particularly along the Soviet southern border and in adjacent countries were two pronged; enlarging and modernizing the ground forces in the European theater, and extending the reach of Soviet power -- in missiles, in the air and at sea. Expansion and renovation of the ground forces went apace for many years (except for a short intermezzo in Khrushchev's time) until there was parity or -- if net-assessment is applied -- superiority in the European theater. The 'missile gap' of 1957-61 led to the Cuban missile crisis, when a forward base was used to bridge the gap between the make-believe image of a country producing intercontinental ballistic missiles in series like sausages and the grim reality, namely that the missile gap no longer existed and the United States was ahead in ICBM's. The use of Cuba as a forward missile launching-site was, however, only the forerunner of many other means of pushing forward the Soviet defense perimeter.

At the start of this strategy, which was evolved gradually and cautiously, the U.S.S.R. was trying to lift the siege of containment, but this same strategy eventually made it possible for the Soviet leadership to assume menacing postures. Until

1965, the Soviet Navy was hardly capable of countering the threat of the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean, but since then Soviet naval presence there has grown steadily. While prior to 1968, the Soviet Navy encountered difficulties in maintaining, in the Indian Ocean, a permanent status. Both in the Mediterranean and in the Indian Ocean, Soviet presence reached a given level which was optimal (in Soviet eyes) and which has been maintained. The Navy also acquired standard procedures for port visits and for showing the flag in peace-time, and it has attained the capacity for fast and efficient reinforcement and regrouping in emergencies. The growing capability in out-of-area ship-days has meant an enormous Soviet investment in hardware.¹ An investment of this magnitude must have taken a heavy toll of the already strained economy, which has been struggling against many odds both on the home front as well as abroad, i.e., in military aid deliveries to Third World countries.² There was no help for it, however, given the strategic conception. In order to establish a solid and credible perimeter of defense as far out as the Indian Ocean, distant from both the Black Sea and Vladivostok, it was essential to provide the Navy with anchorages and shore facilities and to obtain overseas land bases for installations, communications, and support of friendly forces.

There are several ways to assess the Soviet achievement in pushing forward their perimeter of defense. Some analysts, looking at the map, combine the many red dots that have appeared there over the last twenty-five years and present them either as one huge connected red blotch stretching from the Soviet southern

border down to the Horn of Africa and the far reaches of the Indian Ocean, or else as a giant vise, with one jaw reaching from the Soviet Far East along Southeast Asia to the Arabian Sea, and the other, out from the Black Sea until bifurcating at the entrance to the Suez Canal. One extension of this arm of the vise then brings pressure to bear on the Red Sea while the other encloses North Africa, engulfs West Africa and stretches down to Southern Africa. This approach certainly throws into relief the dimensions of Soviet presence, particularly in places none had been none in the not so distant past, but it overlooks several major constraints: the cost of the extensive Soviet reach and its utility. The extended defense perimeter must lean heavily either on naval units dispersed over large areas of water with only flimsy air protection, if at all, or else on a sometimes precarious presence in several Third World countries with their multiple and varied interests, few of which are compatible with those of the Kremlin.

To sum up this argument, the U.S.S.R. pushed its perimeter of defense forward and outward in the attempt to create counter-threats vis-a-vis the United States, break the ring of containment, and be on locus to reduce strategic threats on land or sea. The attempt to establish a line of defense like this well away from Soviet territory had three major results:

1. it expanded Soviet interaction with many Third World countries;
2. it changed the posture of a former strictly land power -- still basically such, the U.S.S.R. now enjoyed

an accretion of some capability for global power projection;

3. it enabled the U.S.S.R. to create threats in situations where the West -- and mainly the United States -- was for whatever reason severely hampered from intervening.

2. Bases, communication, and legitimacy. The Soviet leadership had no way of implementing the strategic concept of a forward perimeter of defense (an idea already carried out and polished to perfection in Eastern Europe) unless it secured the good will of at least certain elements of a Third World government. In long, arduous and at times exasperating negotiations, involving offers of generous credits on easy terms, not inconsiderable investments (Egypt, Syria, India, and Cuba), and a quantity of outright grants, the Soviet government succeeded in laying the groundwork of a strategic infrastructure, scattered air bases, port facilities, overflight and landing rights, and a communication network. The latter comprises stationary facilities (as for instance in Syria, Ethiopia, South Yemen, Vietnam, and Cuba), ships at sea, aircraft, and satellites. Without this strategic infrastructure, the U.S.S.R. could not have made the transition from a land power, however powerful, to a global power. Only by successively forming a chain of bases in friendly and stable countries, can the U.S.S.R. exert leverage overseas commensurate with its power, away from the immediate-conventional diameter of Soviet ground and air capacity. A continuous array of bases makes commercial ties as well as the supply of war material in time of need efficient and rewarding, that is, less costly. It is no wonder that a great

deal of superpower competition has revolved around the issue of
4
bases.

A foreign military base on sovereign territory may be the outcome of subjugation, when a given country was coerced into relinquishing part of its sovereignty (all the Eastern Bloc except for Rumania and Bulgaria, and now of course Afghanistan); or it can be the fruit of mutual, temporary interests (Egypt, Somalia), more permanent ones (Cuba, Perim, Dahlak, Com Rank Bay in Vietnam) or limited ones (India, Sri Lanka, Mauritius). Limited interests can mean a fostering of mutual interests between the U.S.S.R. and any of these countries and developing significance attached by these countries to their relations with the U.S.S.R. in general and not military relations in particular. A military base is not necessarily a result of the client State's great dependence on political, economic, or military aid nor even on a combination of all three. A Soviet military base may be just one sign, albeit symbolic, of nonmilitary interests, and it is therefore at the mercy of the client state -- the U.S.S.R. may be requested to dismantle it in much the same way as it may be requested to recall its ambassador or reduce the status of its delegation (Egypt, Somalia, Sudan, and Indonesia).

Owing to the diversity of the Third World countries and regimes that have chosen to allow the establishment of bases on their territory, it is wellnigh impossible to plot the exact procedure by which and when these countries acquiesced to a Soviet requested base on their territory. Even in countries where Soviet bases had been imposed by coercion, agreements were

eventually properly signed. Significantly, a signed agreement is necessary even with a subjugated country not only for purposes of legitimacy and as a matter of decorum, but also in order to replace the intermittent use of brute force by an at least partial mobilization of the local elite, the process in East Europe and the Warsaw Pact. In subjugated Afghanistan -- still an occupied country, neither 'liberated' nor annexed, and not yet pacified -- the Soviet military presence is without the legitimate status that it has in the East European countries. Other Third World countries have found it rewarding to sign numerous agreements with the U.S.S.R. for their mutual benefit. Many of these agreements, whether secret or not, more often than not included treaties of friendship and cooperation, frequently with a military clause (India, Egypt, Iraq, Angola, and Mozambique).⁵

A military clause like this, even if secret and more explicit, signifies a mutual military interest, although (as pointed out above) not a symmetrical one. Such clauses are, however, far from informative as to the real state of affairs between the Soviet Union and the signatory country. In Third World countries, open agreements with a military clause were only an indication of mutual interest but not of the degree of Soviet influence in a given country. Egypt and Iraq, for instance, signed such agreements (in 1971 and 1972, respectively) squarely in need of Soviet hardware and other forms of military aid, but when economic, political, and political-personal relations were already on the wane. In Egypt, relations started deteriorating soon after signing the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation,

gradually leading to the loss of all Soviet influence there. Reorientation in Egypt was so complete that it included Soviet military aid. Iraq has never allowed the Soviet Union to monopolize its military weapon system, nor has the U.S.S.R. partaken of the Iraqi attempt to go nuclear.⁶ On the other hand, Iraq still depends on Soviet military aid for about 80 to 90 percent of its weapon systems, despite all the tribulations of the Iraq-Iran war.⁷

The political cost of signing a treaty of friendship and cooperation with India was a source of growing concern to the Soviets in their relations with India and China. These two countries did not need additional evidence of India's pro-Soviet orientations, but such evidence was produced throughout Prime Minister Ghandi's term.

In sum, the Soviet global conception dictated the establishment of overseas bases and a communications network. This vast undertaking could not have been realized without coercion and imposition or otherwise the good will of many Third World countries. Striving to implement a concatenation of global bases, naval facilities, and airforce installations, the U.S.S.R. simultaneously found itself enmeshed in a web of regional disputes, tribal feuds (Nigeria, Congo, Afghanistan) and conflicting interests (Turkey vs. Greece, Iraq vs. Iran). Facing these complications, and seeking legitimacy -- in its turn designed to facilitate acquiring more influence -- the U.S.S.R. was willing to sign many agreements, including open military clauses.

The U.S.S.R. has covered a lot of ground since 1955 and has gone a long way toward the transition from the status of land power to that of global power but is still lacking in power capability.

B. Political Aims

1. Presence everywhere. During the civil war in Angola a White House spokesman criticized Soviet naval deployment not far from the coast of Angola as "further evidence of a continuing Soviet involvement in an area where they have no legitimate interests." ⁸ Few things have been more vexing for the Soviets' self-image than the problem of legitimacy. The whole idea of legitimate Western presence as against menacing Soviet penetration is repugnant to the Soviet way of thinking and consonant with its ideology. The U.S.S.R. maintains not only that Soviet presence is everywhere legitimate, but also that it guards the sovereignty of Third World countries against Western infiltration. ⁹ Furthermore, Russian initiatives to solve international problems centering on Third World countries -- and mainly in essential areas like the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, and the Mediterranean -- have always arranged for Soviet presence while attempting to restrict the presence of the West. ¹⁰

In 1980, the U.S.S.R. had commercial (and other) ties with 61 countries outside Europe -- 29 in Asia, 22 in Africa, and 10 in Latin America. ¹¹ Trade with many of these countries has been meagre and military aid negligible, but these ties nevertheless delineate the extension of Soviet interests and presence around the globe.

Soviet presence, when achieved without coercion, is by now grudgingly accepted as routine. It takes many forms. Soviet programs of foreign aid have included technical personnel since 1950. In 1978, more than 70,000 Soviet and East European technicians were working in developing countries.¹² Presence also includes fishing rights, docking for freight ships, and landing of Aeroflot planes.¹³ While the Soviet government keeps insisting on its right of presence everywhere, varied emphasis can be detected both in ideology and in practice. In June 1982, during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, an official announcement by Tass did not fail to state that Israel was encroaching upon Soviet interests because the war took place in proximity to the Soviet border. In choosing between emphasis on Syria as a Third World country, the PLO as a 'national liberation movement' and the threat to Soviet interests from fighting in the general vicinity of the Soviet border, the Soviet government settled on the latter. On many an occasion the Soviet government has justified its presence in a certain area by the right to assist a country in its struggle for liberation, but given the choice, the basic instinct of guarding the Soviet border reasserts itself.

2. Political aims. Soviet political analysts and spokesmen frequently couch their tactical-immediate aims in vague terms of commonly accepted far-off aspirations. The tactical-immediate goal of Soviet policy in Southern Africa is to curb the influence of the Republic of South Africa or even liquidate the apartheid regime.¹⁴ The more general goals are:

1. to demilitarize Africa of nuclear arms;
2. to have the Indian Ocean declared a 'zone of peace';
3. to stop aggressive action on African soil;
4. to prevent the United States from building more military bases in Africa; and
5. to halt attempts to turn Africa into a theater of
15
military-political confrontation.

There is a modicum of Third World consent for each of these general, non-operational goals. For instance, the idea of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace was broached by Sri Lanka (then still Ceylon) in 1971, perhaps with Indian encouragement. A committee dealing with the problem now includes 45 members,
16
mostly Indian Ocean nations and the maritime nations. The 'zone of peace' idea has nuclear undertones, for it means banning nuclear-carrying vessels from traversing this ocean. There are nations who oppose it and in its stead propose the idea of 'balanced presence' (Malaysia, Somalia, Mauritius, Singapore, and several Persian Gulf countries). Despite areas of consent, the political struggle persists, as do demonstrations of naval might and competition for military bases.

The idea of keeping Africa free of nuclear weapons is also very popular on a continent, still virgin territory in this respect. One wonders, though, what the Soviet reaction would be if Libya (on its own or in collusion with Pakistan), were to set about in earnest building or acquiring an atomic device. The U.S.S.R. has hitherto remained aloof from India's nuclear explosion, not had much to say about Iraq's nuclear program, done nothing positive to facilitate nuclear proliferation -- but does

not intervene when a Third World country attempts to obtain an atom bomb. If the U.S.S.R. promotes the demands for an Africa free of nuclear arms and the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace (with the nuclear undertones), it is more for their political, declaratory nuisance value than for their operational feasibility.

Perhaps the most controversial form of Soviet aid to Third World countries is that afforded national liberation movements. Most of the Third World countries that gathered in Bandung in 1955 had been under Western colonial domination for many years. It seemed almost natural that the U.S.S.R. should help these countries in their struggle for freedom, not only because it complemented Soviet ideology but first and foremost because the national liberation movement was seen as an effective weapon for foiling the West and enlisting sympathy from the U.S.S.R. Though the Soviet Union has increased assistance to revolutionary and leftist movements in Africa, this practice has not, however, always been politically remunerative. The Soviet effort to help Lumumba (Congo Leopoldville) backfired when Lumumba was overthrown and African leaders criticized the U.S.S.R. for its attitude to the United Nations peacekeeping force in the Congo. At the time of the Cuban missile crisis, Guinea denied landing rights to Soviet planes.¹⁷ These setbacks and others like them have combined with the growing economic burden to change Soviet policy on foreign assistance. There are still selected national liberation movements that receive Soviet support and aid on favorable credit terms or as an outright grant (PLO, Ethiopia,

and MPLA), but on the whole Soviet foreign aid is nowadays a
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matter of driving a hard bargain.

III. INSTRUMENTS OF INFLUENCE

C. Economic Aid

1. Trade analysis. The most conspicuous aspect of Soviet trade with Third World countries is that while the figures reveal a remarkable increase in commercial turnover, there is still bigger growth in Soviet trade with the West. The following data, based on Soviet sources, may prove the point. (The Soviet sources do not specify whether or not the overall figures on which the calculation is based include arms.)

Soviet Trade Statistics

(Vneshnyaya Torgovlya SSR v 1979g Table III)

1978 -- As a percentage of all Soviet trade

Trade with industrialized countries	28%
Trade with developing countries	12.1%

1979 -- Trade with industrialized countries

32%

Trade with developing countries	11.8%
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1978 -- As a percentage of all Soviet exports

Exports to industrialized countries	24.3%
Exports to developing countries	16%

1979 -- Exports to industrialized countries

29.4%

Exports to developing countries	14.8%
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1978 -- As a percentage of all Soviet imports

Imports from industrialized countries	31.7%
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Imports from developing countries	8.1%
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1979 -- Imports from industrialized countries 34.9%
Imports from developing countries 8.4%

(Vneshnyaya Torgovlya SSR v 1980g Table III)

1980 -- As a percentage of all Soviet trade
Trade with industrialized countries 33.5%
Trade with developing countries 12.7%
Exports to industrialized countries 31.3%
Exports to developing countries 13.8%
Imports from industrialized countries 35.3%
Imports from developing countries 11.4%

One gets the same picture when one looks at a random sample of a number of Third World countries.

Soviet Trade with Several Countries

(As Percentage of all Soviet Trade)

<u>Country</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>
Angola	0.08%	0.07%	0.09%
Algeria	0.1	0.1	0.1
Ethiopia	0.09	0.07	0.1
Mozambique *	0.02	0.02	0.02
PDRY (South Yemen)	0.03	0.08	0.06
Iran	0.9	0.5	0.3
Guinea	0.06	0.06	0.06
Libya	0.2	0.5	0.4

India	1	1.2	1.8
Syria	0.29	0.24	0.34

*

In 1977 the percentage of Soviet and East European trade in the overall trade of Mozambique was only 0.8 percent.

Even if one adds to these figures the not inconsiderable trade in arms, one can only come to the conclusion that Soviet trade with Third World countries is small.¹⁹ This is mainly because developing countries suffer from multiple economic constraints. Many of the countries listed above are in dire need of development, but find it hard at times to adjust their economic strategy to the trade strategy of the U.S.S.R., as analyzed below.

In order to explain the attraction of Third World countries to the U.S.S.R. Roger E. Kanet enumerates the following three main reasons:

- 1) "...developing countries have been able to reduce their economic dependence on the Western industrial countries, while at the same time acquiring developmental aid that often was not available elsewhere.
- 2) In addition, since most of Soviet assistance can be repaid with the production of the completed enterprise, the developing country does not have to worry about acquiring convertible currency in order to repay the loans.
- 3) Third, there is some evidence that the entrance of the U.S.S.R. into the ranks of aid donors stimulated the West to provide additional economic assistance."

Although one can take issue with the second point, the first and third points offer a plausible explanation. All attempts at generalities tend, however, to break down on specific instances.

Developing countries can usefully be divided into four groups: the most backward (those of tropical Africa); relatively developed (North Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia); the oil-rich states;²¹ and Latin America. Poor countries do not produce for export and are in need of foreign aid, which represents a problem for the U.S.S.R. on two counts. Firstly, if the U.S.S.R. exports to these countries without importing from them, their negative trade balance with the U.S.S.R. exposes the latter to accusations of exploitation. Secondly, the Soviet Union finds it hard to grant favorable credits because of economic difficulties at home. These countries, many of them still organized on a religious, traditional tribal basis, need much aid and advice in agriculture before they can attain economic take-off, while the U.S.S.R. on the other hand is geared more for machinery, metallurgy, and heavy industry. A list of Soviet enterprises in Third World countries is indicative: 1) 500 industrial projects, 280 of them already operational; 2) 100 agricultural projects; 3) training of 150 thousand specialized workers; 4) establishment of 130 schools; and 5) Soviet geologists have built or helped build 46 projects in different countries.²²

The U.S.S.R. has developed businesslike relations with the relatively developed countries of North Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia, but none of these countries is so dependent on

the U.S.S.R. that the Soviet government can influence its internal or external policies.

With the oil-rich countries the U.S.S.R. has next to no trade relations. The following statistics of Soviet trade with Kuwait are characteristic:

TRADE WITH KUWAIT			
* (in millions of rubles)			
	1978	1979	1980
Total trade	36.6	8.3(\$5.45)	16.7
Exports	36.6	7.4(\$4.86)	15.2
Imports	--	0.9(\$0.59)	1.5

SOVIET TRADE WITH KUWAIT AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL SOVIET TRADE

0.5%	0.01%	0.01%
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*
The figure in brackets is the dollar value of the ruble for the transactions in question in 1979.

The problem of energy is a case of its own. Soviet global behavior cannot be understood without an analysis of this problem. There has been controversy in the west for many years over the "real" size of Soviet energy sources. Without going too deeply into the details of the first and the second CIA reports, it is worth while examining the lessons of these reports. If the U.S.S.R. was to become an oil-importing country in 1981, as the first CIA report stated, then its interest in oil resources would be identical to that of the United States. The outcome could

have been a far more aggressive foreign policy aimed at securing a foothold in the territory of oil-rich countries as a must and not from choice. Soviet policy has actually been one of showing the flag and trying to circumscribe the West by undermining American credibility and establishing some relations with oil-rich countries and/or with their neighbors. If Soviet energy resources were not going to be exhausted, as the second CIA report stated, but would nevertheless have to face many technical difficulties in extracting the oil or in transporting it from Far East oilfields to western Russia and Europe, the outcome would be growing Soviet dependence on Western oil technology.²⁴ According to both reports, however, Soviet economy would be confronting many difficulties by the mid-1980s, particularly as regards hard currency -- in 1978 oil exports brought in no less than 64 percent of all Soviet hard currency earnings.²⁵

A recent DIA report states: "The Soviet Union will, in effect, be able to meet its oil production targets of 12.2 million barrels daily this year (1981) and 12.9 million barrels by 1985." One of the reasons given for this judgment: "... there was a field at Salym ... it is a large find." General Larkin, DIA Deputy Director, said some months ago: "Prospects for the full satisfaction of domestic needs, planned energy exports to East European Communist countries and negotiated quantities for customers in Western Europe appear to meet Soviet expectations through the 1980s and beyond ... The Soviet Union should be able to realize about \$23 billion from the sale of oil and natural gas to Western countries in 1985."²⁶

Two sets of conclusions follow from this state of affairs: the Soviet Union is not very likely to go to war to obtain resources that are not absolutely vital. Hence, the competition between the U.S.S.R. and the United States over the Persian Gulf is still asymmetrical. This means that the Soviet Union will do its utmost to hamper the West's economy and to undermine its position in the Persian Gulf and Latin America, while the United States will have to be prepared to fight in defense of its interests in the oil countries and the surrounding region. The other conclusion is that the U.S.S.R. is still a seller on the energy market, which means that it must maintain the status quo in Europe and must sell oil and gas for hard currency to rich as well as poor countries, since energy remains its major and probably growing source of hard currency. This state of affairs has already complicated Soviet relations with Iraq and may well do the same for its relations with Angola.²⁷

The problem of energy is only an example, though one of some magnitude, which illustrates the dilemma of a country rich in natural resources but poor in hard currency, competent in heavy industry but wretchedly wanting in agriculture and producing consumer goods. Marxist theory explained throughout the years that the capitalist world was bound to reach its pre-determined end as a result of competition to market its products and to procure industrial raw materials. In September 1980, Mr. Haig told a House Subcommittee that the United States was entering "an era of resources war."²⁸ It appears, however, that the United States is better equipped to conduct this war than the U.S.S.R. and that African governments, Marxist or not, realize this fact.

Countries like Angola, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, for instance, must rely on producing and exporting minerals, while the Soviet Union -- for lack of hard currency -- cannot afford to buy minerals that it is rich in. Thus, we see concessions offered to Western oil prospectors by the current Angolan government.

All in all, the Soviet Union has proved neither better endowed nor more successful in its commercial dealings with Third World countries than the great industrial countries of the West, the United States, Japan, West Germany, and many others.

2. Major items of trade. Faced with the constraints detailed in the previous section, the U.S.S.R. chose a limited strategy of economic relations, by which the Soviet Union cannot expect to have much influence over Third World countries. This strategy concentrates on a number of major items that the U.S.S.R. can produce and that the recipient countries want to buy, items that can stand up in competition with other countries and that provide a hope for further ties in the future.

The following tables show the major export items in Soviet trade with the different countries, in millions of rubles and (in brackets) as percentages of the exports to these countries.

Vietnam

	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>
Total exports to Vietnam	446.2	454.9
Machinery, equipment, transportation means	224.225(50%)	214.964(47%)
Equipment for air transportation	36.098(8%)	37.535(8%)
Oil and oil products	31.799(7%)	38.236(8%)

Bangladesh

Total exports to Bangladesh	25.0	27.2
Machinery, equipment, transportation means	4.894 (29.5%)	4.972 (28.2%)
oil and oil products	12.281 (49%)	9.613 (15%)
Cotton, textiles	6.535 (25%)	10.086 (37%)

Afghanistan

Total exports to Afghanistan	184.2	247.7
Machinery, equipment, transportation means	92.836 (50.3%)	115.019 (46%)
Oil and oil products	39.442 (21.4%)	75.650 (30.5%)

Syria

Total exports to Syria	133.3	167.6
Machinery, equipment, transportation means	82.607 (61.9%)	100.282 (59.8%)
Equipment for air transportation	34.149 (25.6%)	52.222 (31%)
Trucks	10.502 (7.8%)	9.466 (5.6%)

India

Total exports to India	525.1	861.2
Oil and oil products	403.174 (76.7%)	650.852 (75.5%)
Machinery, equipment, transportation means	54.944 (10%)	117.016 (13.5%)

Guinea

Total Exports to Guinea	27.7	13.2
Oil and oil products	15.246 (55%)	2.387 (18%)
Machinery, equipment, transportation means	8.024 (28.9%)	6.171 (46.7%)

PDRY (Yemen)

Total exports to PDRY	64.9	55.9
Machinery, equipment, transportation means	47.422 (73%)	35.816 (64%)
Motorcars, garage equipment	12.539 (19%)	5.651 (10%)
Equipment for air transportation	13.372 (20%)	6.670 (11.9%)

The above tables represent a sample of key Third World countries. The breakdown of the major trade items is indicative of Soviet trade strategy. As for the transportation component, it should be mentioned that the Soviet Union is a small-scale producer of cars, and the large export of motorcars can only be explained as a national economizing measure, which must burden the transportation system inside the Soviet Union proper.

Soviet Motorcar Production

(in thousands)

1977		1978		1979		1980		1981	
A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
106.6	65.1	109.3	63.3	109.5	65	-----	-----	-----	-----

D. Military Aid

1. Weapon systems, training. A comparison between the Soviet Union and the United States as suppliers of major weapons systems shows that during the period 1979-81 the Soviet Union was the larger supplier. They differed, however, on two main points: the Soviet Union's customers numbered 28 countries while America's customers numbered 67. Furthermore, the United States has as many as 61 major weapons produced under license abroad, ²⁹ whereas the U.S.S.R. has only 10. In other words, the military industrial relations of the United States with its customers are more valuable and more variegated than those of the U.S.S.R.

The weapon systems delivered to Third world countries by the U.S.S.R. display enormous variety in both quality and quantity. The quantities in each instance may well be accounted for by the choice that the recipient obviously had to make between need and economic cost and the choice made by the deliverer between political-strategic need and economic rentability. It is considerably more difficult to account for the delivery of old or obsolete equipment, particularly since the trade in arms has become such a common part of international relations. The assumption is natural that the Soviet Union -- like many other countries, if with a different 'style' -- acquires influence, through arms sales or grants but the question is how it is done ³⁰ and how far this policy can succeed.

Reliance on a given source of weapon systems may create dependence under a number of conditions: 1) crisis; 2) scarcity; and 3) timing.

1) Crisis A set of internal or external changes may create a perception of threat on the part of a government. Such a perception usually induces the government to seek weapons to bolster its position internally or to defend the country against external threat. Whether this perception is based on real or imaginary grounds, it will frequently have repercussions inside the country and/or abroad. ³¹ An increase in military capability usually creates a perception of threat in neighboring countries; a sharp cleavage inside a country may lead to civil war. If this perception of threat takes place in a strategic area for the superpowers, the result is a competitive arms race (the Arab-Israeli conflict, Angola).

2) Scarcity A government or leadership which is influenced by perception of threat or soured by a powerful ideology (a state for the Palestinians, black rule, unification against separatism), and which is trying to buy arms, can scout for sellers. An under-developed country in the first or second group, one with which the U.S.S.R. has military relations, is in a peculiar position when in need of weapon systems. It has little hard currency with which to pay for arms and no personnel trained in sophisticated weaponry. If the perception of threat persists and/or the influence of the powerful ideology remains unmodified, only then is there escalation in quantity and quality of weapon systems (Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Libya, India).

3) Timing When there is quantitative and qualitative escalation, presumably in the teeth of opposition from neighboring countries, timing assumes importance. It is essential for a country under threat to receive arms deliveries

at a given time in given quantities and of certain quality. The case of Egypt in the October 1973 War may serve as an example. The U.S.S.R. refused to sell Egypt a quantity of tanks until Algeria was prepared to foot the bill.

When a country becomes a client of the U.S.S.R., its only source of weapons supplies, and finds itself insolvent and in a great emergency, then the U.S.S.R. obtains a measure of influence over it (Syria, Egypt until Nasser's death, Ethiopia, Angola), or else it will change its orientation (Egypt under Sadat, the Sudan, Somalia).³² Such influence is obtained because the military must always prefer standardization. Once a country has obtained a major weapon system, such as fighter planes, it must also obtain the avionics, the ordnance and the ground equipment. The performance of the platform is only one requisite in a whole system. The more major systems, the tighter the tie between the deliverer and the recipient country. The more sophisticated the weapon system, the greater the need for training, technicians and advisers. Egypt then, and Syria now, are clear examples of deep Soviet penetration via the military into the economic and political spheres. It is worth recalling that when Sadat decided to expel the Soviet military contingent in Egypt in July 1972, he had to exempt the advisers who had been hired under contracts.

→ 2. Military presence. According to the IISS there are now 105,700 Soviet servicemen abroad (outside Europe) performing a variety of military duties. The breakdown is as follows: Afghanistan 85,000; Cuba 7,500; Ethiopia 1,200; Iraq 1,000; Libya 1,000; Mali 1,800; Mauritania 200; Vietnam 4,000; Syria 2,500;

and South Yemen 1,500.³³ Military presence constitutes an advanced stage of relations with a recipient country. As we see, the Soviet Union maintains military presence in no more than nine of the 61 countries (outside Europe) with which it has commercial relations. (Afghanistan is not included in this list for obvious reasons.) Military presence has not, however, proved a guarantee against deterioration in relations, nor even against a complete change in the recipient country's foreign policy (China, Egypt, Somalia).

3. Military intervention. The most ominous form of Soviet military interaction with other countries is of course, military intervention. In recent years, the U.S.S.R. has increasingly directed its attention to local wars and intervention. A whole theory has been developed on the conditions under which there may occur a coup d'etat or a military take-over.³⁴ A typology has been drawn up of 'just' and 'unjust' war, including the kinds of war, of external intervention, of warfare and of the weapon systems involved.³⁵ This theory largely describes how the 'imperialist' world thinks, how 'capitalism' exploits the poor nations, and how the West has to instigate wars in order to maintain its domination over the Third World.

It is true that in the post-war years the Soviet Union itself has been directly involved in only one intervention outside of Eastern Europe -- Afghanistan. Indirectly, the U.S.S.R. has been involved in all the major Arab-Israeli flare-ups where Soviet military equipment, training, airlift, electronics, political advice, and support were used. The Soviet Union was also

indirectly involved in the conflict in Yemen, the Iraq-Iran war and Angola.

Three conditions govern the decision of the U.S.S.R. on whether to intervene or not, and it is essential that at least the first two conditions be met: 1) that the United States should not be heavily committed; 2) that the U.S.S.R. should be capable of intervening; and 3) that there should be prospects for success after a Soviet intervention. Angola was not a case of direct Soviet involvement, but the Soviet government did not really expect direct American involvement when it decided to back
36
the massive Cuban intervention.

Afghanistan is a somewhat different case. The Afghan government has been friendly towards the U.S.S.R. for many years and more pronouncedly since 1978. Soviet economic and military aid was increasing while that of the United States or Iran was reduced to a bare minimum. In other words there was a country almost completely under Soviet tutelage, and yet when the rebellion broke out against the Afghan government in 1979, the Soviet Union could not find a political way to help the government or to back the insurgents and decided that it had no choice but to invade the country. In this instance, the first two conditions were present but the third was lacking and, to date, despite the Soviets have failed to find a political solution to Afghanistan.

Another case worth glancing at briefly is the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982, when the U.S.S.R. failed to intervene on behalf of the PLO. As we cannot doubt that Moscow considers the PLO a national liberation movement and that its war

(which has definitely been a defensive one in Lebanon) must therefore be considered a just war. the question presents itself as to why the U.S.S.R. did not intervene. The answer is that none of the three conditions was present in this instance.

In sum, military aid and trade are an integral part of Soviet relations with Third World countries. Trade takes every possible form from purely business relations to those of an outright military nature. More often than not we find Soviet military aid in areas of conflict where the West failed to satisfy the needs of a Third World country (Egypt, Ethiopia, Jordan), but military aid or even presence do not in themselves guarantee permanent Soviet political influence, nor are they different from any other form of Soviet influence in the Third World.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The Soviet Union has developed extensive interaction with the Third World for three main reasons. First, Moscow's conception of threat made it imperative for the Soviet Union to push its defense line outward. This policy could not have been carried out without a huge process of military modernization, both of men and machines. As the defense line was extended further, the U.S.S.R. had to establish relations with a large variety of Third World countries with all their internal problems and regional conflicts. In the process the U.S.S.R. changed its posture from that of strictly a land power to that of a global one, and its foreign policy displayed contradictions and changed course just like that of any other global power.

Second, this period of Soviet transition from 1955 to 1982 saw tremendous changes in the world order as the old colonial system disintegrated. The new independent states were looking for foreign aid and economic models. The struggle of many of these countries, eventually known as Third World countries, presented the U.S.S.R. with an opportunity to curio the influence of the West, undermining some of its strategic positions (Indochina, Egypt, Libya, Aden, Mozambique) while aiding 'national liberation movements' of every hue. After the initial period of the struggle for liberty and independence, many Third World countries had to settle down to the less insouiring day-to-day struggle to make ends meet; the U.S.S.R. too had to adjust its foreign policy to the hard facts of economics. In this area, comoetition with the West is much more difficult, and the attraction of the Soviet Union with all its domestic economic problems is not as unquestionable as it used to be.

Third, the West often failed to find adequate solutions either for the problems that beset the economic development of the Third World or for its own strategic problems, and the Soviet Union was able to fill the vacuum temporarily or permanently. The problems of the U.S.S.R. in its dealings with Third World countries are no different from those of the West, except that the U.S.S.R. is on the whole far less equipped to solve them.

The use of direct military force has been neither the most salient nor the most successful Soviet instrument of power. Actually, the Soviets have utilized every possible weapon in their arsenal -- strategic, economic, political, and ideological. Comoared with where it stood in 1955, the Soviet Union has done

wonders, but there have also been inglorious retreats and failures. It does not appear that the U.S.S.R. has found a magic formula for handling the Third World, nor indeed is there one.

FOOTNOTES

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